

Great Falls  
Municipal Band  
Operations Handbook  
And  
By-laws



2025

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## Mission

The purpose and mission of the Great Falls Municipal Band, Inc. is foster the development in the community of an appreciation of the musical arts, by promoting and producing, or causing to be produced, musical productions and entertainments, and by taking part in activities having that end in view. The organization will also operate concert bands and/or similar ensembles of varying size, to reaffirm the community position in instrumental music, to provide an opportunity for individual musical expression and growth among the membership, and to provide an opportunity for contact and association between and among musicians.

## History

The Great Falls Municipal Band started in 1894 as the Black Eagle Band, formed by the town's biggest employer, the Boston Montana Consolidated Copper and Silver Mining Co. The Anaconda Company bought the smelter in 1910. The band then became affiliated with the city. The Band has performed concerts in the Gibson Park for 132 consecutive seasons making it one of the oldest bands in the nation (2025 season). Over the years, the Municipal Band has been in demand to play for assorted dignitaries, special events and dedication ceremonies. In the late 1930s the band played at the dedication of the Fort Peck Dam which was attended by President Franklin C. Roosevelt. The band also performed for the visits of John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. Recently, the organization expanded to include the Community Band and the Community Jazz Band, groups whose mission was similar and congruent with the Municipal Band.

## Governance

1. The Great Falls Community Bands, Inc. is comprised of three musical ensembles, the Great Falls Municipal Band, the Great Falls Community Band, and the Great Falls Community Jazz Band.
2. The organization is governed by a Board of Directors and is managed by a Personnel Director. There is also a Musical Director that advises the Board on matters as well. The Musical Director is a non-voting member of the Board of Directors.

3. By-Laws of the organization can be found at the conclusion of this handbook.
4. All contracts for performances, membership, financial purchasing, and site venues are entered into and concluded by the Board of Directors requiring the signatures of the President and Treasurer.
5. The Board of Directors is responsible for the maintenance, expansion and insurance of the music library
6. The purchase and replacement of music shall be done by the Music Director with the approval of the Board of Directors if over the budgetary amount.
7. Decisions from the Board of Directors may be appealed directly to the President and the Music Director for adjudication. The President will then make a binding final decision.
8. The pursuit of funding by grants, government agencies, or private sources will be by the direction of the Board of Directors and overseen by the President and a designated grant writer/fund raiser.
9. Group fundraising activities may be approved but with the stipulation that a minimum of 50% of the activity results in a benefit to the organization.
10. The Board of Directors will engage in and commit to Memos of Understanding with rehearsal and performing facilities, clearly stating roles and responsibilities. These will be maintained in the Municipal Band Offices by the Board Secretary.
11. The Board of Directors will participate in regional and national organizations that further their mission.
12. The Board of Directors will engage in an agreement that supports, guarantees and respects the copyright holders of the performed compositions. This may involve securing a license to do so.
13. The Great Falls Community Bands, Inc. may expand its mission to include new ensembles as the times change and warrant.

14. The Great Falls Community Bands, Inc. may add to its performing events smaller groups of musicians, professional guests, non-professional guests and soloists as it sees fit to do so.
15. As a public entity, the financial and operating procedures of The Great Falls Community Bands, Inc. are always open to inspection and examination with due notification. This includes the reporting of all donations and contributions to the organization.
16. In all areas of public discourse and discussion, the Board President shall serve as the official representative and spokesperson for the organization.

## Performance Seasons

1. The Community Band has a Fall Season from roughly September-November, and then again Spring Season from January-May. There is a concert at the end of each season. Members are encouraged to play all year long, but may opt out of seasons if needed.
2. The Community Jazz Band has a Fall Season from roughly September-November, and then again Spring Season from January-May. There is a concert at the end of each season. Special events may be scheduled for this ensemble at the discretion of the Jazz Band Director.
3. The Municipal Band performs a Summer season from mid June-mid August with weekly performances at the Gibson Park Bandshell on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm.

