

Coro Lux Board Meeting
Thursday, April 16th, 2026

MINUTES

Members Present: Katy Anderson, Bob Croft, Kelly Hardison, Keith Hinds,
Charlotte Kramer, Vinnessa Ohle, John Owen, LaVonne Yazzie

Members Absent: Tony Megofna

Staff Present: Bradley Ellingboe, Annie Gomez

Guests Present: Colleen Harris

Meeting called to order at 6:35pm

Introduction of Guest, Colleen Harris

- Brad welcomed Ms. Harris and shared her extensive experience supporting nonprofit and fine arts organizations.
- Colleen expressed she has attended several *Coro Lux* concerts and recognizes the value of its work and mission. After meeting with Brad to discuss the organization's goals, she developed a draft of a Two-Year Strategic Plan of Action.
- Brad asked her to emphasize certain aspects of the draft, since these were topics at the forefront of the Board's work, and also because meeting time was limited. Her emphases are found, below.

Strategic Plan of Action

- Section 2.2 – Areas for Growth – Colleen made the following suggestions:
 - Board Member Skills - Determine each member's specific skillset, then have members take ownership of tasks within their areas of expertise.
 - CRM - Begin utilizing a Customer Relationship Management tool to develop a donor database, including details about donors' family members, to establish relationships and ensure long-term gift-giving.
 - TechSoup - Create an account and use the TechSoup platform to send targeted fundraising campaigns, maximizing contributions.
 - Corporate Sponsorships - Pursue sponsorships, focusing heavily on *El Faro Youth Chorus*, understanding that persistence is key.
 - Ad Hoc Committees - Assemble committees of volunteers from all parts of the *Coro Lux* family to complete menial tasks, such as assembling campaign materials and stuffing envelopes.
 - Grants - Pursue funding with a long-term goal of establishing relationships. Grants are sometimes a lot of work with little return, but building relationships creates a greater likelihood of long-term gift-giving. Part of this process is staying above board with communication and submitting timely paperwork.
 - Financial Transparency – Keep statements and 990s clean and accurate.

- The group discussed logistics of publicizing financial materials and announced that strides have been made to include Form 990 on the website. Colleen suggested financial statements not be made public, due to the risk of exposure to competitors, but can be shared privately with potential donors.
 - Brad asked about posting the annual budget online, and Colleen recommended a simple pie chart highlighting earned versus contributed income.
 - Kelly asked about effective ways of producing and distributing newsletters and campaign materials. Colleen recommended Don Mickey Designs on the corner of Indian School and Girard, saying he's a "guru for printing newsletters."
 - ❖ Colleen called attention to the lifestyle component naturally aligned to music. People like to enjoy music in conjunction with food, wine, travel, and other forms of art. Concerts and shows at Popejoy sometimes include refreshment sales or VIP dining lounges for special donors. This results in increased donations because people enjoy the luxury of exclusive dining as part of their artistic experience.
- Section 3.1 - Board Governance
 - Documenting Success - Collect quotes from *El Faro* singers or guardians to share stories of impact with patrons and engage donor support. Liability waivers must be signed for permission to share student words and pictures.
 - Project Management - Use an annual calendar or Gantt chart to manage the projects the board hopes to accomplish within a season. A visual planning tool will help ensure goals are accomplished within a specific timeframe.
 - When board members volunteer to take on specific tasks, it's important they check in within a few weeks to report on progress.
 - Website board page – Create a board section of the website accessible only to members with a special log-in. Meeting minutes and shared documents will be contained in this common area, and it saves paper. Katy advised TechSoup could also be used for this purpose.
 - Section 5.1 - Diversification Targets
 - New donor acquisition – Use a 4:1 ratio of probability, aiming to secure one new gift for every four prospects identified. At any given time, four new donors should be included in each projected amount category. Setting up donor pyramids can help determine projections, with more small gifts at the bottom and larger gifts at the top. Board members can cultivate relationships with potential donors, reaching out to friends and family first and also considering grants and sponsorships.
 - Speaking with donors - Generally, potential donors want to speak with someone in authority, such as the executive director. They want to know their money will be well stewarded.
 - Procuring large donations – Major donors are looking to fill their charters for youth development or religious affiliation.
 - When Colleen suggested the board look at donation log books for other organizations, such as the Santa Fe Symphony, NMPhil, and NDI, Katy

announced she already has lists in the works. The board will contact all donors on these lists and cultivate their support.

- *Coro Lux* already has the advantage of a locally-based leadership. Patrons like being connected with a local director while also having opportunities to mingle with guest conductors and clinicians.
- Pull other organizations' 990s on GuideStar to gauge donor interests and determine conversation points in requesting donations.
- Donor Perks – The group discussed options for providing special benefits to large donors, such as a pre-concert happy hour, special events with guest artists, information about health and wellness and music's connection to emotional health, especially considering the trauma-informed foundation of *El Faro*.
 - Brad mentioned this week's concert with guest conductor, Jose Daniel Flores-Carabello, and will plan a meet-and-greet for potential donors.
- Yearly Goals
 - Colleen concluded discussion of the strategic plan by encouraging the board to set bold goals for the year, ensuring all are on board to accomplish them.
 - She advised the group establish a standard "elevator" speech to promote *Coro Lux* on the spot.
- Action Steps Going Forward
 - Set up a database to keep track of goals as they are set and completed.
 - Members should volunteer for tasks at board meetings, then follow up with the group halfway through the month to report on progress.
 - Colleen will return to a future board meeting to check on progress and offer additional support, as needed. She affirmed *Coro Lux's* quality product, strong leadership, and stable financials, stating the organization could realistically grow from a current annual income of \$160,000 to \$200,000 by next year.

