

## Opera House Board Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, October 16, 2018 – 10:00am

Present: Mary-Carel Verden, John Beutel, Bill Brehm, Jon Lewis, Gen Wilberg, Tass Johnson, Mayor Tim Swadley, Paul Lawrence

Absent: Jim Borling

Staff: Nicki Dowland, Victoria Flynn

1. 10:05 am--The meeting was called to order by President Verden.
2. 10:06 am--Motion to approve 9/18/18 minutes. Passed unanimously.
3. 10:07am-- Director's Report presented by Brehm:
  - a. As expected, September shows had lighter attendance.
  - b. We will be able to assess the damage at the end of September.
  - c. Choir! Choir! Choir! needed to be rescheduled from 10/11 to 3/7 due to request from organizers. The change in date will allow us more time to sell tickets.
  - d. Fall season is filling in with larger shows starting this week with Bettye LaVette and Shawn Colvin.
  - e. Music Appreciation is doing very well and running smoothly.
  - f. Grieg Chorus is using the auditorium to rehearse every other Tuesday
  - g. Working on Spring flier. It should be out the first week of December.
  - h. Finishing budget for 2019. No major problems or changes foreseen.
    - i. There is a small decrease in the amount of subsidy OH gets from the city.
  - i. There will be a gift card push for the holidays including advertising.
4. 10:16am--Financial Report presented by Brehm:
  - a. Not all expenses (hotels, bonuses, some final payments) have been tied in to the financial report yet.
  - b. Donations & Memberships are expected to increase toward the end of the season.
  - c. What makes it harder to sell tickets in September? —Verden
    - i. End of festival season. It helps to bring in acts that have an established fan base
  - d. Has the Sylvee affected sales? Not that we have seen. Possibly in Greater Dane Co. and Madison itself
  - e. Overall, we're on track heading into 2019. We're in the black!
5. 10:30 am--SOHFA update presented by Lewis:
  - a. Not much to report for SOHFA
  - b. Is there any news about the plan to move city offices out of the building that will affect SOHFA?
    - i. The bank is being donated, HR is moving out of the building today and over to the Utilities building
    - ii. The City is bringing in a firm to discuss best use of space
    - iii. Looking for ideas of what to do to increase revenue
    - iv. Lawrence is concerned about negatively affecting businesses in the area.
    - v. Swadley—City subsidy helps offset costs. Not sure it is sustainable. The City has many costs including staffing etc. that has been discussed at leadership & budget meetings, not solely focused on Opera House.
6. 10:45am--Communications from Verden:
  - a. Possible VIP event with Chorus
  - b. Brehm—would like to launch a more aggressive donation campaign & tie in with Chorus/ donation level
7. 10:50am--Move to adjourn meeting; carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Victoria Flynn