



Minutes of the Board of Directors Annual Meeting Al Fenton Big Band, Inc (“AFBB, Inc.”)

Date: February 12, 2026

Meeting Duration: 7:00pm – 7:40pm

Location: Via Zoom Conference

Attendees: Kathy Neri (President), Raymond McKay (Treasurer), Christine Apruzese (Secretary), Lee Sohl, Michael Breyenton, Les Bernstein, Gary Neff

Absent: Bruce Giannini (Vice President)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by *AFBB Inc.* President Kathy Neri at 7:05pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

President Neri presented the following Meeting Agenda:

- Welcome
- Treasurer’s Report
- Proposed Budget
- New Ideas
- Tribute to Basie Concert
- New Business
- Updated Group Picture

The proposed agenda was reviewed and unanimously approved by all members present.

3. Agenda Items Discussion

- **President’s Welcoming Remarks:** President Neri expressed appreciation for those attending the meeting. She advised to be mindful that our upcoming gig at Heritage Village (Sunday, March 15th) will require us to purchase a one-day liability insurance policy. Singer Kat Volikas has a family member who works in the insurance industry. She is reaching out to obtain several quotes. The price for

a one-day liability policy also needs to include flexibility in the event that weather conditions are not favorable and the gig is postponed.

In addition, President Neri reported that the annual IRS Form 990-N E Postcard was electronically filed and as soon as it is accepted by the IRS a copy will be uploaded to the Shared AFBB Corporate folder on the Google Drive.

- **Treasurer’s Report:** Treasurer McKay advised that the band bank account, held with *American Eagle FCU*, currently has a ledger balance of \$1,000; however, several band members have not cashed recent gig checks. He is therefore considering the actual checking account balance to be \$900.00.

- **Proposed Budget:** Treasurer McKay suggested the following items be included in the 2026 budget:
 - 1) \$50 for the Secretary of State annual filing fee
 - 2) \$150 for several new charts
 - 3) \$150 for new equipment, repairs, cords, etc.
 - 4) \$150 for new carrying case(s) for the AFBB music stands
 - 5) \$250 for the annual AFBB Scholarship Fund
 - 6) \$125 for insurance

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\$875.00 Proposed Expenses, 2026

Budget Notes: It was previously proposed that AFBB purchase a chart for “Teddy the Toad” which is estimated to cost approximately \$75.00. Several additional Count Basie era charts will be considered as well. In addition, the carrying cases for the AFBB music stands are sorely in need of replacing, so that we do not incur damage to them, transporting them to and from gigs.

The proposed budget was unanimously approved.

- **New Ideas:** Annual Scholarship - President Neri suggested reaching out to her former East Hartford Public Schools Supervisor, T. Scavone, who is currently affiliated with the *Hartt School of Music* in Hartford, CT. Previously, *Hartt* graciously allowed us to work with their sound engineering students and utilize their facility to record a demo; it would be great to “give back” with a donation to this department to be awarded to a deserving student in the band’s name. All attendees agreed it sounded like a fine idea.

Concert venue ideas were solicited. We currently have 6 gigs slated for 2026. We are hoping to schedule a performance at the *Norwich Arts Center*. They host big bands

on Friday evenings. We would split the entrance fee proceeds 50-50; therefore, each of us would need to promote the concert to ensure a great turnout. In addition, we would share the fee paid to their sound technician (approximately \$50) who is familiar with the theatre and would therefore be a great asset to us. The group tentatively agreed that the first Friday in June would be our target date for this performance. (This conversation was a great segue to our next agenda item, a Tribute to Basie Concert).

Lee Sohl, trumpet section representative, inquired if the band might be interested in playing at *Infinity Hall* in Norfolk. She indicated, however, that the stage may be a bit tight to accommodate an 18-member big band. This will be held under further consideration.

Mike Breyenton, trombone section representative, advised President Neri that he had downloaded an application to play at the annual *Durham Fair*; Ms. Neri advised that she had already submitted the application. This will (unfortunately) be our “off” year to play at the *Garlic Festival*, as typically they prefer to alternate artists on a biannual basis.

Ms. Neri further mentioned that the *Bethlehem Fair* event coordinators, where we performed in September 2025 for the fair’s 100th anniversary, loved the band. Our time slot was difficult, as it was in the morning, and we were competing with politicians making speeches as well as an auctioneer’s booming voice adjacent to our venue. However, the stage itself and sound technician assigned to us were terrific. We agreed that a time slot later in the day would be ideal, if we’re invited back.

- **Tribute to Basie Concert:** the idea of performing an “All – Basie” concert had been floated among both Board and band members in the past. A full discussion ensued. Highlights: AFBB, Inc. owns approximately 8 charts already that can be revisited; we would require the purchase of several more (as previously mentioned, “Teddy the Toad” tops the list at this time). We have some items to consider: 1) possible legal issues utilizing the name “Basie” when coming up with a tribute name for the concert; 2) whether or not we have sufficient practice time to pull it together for a possible June 5th concert; 3) if we can engage all of the band members to promote the concert so that we can financially make it worth our while (as well as the venue’s). It was agreed that President Neri would contact the *Norwich Arts Center*

and suggest to them a performance on the first Friday in June; and then we will go from there.

- **New Business / Updated Group Picture**

President Neri expressed the opinion, regarding our current group picture, taken in December 2025 at the Crystal Ballroom in Middletown, that it is a bit too contemporary to be utilized in promoting an “All-Basie” tribute concert. She suggested that perhaps we have another picture taken at a future rehearsal at Anthology of Farmington, which is a high-end assisted living facility. On the third Thursday of each month, the band performs for the residents for the first hour; and then, after a short break, we rehearse for the last hour.

Other possibilities include having our picture taken during a rehearsal at the New England Carousel Museum (bimonthly, the last Thursday of the month). The group picture will be coordinated with the band members soon.

There was no other new business at this time.

4. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Les Bernstein (rhythm section representative); it was seconded by Gary Neff (saxophone section representative). The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm promptly.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine A. Apruzese

Christine A. Apruzese, Secretary



From: RAYMOND MCKAY

Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2026 8:44 AM

Subject: TREASURER'S REPORT ADDENDUM

ADDENDUM TO TREASURER'S REPORT

ADDENDUM TO THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 12th, 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL MEETING.

PROPOSED BUDGET EXCLUDED ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE ITEM FOR \$250.00. AS A RESULT, THE ALLOTMENT FOR NEW CHARTS WILL BE REDUCED TO \$75.00. THIS WILL BRING OUR PROPOSED EXPENSES TO \$1054.00.

WITH A WORKING BUDGET OF \$1093.06, THIS WILL GIVE US A BALANCED BUDGET.