

General Membership Meeting of the Freelance Musicians Association (FMA)

Via Videoconference

June 3, 2026

Meeting called to order by President Nate Omdal at 2:02 PM, EDT.

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A motion was made and carried to approve the April 1, 2026 General Membership Meeting minutes as presented.

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President Omdal opened by acknowledging the upcoming 103rd AFM Convention in Ottawa, CA. He said that it is exciting to see the direction that the recommendations and resolutions are heading, and that the FMA will have some influence. Omdal shared his optimism for the future of the FMA after the convention.

Wages Argott, AFM Director of Freelance Services, mentioned that the AFM is now able to point out potential leaders from the rank-and-file. Argott pointed the new members towards the Discord channels.

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Gene Pearla, Board Member-at-Large, FMA, and Ken Hatfield reported on behalf of the Jazz Advocacy Committee. Pearla reported that the FMA now has access to a database of venues in New York city and surrounding areas that was compiled by David Stern, member Local 802, New York, NY. Pearla went on to report that signing up and contributing to Venuology.org is still difficult.

Pearla also said that 3 common problems have been identified by the Jazz committee: many colleagues want to use their Locals as a booking agency, some jazz musicians can't find their footing within the AFM, and many jazz musicians are skeptical about the union because they never see work being done in front of them.

Vice President Kreienberg suggested that some jazz musicians join the Venuology committee for better communications and overlap with the Jazz committee.

Mario Guarneri, Board member Local 6, San Francisco, CA, mentioned that there used to be a program similar to Venuology through the "Independent Musicians Alliance", a nonprofit organization serving the Bay Area. He also mentioned the possibility of "Jazz in the Neighborhood", another nonprofit organization in San Francisco, becoming the employer of record for jazz musicians performing in the city in order to help with W2 work status.

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Kreienberg reported on behalf of the Communications Committee: Buttons and stickers with the FMA logo were ordered for the upcoming convention. A future meeting of the Communications Committee was scheduled for June 8, 4:30pm EDT, where email and social media will be the priority of conversation.

Omdal said that there has not been much opportunity to work on the P2 Visa situation, but that the FMA still considers this an important topic

Argott reported on the Candlelight Concert Series. After a conversation with Stacey Eliason, Board Member Local 105, Spokane, WA, 4 topics were identified that should be addressed at a national level: pay, communication problems, working conditions, and licensing and recording.

Helen Rucinski, member Local 4, Cleveland, OH, reported on behalf of the Educational/Professional Development Committee. There have been 2 official meetings so far and topics included developing relationship skills, common features of a good employer, writing your own contracts, and the importance of reaching out to students and newly graduated musicians. There was also discussion on holding a workshop to help educate freelancers about the AFM, its benefits, and demystifying organizing. The workshop was planned for September. This committee decided to hold their regular meetings on the 3rd Wednesdays of the month, at 12PM Eastern.

Omdal gave an update on a weekly zoom meeting called "Independent Gigging Musicians". The space was started 6 years ago and the work that was being done there is now shifting into the FMA, so the weekly zoom has been rebranded to be the Health and Wellness Committee and meets Saturday mornings, 11am PT.

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Omdal let those present know that United Musicians and Allied Workers, a nonprofit organization, has asked the FMA for an endorsement on two projects they are working on, the "Living Wage for Musicians Act" (LWMA), and "Raise the Bar" (RtB). Omdal recommends splitting the endorsement into 2 parts. LWMA is a piece of legislation and there are too many politics involved for the FMA to make a well-informed endorsement. Omdal would rather see a special taskforce created to go to the International Executive Board (IEB) to advocate for a better presence in this space; the AFM has not been leading the way when it comes to organizing in this sector. This taskforce will be able to tell the IEB what is important to the FMA. Omdal also mentioned the possibility of creating a UMAW committee.

Argott mentioned that there has been some discussion on how the FMA can help orchestral freelancers. Marjorie Goldberg, Vice-President Local 77-274, Philadelphia, PA, said that the Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) has a subcommittee on orchestral sub musicians.

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Colin Dean, Board Member-at-Large, FMA, recommended a new member survey be sent out. Our membership body has grown and perhaps the needs of our new musicians have not been identified yet.

Edmund Velasco, President Local 7, Orange County, CA, reported on a payroll software that the Teamsters union has that could be beneficial for musicians who do independent contractor work. This payroll system converts work into W2 status so that workers can contribute to unemployment, social security, etc.. Velasco said that he has another meeting scheduled with the Teamsters to see if this is something we can use. Velasco also said that this can help cover club musicians and freelance symphonic workers not under a W2.

Secretary-Treasurer Salazar mentioned that the FMA has officially filed an LM-1 Form with the Office of Labor-management Standards.

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A motion was made and carried to adjourn the meeting at 3:20pm EDT.