# LOCAL 400

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS

**Local 400 Officers**

Christine Melson, Acting President
Arthur Masi, Secretary-Treasurer
Jarrod Briley, Executive Board
Thomas Hudson, Executive Board
Jordan Jacobson, Executive Board
Walter Mamlok, Executive Board
Roy Wiseman, Executive Board

# *The Score*

**January 2026**

## Next Membership Meetings: February 23



## Upcoming Membership Meetings

**When: February 23, 2026, at 7:00pm (Bylaws Revision) and 7:30pm (Regular Membership)**

Our next membership meetings will be held on Monday, February 23rd via Zoom. A link for the meetings will be sent out next month and will also be found on the AFM Local 400 Website.

Overview of Proposed Bylaws Changes

1. Local 400 name change "do-over"
2. Clean-up of jurisdiction language (no changes, just clean-up)
3. Specification of quorum of 10 active members for membership meetings (current bylaws have no quorum requirement for membership meetings)
4. Authority of EB to appoint Business Agents
5. Elimination of payroll stipulations for officers after completing their terms
6. Notice of membership meetings changed from 21 days to 15 days
7. Election Ballot counting changed from second Sunday in December to second week in December
8. Various small spelling, grammar, and style edits

**The Details (including rationale for changes)**

Link to proposed bylaws changes details

---

## Officer Status Updates and Business Agent Hiring - ICYMI

In case you missed our last correspondence, there have been some changes in Local 400 officer status. **Kirsten Lipkens** stepped down as Acting Secretary in November, but **Arthur Masi** has consented to serve as Secretary/Treasurer until December 31, 2026, and was appointed to do so by unanimous vote of the Executive Board. We're all grateful to him for taking this on, and we thank Kirsten for helping us out last year.

**Jarrod Briley** was elected President of AFM Local 400 by acclamation at the October 2025 Nominations meeting, and was to have served in that position for calendar year 2026. However, Jarrod, after carefully considering everything he has on his plate, has decided not to serve. **Christine Melson** will therefore continue to serve as Acting President for calendar year 2026.

The Local 400 E.B. responded to this situation by deciding, after consulting with the AFM, to hire business agents to help with managing and enforcing our Collective Bargaining Agreements, as well as negotiating successor agreements for those CBAs that will expire soon. On December 12, 2025, the EB met and passed a resolution to appoint one or more such business agents to serve until June 30, 2026, at which time it will evaluate how well this new system is working, and perhaps continue it until the end of the year.

The E.B. subsequently offered Business Agent appointments to former officers Joseph Messina and Candace Lammers. Both Messina and Lammers accepted these appointments, and began serving on January 2, 2026.

---

### Successor CBAs

Local 400 negotiated successor collective bargaining agreements with **Goodspeed Opera House** and **The Palace Theater**. The Goodspeed CBA, negotiated with the assistance of AFM theater trade negotiator, Michael Epperhart, extends through January 2029. The Palace Theater CBA extends through November 2028.

---

### Dues Reminder - Deadline Fast Approaching

Our December billing cycle is nearing completion. If you've not yet paid your 2026 dues, please send your check or make your credit card or Zelle payment by **January 30, 2026** in order to avoid Suspension and a $5 late fee. Zelle payments are totally fee-free. Use the QR code below:




---

### Local 400 Website - Did You Know?

Did you know that you can find the following information on the Local 400 website? You can access these items in the "members' area," which requires a login using your AFM website credentials.

- Membership rosters (by name and by instrument) updated every month
- Current Local 400 Bylaws
- Current Local 400 Wage Scales
- MPTF Program Information
- Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

