

Theatre Workshop of Nantucket
Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, August 5, 2019, 9:00 a.m.
Nantucket Police Department, Second Floor Conference Room
4 Fairgrounds Road

Directors present: Amber Cantella, John Copenhaver, Nina Duchaine, Beth English, Jane Forman, Susan Lucier, Chris Mortenson, Helene Patterson, Maria Roach, Terry Schubach, Elaine Schwartz, Judy Seinfeld

Directors on the phone: Kay Bernon

Council members present: Jeff Lucier, Les Silverman, Lisa Soeder

Council members on the phone: Chris Bloom

Staff present: Justin Cerne, Bethany Oliver

Welcome and Call to Order: Board President Susan Lucier called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Approval of Minutes of the June 24, 2019 board meeting: Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

President's Remarks

- Susan thanked everyone for their participation in the Strategic Planning retreat led by facilitator David Mallett on July 16 & 17. We had a great turnout with 79% board participation; and the first phase of the project—to review David's Organizational Analysis Report and discuss and codify our mission—got off to a great start. Susan is proud that we can report this to ReMain, which approved a \$30K grant to fund the process.
- In the next phase, we will form a Project Team and a few smaller groups to drive the process forward. The Project Team will meet with David once a month for the next four months to:
 - Create a grid based on David's Retreat Summary Report. (Per a request from Kay, copies of the Report will be sent to all Directors.)
 - Assign tasks and topics to smaller groups based on their expertise and willingness to serve. Directors may be called upon to join one of these groups.
 - Formulate a strategy statement and articulate 3 to 5 strategic goals, with detailed objectives and action plans.
 - Send project reports to the full board each month.
- Susan thanked Ellie Gottwald for designing the beautiful plaque honoring Edythe Travelstead, which now hangs in the Bennett Hall lobby to honor Edythe's memory; acknowledge her love & support for TWN; and recognize her generous bequest.
- Susan thanked members of the Grease Benefit committee and especially our co-chairs—Kay Bernon, Maria Roach & Terry Schubach—for a fantastic job. She also thanked Will Steele for his décor vision and Will and Christopher Drake for underwriting the amazing decorations. Anyone who attended the event saw how beautiful everything looked, how much fun it was all around, and how incredible the talent was—the Broadway stars, the *Grease* cast and the kids from both *Seussical* and the TIFTT workshop.

- Susan called on Jeff, who encouraged everyone to attend the Verdura jewelry trunk show, scheduled from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 7, hosted by Susan Doughan at her 134 Main Street home. Per a suggestion from Maria, Bethany will put together TWN information packets for the event. Maria also suggested giving Ms. Doughan a gift (perhaps show tickets) as an expression of our gratitude to her for opening her home.

Artistic Director's Report

- Justin said he feels "lucky to be here and to have this moment."
- Halfway through its run, *Grease* is not a smash hit like *Mama Mia*, but it's doing quite well. 2,900 people have seen it so far, and audiences are averaging 70% of Bennett Hall capacity. Our budget estimates were too aggressive, and we may end up with a revenue shortfall. Why? higher ticket prices, the high cost of securing rights (which will continue in the future), and "there's so much going on!" But overall, the show is a success.
- *Grease* marketing: We purchased ad space on the Hy-Line ferry that we can use for the rest of the year. We will not publicly discount tickets. Per a suggestion from Kay, we will change up our ads with different copy and graphics. Judy suggested working with hotel concierges to spread the word.
- *Seussical*, our first venture in Theatre for Young Audiences, is "feel good fun" and a huge success. Justin urged everyone to see it before it closes August 10.
- Our August 19 cabaret starring Liz Callaway needs to be a sellout. Only 64 tickets sold so far, and we need a big final push. One table on the stage is still available.
- For the 3rd year in a row, we are sponsoring Tugley Wood, a Theatre Camp for adults with special needs. August 17, usually a 2:00 p.m. curtain.
- *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, starring John Shea, runs August 21, 22 and 23 at the Whaling Museum. John does something new each year, so it's worth seeing even if you've seen it before. This is a revenue-share with the NHA.
- Rehearsals for *Terms of Endearment* start August 26, and the show opens on September 12. It will be theatre in the round like last season's *The Cocktail Hour*.

Managing Director's Report

- Bethany reported that our renewal lease agreement with the First Congregational Church has been signed, securing our occupancy of Bennett Hall for another five years, through 2024. It includes another 5-year option, through 2029. Rent goes down but we will begin paying for utilities. The Church has calculated rent so that our overall cost will increase by 4% per year.
- The Town removed our sandwich board from the entrance to the Church. Bethany said they are illegal. Lisa said the HDC had recommended that we use a sandwich board instead of a sign, and she offered to see if she could find this in writing. She also offered to go with Bethany to meet with the HDC.
- We will soon have new office space on the 3rd floor of 53 Main Street, across the street from our current office. This will reduce our office rental expense considerably. Judy suggested placing signage and an artifact (like a replica of the Statue of Liberty) at street level and installing a doorbell so ticket buyers won't have to climb the stairs.
- We will soon begin to work on the Fall Appeal. Chris encouraged directors to provide new names and be ready to personalize their letters.

Treasurer's Report

- Chris said a one-page revenue & expense report—budget vs. actuals, January through June—was distributed with the agenda prior to the meeting. It shows very good financial performance. Highlights include:
 - Box office receipts—\$57K vs. budget of \$28K
 - Producer appeal—\$337K vs. budget of \$280K
 - Grants—\$53K vs. budget of \$52K
 - Only disappointing line item was Business Sponsorships, but we have some ideas for improvement
 - Total fundraising almost \$100K over budget and total revenue \$645K vs. budget of \$535K
 - Expenses well below budget
 - Bottom line net income—\$186K vs. budget of \$17K
- Our cash position is strong, in part because our new credit card processor (authorize.net) sends us ticket sales revenue from credit card transactions when the sale is made instead of when the show opens.
- July is the largest income month in our budget, and we took in \$267K, beating the budget by \$46K. Benefit net income was \$160K vs. budget of \$115K. On July 31, we had \$550K in the bank, \$100K of which is restricted.
- Not included in the budget—revenue from *Seussical* and miscellaneous unsolicited donations. Judy suggested placing a line in future Playbills thanking people for these unsolicited contributions.

New Business

- Lisa made another request for directors and friends to join the TWN team at the Autism Speaks Walk on August 17.
- In response to an inquiry from Jane about our future involvement with *MusACKal*, Justin offered a few pros and cons, along with his opinion that the run is too long (June 18-September 2)
- Nina informed everyone about a new musical adaptation of *Moby Dick*, starring Dave Malloy, at the American Repertory Theatre in New York.
<https://www.broadway.com/buzz/196507/dave-malloy-to-portray-author-herman-melville-in-his-moby-dick-musical-at-art/>
- Jeff gave kudos to Justin for his work on the Producer Appeal and said we would soon make a plan to secure multi-year producer commitments for the future.
- Susan reminded everyone about the next Board meeting. It will be at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, September 9, in the downstairs room at the Police Station.

Adjournment: Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 10:07 a.m.

The Board then convened in Executive Session.