

11/15/20 Vermont Blues Society Annual Meeting and Concert Minutes

We're Still Standing

Due to COVID -19 restrictions The 2020 VBS Annual Meeting and Concert was held via Zoom this year

Sal engineered the Zoom production including uploading pre recorded videos from the musicians

6:15-6:30- Early arrivals to the meeting were entertained with videos from the past three virtual VBS Blues Jams this year

At 6:30 pm The business portion of the meeting kicked off with welcoming remarks from Dennis Willmott, Co-founder and Chairman of VBS

Sandy narrated the powerpoint he and Marian developed including:

VBS Mission Statement

Vermont Blues Society's mission is to preserve the heritage of blues music, celebrate blues recording and performance, expand local awareness of the blues music, enhance opportunities for Vermont-based blues musicians, and ensure the future of this uniquely American art form is alive and well in Vermont

Introduction of VBS Board of Directors with photos & birthday greetings to Marian and Dennis

Dennis Willmott, Co-founder, Chairman

Marian Willmott- Co-treasurer, Website, Newsletter

Charlie Frazier- Co-founder, Vice President

Sandy Combs- Co-founder, Vice President

Tom Buckley- Co-Secretary, "Just The Facts"

Arlene Sorgen-Co-Secretary, Volunteer Coordinator

Rebecca Brooklyn- Events & Entertainment Coordinator, Production

Sal DeFrancesco- Zoom & FB Guru/Engineer

Member Benefits- Jan 2021

1. Multiple Levels of Membership Available to Support VBS
2. Being part of a great active Blues Community - Celebrating & Advancing Blues Music throughout Vermont!
3. Connecting with Musicians, Influencers, Enthusiasts
4. Gig & Band Promotion
5. Blues Foundation Affiliation (IBC!!!)
6. Member Newsletter, Communications, & Social Media Groups
7. Annual Meeting & Celebration

Acknowledgements

- Special VBS Contributors –
 \$25 Friend, \$50 Partner, \$100 Supporter, \$250 Patron
- 159 Current Active Members – 25 renewed for 2021
- Volunteers
- Special Mentions - *Gov. Phil Scott's Proclamation*
 "NOV 2020 is Local Music Month"
 Jim Lockridge & Big Heavy World's #HEARVT Campaign
- Businesses/Orgs – *Double E and PB&J Blues Concerts*

Financial Summary Jan 1-Oct. 31, 2020

VBS Beginning Balance:	4,481
VBS Revenue	+3,016
VBS Expenses	-1,417
Current Position	6,080

All VBS financials are available to any current VBS Member by request

2021 VBS Priorities

- Greater Statewide Presence
- Improved Volunteer Participation
- Increased Social Media Presence & Awareness
- More Educational Offerings/Programs
- Vt to Memphis IBC Challenge?
- Annual Meeting- Fall 2021

VBS Call To Safe Action

- Use the VBS Facebook Community- add, like, share!
- Support blues musicians & safe events throughout Vermont
- List safe events on VBS Facebook & VBS Website calender
- Register bands on VBS Website
- Purchase more official VBS merchandise
- Encourage your friends to join

Members were directed to ask questions via Zoom Chat

Music Entertainment

The meeting segwayed to the musical portion of the evening with Dennis' introduction of the multi-talented John Fusco, a filmmaker, television producer, and blues musician. John received the Vermont Award for excellence in the Arts this year.

John Fusco- John showed a video of his song Snake Oil Man from and performed a

couple of live songs. Marian facilitated questions from the Zoom audience for John to answer

Rebecca introduced the remaining performers and various awards they had won. After each performance Rebecca facilitated questions from the Zoom audience.

Award winning Local musician **Dave Keller** played a few songs and answered questions. Dave recognized two of the evening's performers: Dawn Tyler Watson and Annika Chambers, for their contribution to his new album *You Get What You Give*. All proceeds from the album go to racial justice and equity organizations

22 year old **King Solomon Hicks** provided pre-recorded videos and answered questions. Solomon performed a song written about VBS board member Rebecca Brooklyn, and commented that he hopes to return to Vermont for another house concert when the pandemic is over.

24 year old award winner and multi instrumentalist **Jontavious Willis** provided pre-recorded videos that showcased his "old style" of playing the blues. Jontavious spoke about the elder musicians who mentored him and influenced his style, particularly his grandfather..

Multi award winners and recently married **Annika Chambers and Paul DesLauriers** performed together in pre recorded videos from their home in Florida. Blues powerhouses in their own right they have been making music together throughout the pandemic. They answered questions from their car on the way home from showing Paul's son the place where they were married.

Multiple award winner and exceptional show woman **Dawn Tyler Watson** provided pre-recorded videos including a rousing rendition of her song *I Look Good* and a soulful version of *Summertime*. Dawn answered questions from her home in Montreal.

The meeting ended at 9:15 pm

Next VBS Board Meeting: 5 pm Dec 21, 2020