



# Theatre Workshop of Nantucket Board Meeting

September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

*Nantucket Police Department, 4 Fairgrounds Road*

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## **Call to Order: Les Silverman**

- Les welcomed the board and called the meeting to order at 9:00am

## **Roll Call and Certification of a Quorum: Trich Wages**

**Directors present:** Max Berry, John Copenhaver, Nina Duchaine, Beth English, Jane Forman, Fritz Michel, Chris Mortenson, Marianne Moscicki, Jennifer Oberting, Maria Roach, Terry Schubach, Elaine Schwartz, Les Silverman, Judy Seinfeld, Lisa Soeder

**Directors absent:** Anna Karin Dillard, Amy Fahrenkopf, Duncan Will

**Council members present:** Sara Boyce, Kathy Garre-Ayars, Victoria Girvan, Susan Hostettler, Peggy Kaufman, Linda Mason, Jan Metcalf, Mark White

**Staff present:** Justin Cerne, Trich Wages, Emily Glazier

**Others:** John Shea, Artistic Director Emeritus, Susan Lucier

## **Introduction of Susan Lucier: Lisa Soeder**

- Lisa reported that Leslie Bains has resigned on August 27<sup>th</sup> as a Director and as President of the Board, and thanked her for her service. She reported that the Executive Committee unanimously agreed that Susan Lucier has the qualifications and vision to lead the organization, summarizing Susan's credentials as follows: Susan served on the board from 2007 to 2015, the last three of those years as an officer. A born leader with extraordinary organizational skills, Susan is a member of AEA and SAG; has directed and acted for TWN; has served on the Luna Committee (for 8 years) and the Curtain Up committee. Susan is a passionate supporter of TWN, attending all events and productions, generously contributing financially at the producer level every year, and

donating freely her time, enthusiasm, and vision to TWN. The Executive Committee recommended the election of Susan Lucier to the board and as our new President – 2 separate votes.

- **Call for Motion: Les Silverman**

Susan was unanimously voted onto the Board and as TWN's new President.

- \* **New Slate of Officers and Executive Committee: Les Silverman**

- Less announced the new slate of officers and Executive Committee: Susan Lucier, President; Max Berry, Vice President and Chair of the Development Committee; Lisa Soeder, Vice President; Chris Mortenson, Treasurer and Clerk; and Terry Schubach, Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee.
- The Board voted unanimously to approve the slate of officers and members of the Executive Committee.

### **Remarks by Susan Lucier**

- Susan thanked everyone for the opportunity to lead TWN. She joined the board in 2007 because she saw the need for a viable theatre on Nantucket. As an active participant on many levels, she did a little of everything. TWN was changing quickly. It's had its ups and downs over the years, but passionate and dedicated people were always there to help. She looks forward to working with the executive committee, the board, Justin, and the staff to continue producing great theatre. She thanked Justin for his efforts in making the theatre an artistic success, but reminded the board that this requires a lot of money. She wants us to focus on:
  - 1.) Continue to have high standards of quality, even if we have to cut back on the number of shows.
  - 2.) A renewed focus on nominating and governance; the board needs to get more involved as well as the executive committee. She thanked the board members and said we need to attract more good people to the board.
  - 3.) Need to work more on development. The immediate goal is to raise enough money to sustain ourselves through next May. Max will lead the Development Committee, and Maria, Lisa, Chris and Susan's husband Jeff have agreed to join.
  - 4.) We need to develop a plan to stay on course and gain strength for a successful future.

### **Artistic Director's Report: Justin Cerne**

- Justin said he feels fortunate to have Susan as president. This is a great step for the future of TWN.

- Mamma Mia is a huge success and he thanked everyone involved. MM sold out over 20 of its 35 performances.
- Curtain speeches were effective for promoting one-off events.
- Moby Dick Rehearsed came back to the Whaling Museum and sold out every night. Justin and John Shea will continue to talk about expanding on its success.
- Heidi Blickenstaff's performance was magical. The cabaret series is a stamp Justin has made as AD, and he would like to continue to do them.
- Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf designer run was wonderful and clocked in under 3 hours. He asked the board to attend on opening night and during the first week.
- NHA has a shift in leadership; taking a break this year from fall program with TWN; the Quaker Meeting House reading will not happen this year.
- Justin thanked Beth and Susan for hosting events – both benefited TWN. He also thanked Susan for housing VW actors and the Doyles for housing Dan Foster. Finally, he thanked the board for acknowledging interns and staff by name. He feels very hopeful moving forward.
- **Remarks:**
- Judy said an editorial in I&M, 10 Best Things to do on Nantucket, featured 3 TWN events. This should go in the Annual Appeal.
- Max would like someone to do a History of the Theatre.
- John Shea thinks Marianne Stanton is the key to having positive feedback for TWN; he knows her and her parents from acting here when he was 19 years old. Marianne has an affection for the theatre that goes back to her childhood. John worked at TWN when it was more of a community theatre; there wasn't expensive overhead then and the productions suffered. The theatre needed professional paid actors. Justin brought a level of professionalism that TWN hadn't seen before. We want to continue the tradition of excellent theatre and raise the funds to support it.