---

# 2025 Secretary-Treasurer's Report

by Arthur Masi, Secretary-Treasurer

## Membership Roster Cleanup

During the first few months of 2025, Local 400 underwent a comprehensive internal audit and subsequent update of its membership records to ensure the integrity of its membership roster. This process required the expulsion of nearly 220 members who hadn't paid dues in a long time but who were still coded as "active" in the roster system. We also audited our email messaging system and learned that it was only about 50% accurate at the start of 2025, resulting in poor initial communications at the start of the year. The process also required reaching out to musicians who are members of our CBA groups to ensure that each and every membership was up to date. Starting in June, I restarted the routine process of suspending and subsequently expelling members whose memberships lapsed; this routine had been abandoned for several years. I am now in the habit of reaching out to members via multiple channels — US mail, email, telephone call, and text message — to help them avoid suspension, expulsion, and the fees associated with those statuses. As of December 31, 2025, Local 400 had **514 active members** — a net gain of **163 new members (46%)** since the membership roster was cleaned up in mid-February 2025. **You can now trust with 100% confidence the accuracy of a membership roster search for Local 400 from the AFM website.**

## Financial Cleanup

With regard to finances, Local 400's finances were found to be in quite a bit of disarray at the start of 2025, but I am happy to report that a year later, we are almost completely caught up. Among the issues that needed to be addressed in the past year were:

1. Forty quarters' worth of employee **state payroll tax withholdings** had not been passed along to the State for 10 years.
2. No **CT Paid Family Leave withholdings** were ever passed along to the State since it implemented the program in 2021.
3. A **$6500 checking account** belonging to the former New Haven Local 234-486 was never transferred to Local 400 at the time of the 2009 merger.
4. Local 400 owed almost $900 in **Federation Initiation Fees** from 2023 that were collected from members but not passed along to the Federation. There was a $400 late fine assessed on this late payment.
5. Nearly $6000 in undeposited checks from the AFM, representing members' **online dues payments** and **Local Initiation Fees** from 2022, were found and had to be re-issued by the AFM.
6. Nearly $5000 in undeposited **work dues** checks from employers from 2022 were found and had to be re-issued.
7. Over 100 undeposited checks, totaling $14,500, representing **membership dues** payments from 2010 to 2023 were discovered.

## Implementation of Rigorous Financial Processes

As a result of the above issues, calendar year 2025 saw the implementation of rigorous and repeatable financial processes at Local 400 as well as remediation for deficiencies from the past decade. Highlights include:

- A large project that resulted in passing 40 quarters' worth of employee **state payroll tax withholdings** (along with filing the requisite paperwork) to the State was completed at the end of July. These taxes, withheld from Local 400 employees' paychecks, had not been passed along to the State for 10 years. This is now a repeatable quarterly routine.
- Five years' worth of **CT paid family leave payroll withholdings** were passed through to the State in May. No withholdings were ever passed along to the State since it implemented the program in 2021. This is now a repeatable quarterly routine.
- An **entire checking account**, worth $6500, was retrieved from the State of CT via the unclaimed property claim process. This checking account belonged to the

former New Haven Local, and the funds were never transferred into Local 400 at the time of the merger back in 2009.

- All **Federal and State payroll tax pass-throughs** and forms were filed on time.
- All **AFM Federation Initiation Fees** collected by the Local were passed along to the Federation on time.
- All **Work Dues** from members who are employed in CBA groups, electronic media projects, and MPTF projects were collected, deposited, and the requisite portion passed through to the AFM on time.
- All quarterly **AFM Per Capita dues** were passed along to the Federation on time.
- **Monthly financial reports** were produced, shared, and reviewed by the Executive Board every month.

***I am pleased to report that as of January 9, 2026, all monthly, quarterly, and annual Federal, State, and AFM processes for 2025 have been completed.***

---

## MPTF Updates

by Christine Melson, Acting President and MPTF Coordinator

2025 saw some changes for the Music Performance Trust Fund. Effective September 1, 2025, music recording industry veteran Greg Linn became trustee of the fund, following Trustee Dan Beck's retirement. Beck has been appointed trustee emeritus. See the article in the September International Musician for additional information about Trustee Linn.

Vidrey Blackburn, Senior Director of Grant Management, emailed me recently that she would retire at the end of December after many years of dedicated service. We thank Vidrey for all her help in procuring grants for our musicians' MPTF performances.

The current MPTF year is proceeding very successfully for Local 400, with a current total of 47 completed and upcoming performances. Upon making inquiries on behalf of members, I was pleased to learn that MPTF would make significant additional funding available to Local 400, especially welcome since we had spent all of our allocation. It is therefore still possible to schedule programs for this MPTF year, which ends April 30, 2026. Please consider programming for Black History Month (February), Women's History Month (March), and Jazz Appreciation Month (April). These special initiatives may be funded at 100% according to the guidelines.

