

## Opera House Board Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 10:00 am via Zoom

Present: Mary-Carel Verden, Bill Brehm, Mayor Tim Swadley, Jon Lewis, Lisa Reeves, Jim Borling, John Beutel

Absent: Genevieve Wilberg, Paul Lawrence

Staff: Victoria Flynn

1. The meeting was called to order by President Verden--10:03 am.
2. Motion to approve Sept. 15, 2020 Minutes by Lewis, second by Reeves—10:04 am.
3. Director's Report, Brehm—10:05 am.
  - a. Tickets went on sale to Members on Oct. 12.
  - b. The public on sale will be Monday, Oct. 26.
  - c. We will be moving to a new ticketing platform around the third week in November.
  - d. The Spring 2021 memberships came in at \$85,000, surpassing our goal and showing substantial support from our patrons during the pandemic.
  - e. First floor developments continue.
  - f. Julie McDougal has started working with us part time.
  - g. Feb. and March shows may have to be rescheduled, but we may still have shows in Apr. and May. Shows need to happen by Fall 2021.
  - h. The City budget process will be finalized soon to secure funding for 2021.
  - i. Brehm put together a comprehensive presentation for the Committee of the Whole that illustrates the Opera House negative fund balance that has been slowly increasing over the past decade. Due to Covid-19 that negative balance has grown substantially. To help address the negative balance, Brehm has asked for a slight increase in the budget request for 2021.
    - 3.i.i. Brehm's presentation makes use of graphs illustrating the City subsidy over the course of years in comparison to Opera House revenue increases, staff wages and benefits, and economic impact from Stoughton residents as well as the 85% of patrons who travel into town for performances. Brehm's thesis centers on how the Opera House creates a substantial positive economic impact on the City.
  - j. The single biggest benefit for the future of the Opera House was City Hall moving to the new building and opening up space for concession sales on the first floor.
  - k. First floor concessions must be up and running by the time the first show starts up again.
  - l. SOHFA has made about \$300,000 in capital improvements on the building.
  - m. The Cares Act will help us put in hands-free bathroom fixtures and stand-alone sanitizer stations.
  - n. Brehm has also put together a budgeting plan that lays out three scenarios for Spring-Fall 2021 which compare projections for shows in Fall 2021, no shows in Fall 2021, and shows in both Spring and Fall 2021.

- o. A planning document was included with the meeting invitation email that lays out what we're looking to accomplish with the opening of the first floor rooms.
  - p. Projections for Spring 2021 shows that went on sale last week are optimistic. We're about 1/3 of the way to our goal.
  - q. We are currently on a booking freeze. If we are unable to have Spring 2021 shows due to Covid-19 they will have to be postponed to the fall.
4. SOHFA Report—11:18 am
- a. The first-floor renovations are paid for by SOHFA.
  - b. We're waiting on new light fixtures to arrive and get installed.
  - c. SOHFA is happy to hear fundraising ideas from anyone.
5. Move to adjourn by Lewis, second by Beutal—11:22 am.

Next meeting, Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Respectfully submitted, Victoria Flynn

10/20/20