## Conductors

1. The Board of Directors, along with the Musical Director and Personnel Manager arrange for conductors of the ensembles.
2. The Community Band has a conductor for the Fall and Spring Seasons, sometimes with rotating duties among two conductors if needed.

3. The Jazz Band has one conductor leading this ensemble for the entire season.
4. The Municipal Band currently uses a rotating roster of conductors with their weekly programming.
5. The Board of Directors may compensate conductors for their services on a pre-determined rate.
6. It is the responsibility of each of the individual conductors to research and examine as well arrange procurement of copyright permissions for performances.

## Membership

1. New members for all organizations will go through a screening process
2. Each ensemble has its own membership requirements. There is no fee to join any of the ensembles, but members must furnish their own concert attire.
3. The Community Band is open to all members with no audition, as long as they maintain attendance requirements.
4. The Community Jazz Band is open to members by invitation of the Jazz Band Director.
5. The Municipal Band is open to members by invitation of the Personnel Manager and Musical Director. Strict attendance requirements are required of the members in this ensemble due to the concert season being short and space on the Gibson Park Bandshell being limited. Members of this ensemble need to be solid musicians and proficient sight readers. They must practice new music on a weekly basis due to the weekly concert programs required of this ensemble.

## Concert Attire

1. Community Band: White top, Dark pants, dark socks, dark shoes.

2. Jazz Band: Attire is at the discretion of the Jazz Band director. This may vary depending on the theme of the program or event.
3. Municipal Band: Members in this ensemble are required to wear the official Municipal Band polo shirt as well as tan pants for each concert. Tan shorts may be worn when the weather allows for cooler attire. Polo shirts may be purchased from the Band at the start of the season. Cost is \$32 for a polo (2025 pricing).

## Rehearsals

1. The Community Band rehearses on Thursday nights from 7:00-8:30 pm. Location is New Hope Lutheran Church.
2. The Jazz Band rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-9:00 pm. Location is Great Falls High School, currently.
3. The Municipal Band rehearses on Tuesday nights from 7:00-8:30 pm. Location is Times Square. Music rehearsed on Tuesday is performed on the following day (Wednesday) for the weekly concert.

## Attendance

1. Regular attendance is crucial to the musical success of all the ensembles. Members need to commit to coming to rehearsals on weekly basis. If a member needs to miss a rehearsal, the director of the Ensemble needs to be notified.
2. Attendance is a priority—members must make every effort to play for concerts they have signed up for. Failure not to show up for assigned rehearsals and concerts is grounds for dismissal.
3. **Municipal Band Members** have stricter requirements:
  - a. Municipal Band Members are required to attend the rehearsal prior to a concert or receive prior approval from the Personnel Director.
  - b. Municipal Band Members are vested for the next season by playing 5 or more concerts of the previous season.

- c. Vested players are on a "Core Players" list.
- d. All other participants are placed on an "as needed" or "substitute" list for the next season and are not considered as members of the Great Falls Municipal Band.
- e. A musician sub list of non-vested players will be established that is utilized by the Music Director and Conductors to make sure each concert is adequately staffed.
- f. Adults:
  - i. Membership in the **Municipal Band**, demonstrating playing ability OR Recommendation from a regional current music educator or professional musician on playing and reading ability.
  - ii. Playing audition for the Music Director(s). Musicians that are members of the Great Falls Symphony or any other local Symphony or Winds of Montana do not need to audition.
- g. Students:
  - i. Recommendation from current band director
  - ii. Recommendation from private lesson teacher (must be taking lessons to be a member)
  - iii. All-State placement or audition
  - iv. Students should be used on instruments where the band is short section players.

## Instrumentation and Equipment

1. Each member of the woodwind and brass sections in the ensembles are responsible for keeping their instruments in proper playing condition.

