

TBGO Band Associates and Friends,

We all miss performing and rehearsing together. After more than a year of quarantining and social distancing, it seems like forever since we've been able to gather as a group! Thank goodness for technology like Zoom that lets us stay in touch and participate in some fun, virtual projects!

We do not currently have a 2021 menu of performance possibilities; event planners are also still figuring out when it will be safe to stage large events under Oregon's strict COVID-19 restrictions. That said, we are watching and waiting to jump in when the time comes that parades, concerts, and other public events are held once again. In fact, we are watching a couple of possible performances in August including early discussions with the Oregon State Fair folks who hope to hold that important event and want us back if they can!

Though no events are booked yet, it's time to start planning more seriously for the possibility of in-person rehearsals and performances later this year. As an all-volunteer organization, we have both a responsibility and broad latitude to adopt policies that ***serve and protect*** our Band Associates and our clients. On a positive note, wide availability of COVID-19 vaccines makes it more likely that large groups will be able to gather safely as the year progresses. At the same time, continued high infection rates and TBGO's vulnerable population demand that we implement appropriate precautions.

The TBGO Board met recently to debate these trade-offs. After honest and robust discussion, the Board is instituting the following policies:

- No in-person rehearsals will be scheduled until permitted for groups of our size by Oregon public health guidelines.
- Once permitted and in compliance with state guidelines, in-person rehearsals will be held ***outdoors*** until indoor rehearsals are deemed sufficiently safe.
- ***Until further notice, a TBGO Band Associate wishing to rehearse or perform in person with the band must be vaccinated against COVID-19.*** Those who choose not to receive a vaccine should not attend in-person practices or performances for their own protection and to reduce health risks to other Band Associates. This vaccination requirement, along with agreement to abide by it, will be added to the ***Code of Conduct*** (CoC) that is signed by all Band Associates.
- ***Verification of vaccination*** must be submitted with your signed CoC:
 - If submitting your signed CoC at a rehearsal or other designated opportunity, show your vaccine confirmation card.
 - If submitting your signed CoC via email, add an accompanying electronic facsimile (scan or photo) of your vaccination card.
 - ***TBGO will not retain images of your vaccine confirmation card*** after verification.
- Your signed CoC and vaccine verification ***must be completed before performing at an in-person rehearsal or event.*** You may submit your signed CoC and material for verification ahead of time via email or at the first in-person 2021 rehearsal that you attend. ***We will not accept a Code of Conduct at an event*** unless explicitly stated in posted event logistics.
- As vaccination is not 100% effective against COVID-19 (and in accordance with common sense), Band Associates who are ***not feeling well*** should not attend in-person rehearsals and performances.
- Rehearsals and performances will respect ***social distancing guidelines.***
- ***Face masks*** are required for everyone ***before and after*** all in-person rehearsals and events. Requirements for face masks ***during*** rehearsals and events will be determined on a case-by-case basis and published with event logistics. (Examples: We will likely not require face masks during

parades or outdoor rehearsals but may require them in more crowded settings or as we move indoors.) If use of masks is specified for a rehearsal or event, wind instrument players will use specialized musician's face masks to reduce the spread of aerosols as recommended by current guidelines, with "regular" face masks required for other musicians, auxiliary units, and support staff. The Board is exploring options for obtaining musician's face masks.

- **Bell covers** are required to reduce the spread of aerosols as recommended by current guidelines. The Board is exploring options for obtaining appropriate equipment.
- At rehearsals and performances, musicians should carry and use an absorbent cloth (a.k.a. "spit rag") for draining moisture from water keys to reduce the possible spread of pathogens (this is good hygiene anyway!).
- The Board reserves the right to adjust these policies as circumstances require and guidance from public health authorities evolves. In particular, we will look forward to welcoming unvaccinated Band Associates at rehearsals and performances once it is deemed safe. Policy changes will be communicated to all Band Associates by the Board.

The Board is aware that these policies may not be popular with everyone. Please understand that these are *health* decisions, not *political* decisions. Feedback (pro or con) may be offered to individual Board members (contact information is available under Members / Board on the website) or to the entire Board by emailing board@tbgo.org. We look forward to seeing all of you in person someday soon!

The TBGO Board

Steve Tolopka

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Tom Higham

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