### **Annual Appeal: Jane Forman**

- Trich will hand out lists of everyone who has received letters for the past 2 years and the result of those letters. Board needs to look over the lists and personalize more of the letters going out to have a better outcome for donations.
- People who haven't given in 5 years will be removed from the general donations list.
- Board members should submit 10 names of people that they will send personalized letters to (Sept 6-8<sup>th</sup> deadline).
- Fall 2017 letters will be ready Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> // October 1<sup>st</sup> mail in date.

- Envelopes will have a handwritten name above the return address – hopefully this will increase the chance of the donor opening the letter.
- Everyone should review the event lists, nonprofit report, phone contact lists invitations; we need to find new people to add to the appeal list, especially year-rounders. Will let people know about the solicitations more frequently. A thank you note for \$500+, \$1,000 thank you note from Justin as well. The appeal is so important - \$150,000 needs to be reached and Board members need to help. The donor list needs to be bigger and more legible. Send these to off island or to island addresses?
- Max wants Thank you's to go out much sooner. Susan G. will go into the office and ensure all thank you's are sent out, especially from the Gala.
- Jane would also like the Board to pick up the phone and call people to thank them personally. Jennifer O. suggested having a hospitality person charged with sending congratulatory notes to someone who donated that had a baby or got married, etc.
- Susan L. wants a high level of confidentiality around the donor lists. She's not sure it's a good idea to have them handed out and emailed so much. Document is confidential. Chris will circulate it in PDF format.

### **Treasurer's Report, Chris Mortenson:**

- Chris is emotional and proud of where TWN has come in the past few weeks. Mamma Mia has hit 94% capacity.
- Where TWN stands - \$148,000 is in the bank but this is our season high and that money has to get us through the winter and into the spring until we feel we're in a good place.
- Slowed down paying bills to keep more money in the bank. Let's say we have \$100,000 in the bank backing out the bills we need to pay. In September, we will have more cash flow after Virginia Woolf performances. There needs to be a joint effort to make VW a success. We will run a cash deficit in September. October is going to be a tough month; not much money will be coming in except for the annual appeal.
- With this difference, we will likely have \$20,000 by the end of October.
- November and December; the Sound of Music will help but we will run out of money completely by December. Fundraising will NEED to happen.
- 2018 Budget; the preliminary draft assumes (5) shows, (3) cabarets, no LunaFest or Gala.
- \$100,000 surplus – Chris wants to raise \$300,000 - \$400,000 in order to be happy about where we sit next summer. We still have a lot of work to do.

### **Susan Lucier's Remarks:**

- We must obtain grants, contributions, and events money. Board needs to be more involved now more than ever. There needs to be 100% board participation and

everyone is expected to pay for their 2017 contribution to TWN now. Asking the Board now to help us sustain TWN; more money is needed.

### **Max Berry's Remarks:**

- Development: need cost control that we stick with. Need more discipline with spending. Last summer, when Jonathan and Joe were here, they had encouraging words but nothing there to back it up.
- When everyone leaves in October to June, it's hard to raise money. We need to try something different to raise it.
- Have check in board meeting when everyone is on island for Stroll, Daffy, etc.
- 1-3 breakfasts and a few cocktail parties at his home next June.
- Feels the board needs to up their contributions to \$5,000 a year
- PCP (personal contact plan): 2 to 3 people into 6 teams to tackle fundraising with breakfast, lunch, or to someone's home. Once there, you make a pitch for the amount of money you need. Or 10 dinners with (10) people at each table; if each couple gives \$2000 it's worth it.
- Wants to have a cabaret on exclusive property to fundraise. Yacht club in Madaket – one time event out there. Maybe even Moby Dick. We also need to get better at applying for grants. Grants need to become a part of fundraising.
- Arts Advisory council should be \$2,000.
- Yearly Gala where someone is honored. Maybe honor Marianne Stanton's father.
- Suggested a 1-hour play involving just children off season that's either a TWN original work or a simple production or talent show; \$25 ticket. Annual production of the Christmas Carol or Mouse Traps every year.
- Wants to have a PR specific committee.

### **Susan closing remarks:**

- Board will work on reviewing meeting minutes that will open the next board meeting. Our next Annual meeting is coming up October 16<sup>th</sup> at 9am. One more board meeting Friday Dec 1<sup>st</sup> at 9am. Beginning in 2018, there will be meeting dates for the entire year to review for any conflicts. Susan thanked John Shea for his passion for the theatre; TWN has had many ups and downs but we're still pushing through. Susan committed to calling everyone individually to get to know them better.