2. Percussionists are required to furnish their own sticks and mallets. Occasionally percussionists may want to furnish their own accessory instruments depending on the instrumentation required for the performance. The Bands have percussion equipment that belongs to the band or is on loan to the band for use. These include timpani, crash cymbals, temple blocks, suspended cymbals, concert bass drum as well as many accessory instruments.
3. Jazz Band rhythm section members will need to furnish their own amps/cables for electric instruments at gigs. Drum set will need to be transported for gigs as well. Rehearsals at Great Falls High School may use the school instruments if the Great Falls High School Band Director is in agreement to this.
4. Music stands need to be furnished by members of the Community Band and Municipal Band for rehearsals and concerts. Municipal Band members are encouraged to have heavy duty stands with clips/plexiglass to help manage sheet music with wind and other outside elements.

## Music

1. Programming decisions are in the hands of the conductor and Music Director
2. Music from the current library may be lent to other organizations with the approval of the Librarian and the President. This lending will have a start and return date.
3. Music may be borrowed from other organizations and must be returned in excellent condition at a specified time and received destination.
4. Performers who have lost music are responsible for its replacement.
5. Performers are to make appropriate notations on their music in pencil. We encourage these markings are to be erased after the performance. Markings by pen or marker or highlighter are viewed as destructive and the performer will be charged appropriate repair or replacement fees.

6. The Librarian and the Board may engage services to transcribe from performance scores missing parts.
7. The Board of Directors in consultation with the appropriate conductor and the Music Director engage and cause to be created new works for an ensemble to perform.

## Performances

1. It is understood that performers are on public display during concerts. Behaviors should be appropriate representing therefore the entire organization.
2. Being on public display defines the performers as also on public view. Pictures and Videos are expected from the audience. There is no expectation of privacy.
3. When performances involve minor aged individuals, publicity photographs and web presences will attempt to separate the name of the individual from the photograph/video. However, there is no guarantee nor safeguard to assure that protection.
4. The recording rights of the owners of the music copyrights will be respected. No recordings will be licensed or distributed without securing those rights.
5. The Great Falls Municipal Band, Inc. may be contracted and engaged to participate in public events and ceremonies, such as special events and parades with the submission of a request and approval of the board.

## Electronic Presence

1. The Great Falls Municipal Band, Inc., will maintain a web presence and a domain. The current domain expires in 2033. It has a ten-year domain contract.
2. The leadership of the Great Falls Municipal Band, Inc., will have and maintain email contact provided by the organization. There is an expectation of proper behavior regarding the use of electronic media.

# **BY - LAWS**

## **The Great Falls Municipal Band, Inc.**

Approved, February 1, 2019

### ARTICLE I. Name and Purpose

#### A. Name

The name of the Corporation is the Great Falls Municipal Band, Inc.

#### B. Purpose

1. The purposes for which the Corporation is formed are charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as presently constituted and as the same may be amended from time to time.
2. The purposes may be more particularly stated as follows:
  - a. To foster the development in the community of an appreciation of the musical arts, by promoting and producing, or causing to be produced, musical productions and entertainments, and by taking part in activities having that end in view.
  - b. By operating concert bands and/or similar ensembles of varying size, to reaffirm the community position in instrumental music, to provide an opportunity for individual musical expression and growth among the membership, and to provide an opportunity for contact and association between and among musicians.

### ARTICLE II. Membership

#### A. Qualifications for Membership.

1. Corporation members are participants in one or more of the corporation's ensembles. The Great Falls Municipal Band Inc. and its performing ensembles shall operate without regard to sex, race, national origin, marital status, age, political views or affiliation, religious views or affiliation, sexual orientation, disability, or other factor unrelated to the support of the purposes of the corporation. Applicants for membership in The Great Falls Municipal Band Inc. shall be required to demonstrate satisfactory musical competence as determined by the music director, and agree to fulfill all the responsibilities of membership set forth in these Bylaws.

