



August 2, 2017



News of Note

Information on Dues

Dear Friends and Fellow Members,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Directors to share with you a change in the Membership Dues for the upcoming season.

Effective September 1, 2017, the Membership Dues will be increased by \$10 per semester. Senior Citizen and Prepayment discounts will not change. The new Membership Dues are summarized in the following table.

	Semester	Full Year
Member Dues	\$60	\$110
Senior (65+) Dues	\$50	\$90
Student	\$0	\$0

Let there be no doubt: we are very sensitive to the fact that any increase in Membership Dues, regardless of amount, has a real impact on all of our Members. In fact, because the Board has always been extremely reticent to increase the Membership Dues, there has not been an increase in nearly 15 years.

In that time, the ordinary and routine costs to run the Choral Society have steadily risen year-on-year. We also have enjoyed renting rehearsal spaces at very low rates, something that has changed in the last year, as every available rehearsal venue has increased their rental costs, a saga that our Past President, Joanne Johnson, described in detail during our last Annual Meeting.

Many of us, regardless of whether or not we may be on the Board, have done unbelievable work to generate our income through ticket sales, soliciting individual and corporate sponsorships, participating in great fundraising opportunities, and asking local business to place advertisements in our concert programs. This increase in Membership Dues will compliment these continued efforts appropriately.

The Board ensured that any proposal to increase Membership Dues was fully examined. I would like to share with everyone that process, which took place over the course of several months:

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Rehearsals (unless otherwise noted) -

Mondays 7:15 – 9:45

Newburyport Senior Center

331 High Street

Newburyport, MA 01950

- The Budget Committee met during Spring 2017 to create a budget proposal for FY 2018. After examining all of the foreseeable income and expenses, and deciding on a reasonable amount for each, the Budget Committee unanimously agreed to recommend a Membership Dues increase, in order to allow for a level-funded budget, while maintaining responsible income goals for each source, and controlling our expenses.

- The Executive Committee examined both the recommended FY 2018 Budget and proposal for an increase in Membership Dues, and endorsed both as appropriate.

- The Board of Directors
 - Reviewed and approved the FY 2018 Budget during the May 2017 meeting and all members of the Board received notice of the proposed Membership Dues increase.

- Given the importance of the issue, and allowing sufficient time for all members of the Board to research and reflect, the proposal was taken up again during the June 2017 Meeting.
 - Approved the Proposal at the June 2017 Meeting.

It is important to know what our Membership Dues help pay for. We attend between 15 and 20 rehearsals per semester, run by a professional conductor, alongside a trained and phenomenal accompanist. And we don't just sing at these rehearsals! Each rehearsal is master class, with a mix of learning how to sing, both individually and as a group, and learning both interesting and needed musicological background, interpretation, and musicianship of each piece. In addition, musicianship classes are held before several rehearsals for those who wish to learn even more.

Compare all that we get in our rehearsals to taking a class at a local college or adult education center. We get two times the value at a fraction of the cost!

Finally, I do not wish a single Member of our Choral Society to either not participate or feel burdened by the Membership Dues, increase or not. We do have funds available for those who may benefit from some assistance. Please speak with Sarah Hall (Alto

1), our Membership Director, or myself, and we will discretely take care of what needs to be taken care of.

Friends, my door is always open. Please, never hesitate to speak with me in person, or e-mail me at pres@newburyportchoralsociety.org, should you have any questions or concerns.

I very much look forward to a wonderful concert season to come, alongside my NCS family.

Warmest Regards,

Solomon Berman, Bass 1
President, Newburyport Choral Society

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Email: info@newburyportchoralsociety.org

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