

Opera House Board Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:00 am via Zoom

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

Absent: Genevieve Wilberg

Staff: Brandi Brandes, Victoria Flynn

1. The meeting was called to order by President Verden--10:05 am.
2. Election of officers—10:06 am.
 - a. Lawrence nominates Mary-Carel Verden for President. Lewis seconds. Votes are unanimous.
 - b. Verden nominates Jon Lewis for Vice President. Lawrence seconds. Votes are unanimous.
3. Motion to approve February 18, 2020 Minutes by Lewis, second by Lawrence—10:08 am.
4. Director's Report—10:09 am.
 - a. Opera House staff has been working from home since March 16, 20 due to Covid-19.
 - b. Brehm sent out a comprehensive report via email on April 9, 20 outlining how staff imagines ramping operations back up in the coming months.
 - c. Staff had been communicating electronically on how and when to start back up in the building again, the earliest being June 1, 20.
 - i. The Opera House will not be open to the public for tours, memberships, or ticket purchases until further notice and will have to be done electronically.
 - ii. Dane County Health has put together a phased plan called Forward Dane with specific criteria for reopening.
 - d. Work has started on the first floor. The walls have been repaired and painted in the 3 east side rooms and the new ceilings are being put in this week.
 - e. Some important health and safety changes will need to be made to the building before concerts can begin such as hands-free sanitizing stations, bathroom sinks, and toilet flushing systems. Ticket scanners will need to be purchased. Will-call may need to be handled differently, possibly moved to a different area.
 - i. Some of these changes may become standard across City buildings and rolled into the budget.
 - f. Catfish has been postponed until July 2021.
 - i. There is currently a Go Fund Me campaign to raise money for the Opera House
 - g. The membership drive is getting underway. Brehm is making final changes to the "Sneak Peek" and hoping to make 50-75% of regular memberships.

- h. The timeline for the annual brochure is being pushed back to the first week of August while member ticket sales will begin on Monday, August 17 and general public sales during the first week of September.
- i. We are moving forward with planning shows for September, but will make final decision the first week of July.
 - i. If shows need to be rescheduled due to Covid-19, we may have some summer performances in 2021 or move shows forward to September of that year.
- j. Arts & Culture distribution is being looked into since the Isthmus has ceased paper copies.
 - i. The A & C print order will be cut by about ½ and electronic guides will be encouraged.
 - ii. Depending on the season and advertising, we may print two smaller guides.
 - iii. The artist's agencies are willing to work with us regarding local health ordinances.

5. Financial Report—10:34 am.

- a. There wasn't an end of month report for March due to the fallout from cancellations, rescheduled shows, and stay-at-home orders so all information is coming from the City books.
- b. Since shows were rescheduled there wasn't much to look at for April.
 - i. The refunds have caused some confusion as some checks have not yet gone through.
 - ii. These numbers don't reflect the adjusted shows for April. Will be updated in May.
 - iii. Revenue and costs will be moved to next season with the 2019-20 shows ending Mar. 7th.
- c. Updates should be accurate by the second week of June.

6. SOHFA Report—10:47 am.

- a. The \$30,000 grant from the Bryant Foundation is delayed due to Covid-19.
- b. The funding for the first-floor remodeling is coming out of SOHFA check book since there will be no Catfish expenses this year.
- c. We received a \$1,100 donation check from Shippee.
- d. The contractors have been doing prep work on the first floor. They have repaired and painted walls and ripped out carpeting. They haven't started work on the ceiling yet.
- e. SOHFA is working on finishing liquor license paperwork for the State of Wisconsin.
- f. There was an interview in Isthmus about how smaller venues are dealing with Covid-19 and an interview in Tone Madison.

7. Move to adjourn by Lawrence, second by Lewis—10:54 am.