2. Any person wishing to become a member of one of the Corporation's performing ensembles must have the approval of the director of that ensemble. If accepted, such person shall automatically be approved as a member of the Corporation. The person shall remain a member of the corporation so long as they are a member of one or more of its ensembles.

## B. Duties of Membership

### 1. General

Members shall conduct themselves with collegial and respectful demeanor towards the Band, its members, conductors and guests, and abide by the requirements and regulations stated in these Bylaws.

### 2. Attendance.

Attendance may be taken at rehearsals and concerts at the discretion of the director. Any member who misses a dress rehearsal will not be allowed to perform at the concert without the approval of the director. Members are expected to play all scheduled concerts and to attend a pre-concert warm-up rehearsal, or give adequate notice if they cannot attend.

### 3 Concert Dress

Concert dress shall be determined by the director of each band or ensemble, and shall be adhered to by the membership.

### 4 Seating

Seating shall be determined by the director who may choose to consult with section leaders where appropriate.

### 5. Music Responsibility

Members shall be responsible for returning their music. Fees may be charged if music is not returned in a timely manner.

## C. Termination of Membership: Membership in the Corporation may be terminated for the following reasons:

Failure to maintain musical competence in the judgment of the ensemble director.

Conduct, that in the judgment of the Board does not align with the mission of the Corporation.

### ARTICLE III. Board of Directors

#### A. Executive Authority

The executive authority of the Corporation and its performing ensembles is vested in a Board of Directors, whose duties shall include, but shall not be limited to:

1. Management of the general affairs of the Corporation, taking all action, which is compatible with the best interests of the Corporation.
2. Management of the financial affairs of the Corporation, including the right to select authorized depositories for the funds of the Corporation, the establishment of annual budgets, authorization for audits, and any other matters incidental thereto.
3. The appointment and dismissal of directors and, if desired, one or more assistant conductors.
4. The replacement of members of the Board of Directors or of officers who are unable to complete their term of office.
5. The Board may appoint, by resolution, at any time from the Membership of the Corporation, such other officer or officers as may be deemed expedient and any such officer shall perform the duties assigned by the Board, and hold office at the pleasure of the Board.
6. Judgments concerning standards of conduct and attendance may be reviewed annually.
7. The Board of Directors and all Officers of the Corporation shall at all times conduct the affairs of the Corporation in such fashion as to comply with those provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as presently constituted, or as the same may be amended from time to time, which are requisite to the continual qualification of the Corporation for exemption from tax under Section 501 of said Code, or any successor provision thereto, and to the deductibility for federal income tax purposes of contributions to the Corporation as charitable contributions under Section 170 of said Code, or any successor provision thereto.



3. Annually, the Board may consider the appointment of the Principal Music Director.

4. Each member of the Board shall have one vote.

5. A simple majority of Board members in attendance and voting will carry any motion.

6. In emergency situations outside of meetings votes may be taken by electronic or other media.

E. Vacancies

Vacancies in the Board, or Officers, may be filled by the Board. Members or Officers so selected shall serve until next annual meeting of the Corporation.

F. Removal of Officers

Attendance at regularly scheduled meetings is expected by all members. Any member missing 3 consecutive, or 4 meetings in a calendar year, shall be grounds for dismissal.

#### ARTICLE IV. Officers

A. The officers of the Corporation shall be Principal Music Director, President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officer or officers as may be appointed by the Board of Directors pursuant to the authority given to it in Subparagraph 5 of Paragraph A of Article III of these By-Laws.

B. Duties of Officers

1. President:

The President presides over meetings of the Board.

a. Call meetings of the Corporation and the Board of Directors as provided by these By-Laws.

b. Perform all acts and duties usually performed by a chief executive.

c. Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.

2. Vice President. In the case of the absence or disability of the President, the Vice -President shall perform the duties of the President required to be performed during such absence or disability. He or she shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.