In order to apply for MPTF funding you should first approach venues for whom you would like to perform. These may include libraries, schools, nursing and assisted living facilities, senior centers, as well as town park and recreation facilities. Performances must be free and open to the public. In most cases these venues function as the co-sponsors, who must sign the MPTF agreement form agreeing to pay the musicians, and also provide their organization's w-9, both of which must be attached to the online application form submitted to MPTF by Local 400. The agreement form is posted on our website. Applications should be submitted no later than one month prior to the performance, which means all forms and information must be supplied well in advance in order to allow time for submission. Public Service scale is $115 for side musicians, with leaders and contractors receiving double the scale, $230. See the Local 400 wage scales for applicable cartage or doubling. New members are encouraged to apply!

The AFM is mandating 5% work dues on wages/doubling for all MPTF engagements, payable to Local 400. A work dues form providing complete information will be supplied to all leaders/co-sponsors after the performance is approved for a grant by MPTF.

We encourage members to consult the MPTF website musicpf.org for additional detailed information about the history and mission of the Music Performance Trust Fund. Please share with potential sponsors the link provided that represents MPTF's mission. Click on the link below to watch the video.
https://musicpf.org/75th-anniversary-film/

There is also information on the MPTF website about applying for Music's Future and Music Family Scholarships.

Please contact Christine Melson at vicepresident@afmlocal400.org for more information about the application process for MPTF performances.

---

### What's In Store for 2026

Successor Agreements

Work is already underway to negotiate successor collective bargaining agreements with Goodspeed Terris Theater and Toyota Oakdale Theater.

AFM International Conference

The AFM International Conference is being held this year from June 20 to June 23 in Ottawa, Ontario. Local 400 plans to send at least one delegate to the conference.

Officer Nominations and Elections

Local 400 nominations for all officer positions, including the Executive Board, will be held in the first week of October, 2026. Subsequent elections will be held for any officer position with more than one nominee.

---

## Operational Compliance Review

On December 16, the International Representative from the AFM for the Eastern Region visited Local 400 to conduct an Operational Compliance Review (OCR) of AFM Local 400. This is an external audit of the Local's adherence to standards and policies, and it includes all aspects of running a Local. Click here to read the report.

---

## Belong to More than One AFM Local?

**You may qualify for a dues rebate**

If you play with more than one union orchestra, chances are that you are required by those orchestras' CBAs to belong to the Locals that are party to those agreements. This often introduces stress on members' financial situation. The AFM has a program called "multi-card rebate" that allows members who belong to three or more AFM Locals to petition the AFM International Secretary/Treasurer for a rebate of the per capita dues received by the Federation from each of the Locals to which the member belongs that are in excess of two.If you are a Regular member, that means that you can request a rebate of $66 for each of the third, fourth, and additional locals to which you belong. Restrictions do apply, and documentation will be required. Click here to access the rebate form and complete information.

---

## Help Us Communicate via Email

Local 400 relies heavily on email to communicate with its members. If you send an email to local400@afm.org, it will be forwarded to several addresses within the domain **afmlocal400.org**, from which we will reply. In order that our replies don't wind up in your junk or spam folders, we recommend "whitelisting" the domain our emails come from. You can also click on your email program's "not junk" or "not spam" button to help route our emails to your inbox.

Please feel free to contact us at **it@afmlocal400.org** if you have questions.

---

## Have any events you'd like to advertise? Let us know!

Is there an upcoming performance or event you want people to know about? Want to contribute an article for a future issue? Think of something you'd like included as a regular addition to *The Score*? We love sharing the stories and successes of our Local 400 members, so if you have anything you'd like to include in a future issue of this newsletter please reach out!

**Contact us!**

---

American Federation of Musicians Local 400 56 Town Line Rd Rocky Hill, CT 06067-1241 USA - 860-563-1606 - afmlocal400.org

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can update your preferences or unsubscribe