At about 7:35pm, Colleen Harris departed, and the meeting continued:

March meeting minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

- Bob announced a bank account balance of \$5,957, reporting funds were recently transferred from the savings account to checking to meet cash flow needs. Though the checking account is down by about \$4000 since last month, all expenses are covered. A recent Schwab stock grant is being traded, and funds will appear in the account soon.
- Statements from Riley Accounting were distributed, and Bob reported a current total end-of-year income of \$158,000 with three months left in the fiscal year.
- The Anna Harris foundation was identified by Bob as a potential donor. The award amount may only be a few thousand dollars, though the benefits of forming a long-term relationship with this broad-based family foundation will outweigh the initial gift. Bob reported they recently accepted *Coro Lux's* designation as a 501(c)(3) organization and pledged to award a gift at the end of the fiscal year.

Concert Updates

- Brad distributed posters for *Light Upon The Water*, taking place Sunday, April 26th, at 4:00pm at St. Paul Lutheran.
 - Kelly commented on the blank back side of the posters, recommending future posters include text and graphics on both sides. She suggested the back feature *Coro Lux's* mission statement and a list of top donors along with a QR code for additional donations.
 - Brad reiterated the need for graphic design support, as previous designers have stepped down or can no longer offer services. Katy circled back to the importance of forming committees withing the board to take on these tasks. Kelly volunteered to help lead a marketing committee.
 - Annie reported 71 tickets sold to the concert so far with at least 200 needed to break even.
 - Sharlotte recommended handing posters to Spanish teachers in local schools, and LaVonne mentioned the UNM Spanish dept, as she has connections with faculty.
- *All You Need Is Love* takes place Sunday, May 3rd, at 4:00 and 6:00pm at Canteen Brewhouse.
 - Annie reported only three tickets sold so far to this show.
 - Kelly hopes several co-workers will attend.

Positive Publicity

- Brad shared a number of articles in *The Voice*, the national journal of Chorus America, featuring our participation in the Raven Chacon event, and *El Faro's* trauma-informed approach.

El Faro Update

- May 15th Concert - LaVonne reported the youth chorus is preparing pop music for their concert on May 15th at 5:30pm. Board member attendance is very much appreciated.
- Recruitment – The choir currently consists of eleven members, and recruitment efforts for additional singers are underway. LaVonne expressed a need for someone connected to APS who can distribute flyers and information to public school music programs. Katy suggested considering Peachjar, the system used for communication by all public schools. Members also considered Jacqueline Zander-Wall, President of the Albuquerque Music Teachers Association and founder of the Vocal Artistry Art Song Festival.
- LaVonne wants more Indigenous involvement in *El Faro*, hoping to reach out soon to the Native American Community Academy (NACA).
- Summer Activities – Parents have discussed possibilities for *El Faro* summer activities in future years, though Joe plans to give students a break this summer and recruit for the fall. Board members discussed the option of students participating in *Quintessence's* youth summer workshop.
- Brad reported a recent conversation with National Dance Institute Executive Director, Russell Baker, in which they discussed a possible collaboration with *El Faro*, combining singing and dance.

Legacy Society

- Brad recently met with a former board member who promised to include *Coro Lux* in her estate planning. She suggested that communication with donors happen consistently on a monthly basis to ensure gift-giving is maximized. Brad and Keith are developing new plans for the legacy society and will consider this suggestion.

Progress on New Board Members

- The board reviewed last month's discussion on the skills matrix, restating the need for someone with fundraising or marketing experience, between the ages of 35 and 50, with Hispanic ethnicity.
- A list of eleven potential candidates had been assembled, and a committee will be assembled to proceed with the selection process.
- Katy created a phone interview script, and board members who recommended names will call first, using the script to gauge interest. A Google form will then be completed with details and contact information, following which the nominating committee will take next steps for formal interviews and screening. This should all be accomplished by the next meeting.
- The board discussed personality traits assessments, such as Working Genius. Katy will send links to the group.
- Katy proposed that section 3.3 of the Strategic Plan, "Committee Structure," is of utmost importance when considering teams to accomplish goals within the organization. It should be a discussion priority for the next meeting.

Next Meeting: May 21st at 6:30pm

Meeting adjourned at 8:34pm

Action Items:

- Kelly will host a special event with guest conductor, José Daniel Flores-Caraballo and potential donors
- *El Faro* outreach and expansion
- Develop committees, according to the strategic plan, to complete important tasks. Charlotte will create and distribute a spreadsheet.
- Complete phone conversations with board nominees, then the nominating committee will complete the selection process by June.

Agenda Items:

- Board member selection
- Strategic plan – committee development and actions