3. The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the transactions of all business meetings of the Corporation and Board of Directors, and shall perform such duties as may be prescribed. The Secretary is responsible for posting notices and notifying the membership of all meetings and affairs requiring membership action. All records of the Secretary shall be turned over to his or her successor within one month of the election and qualification of such successor.

4. The Treasurer shall receive and safely keep all money and other property of the Corporation entrusted to his or her care and shall disburse the same under the direction and to the satisfaction of the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall keep a complete account of the finances of the Corporation on books which shall remain the property of the Corporation and which shall be inspected annually in October and/or at other times at the discretion the Officers, or Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall render a current statement at each regular meeting of the Board of Directors and of the Corporation. The Treasurer's annual statement for the fiscal year may be audited and certified by persons designated by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer may be bonded at the expense of the Corporation. The retiring Treasurer shall, within one month of the election and qualification of his or her successor, deliver to said successor all money, vouchers, books, and papers of the Corporation in his or her custody.

5. Principal Musical Director duties are as provided in article V.

6. Other Officers. Other officers shall perform such duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.

7. All remaining officers shall on expiration of their terms or resigning their office will surrender all property in their possession belonging to their respective offices to the newly elected President.

## ARTICLE V. Principal Music Director and other Ensemble Directors

### A. General Responsibilities

The Principal Music Director shall be responsible for overseeing the artistic standards of the Corporation and its performing ensembles.

### B. Specific Areas of Responsibility

The Principal Music Director and other Ensemble Directors shall be responsible specifically for the following areas:

1. Programming

The directors of each ensemble shall determine program selections and their order for concerts.

2. Rehearsal

The Directors of each ensemble shall be responsible for preparing selections for a performance and shall determine the need for additional rehearsal time, sectionals, dress rehearsals, and the selections to be rehearsed.

3. Auditions

The Directors of each ensemble shall determine the need for membership and/or seating auditions.

4. Seating

Directors of each ensemble may designate each section leader and with his or her consultation shall make any changes deemed necessary within a section.

## ARTICLE VI. Elections

A. Elections of the Board of Directors shall be held at the corporation's annual meeting.

B. Individuals seeking a position on the Board shall submit a written request to the President, or Principal Music Director at least 7 days prior to the annual meeting.

C. Election shall be by acclamation if no contest exists. Otherwise election shall be by secret ballot of those members present and voting at the annual meeting of the Corporation.

## ARTICLE VII. Meetings of the Corporation

A. Annual Meeting

The annual meeting date of the Corporation shall be set by the Board, and commonly will be at the second rehearsal in June. In the event of vacancies, election of Board members takes place at the annual meeting.

B. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Corporation may be called by the President, by a vote of the Board of Directors, or at the written request of any fifteen members of the Corporation.

C. Quorum and Voting

Fifteen members of the Corporation shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business. Each member shall have one vote. Unless otherwise provided in these By-Laws, a simple majority of members present and voting will carry any motion.

ARTICLE VIII. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be the calendar year.

ARTICLE IX. Amendment

A. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the Board at least thirty days prior to the meeting at which they are to be voted upon.

B. A two-thirds vote of the Board will be necessary for adoption of any amendment.

C. No amendment to the By-Laws or to the Articles of Incorporation shall cause the Corporation to fail to comply with those provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as presently constituted, or as the same be amended from time to time, which are requisite to the continual qualification of the Corporation for exemption from tax under Section 501 of said code, or any successor provision thereto, and to the deductibility for federal income tax purposes of contributions to the Corporation as charitable contributions under Section 170 of said code, or any successor provision thereto.

D. No such non-compliant amendment shall affect the validity of the remaining by-laws.

ARTICLE X. Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of the Corporation, no member shall be entitled to any distribution or division of its remaining property or its proceeds, and the balance of all money and other property received by the Corporation from any source, after the payment of all debts and obligations of the Corporation, shall be used or distributed exclusively for purposes within the intendment of Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code as the same now exists or as it may be amended from time to time.