

# Approved 5/20/19

## White Heron Theater Company Board Meeting Minutes, February 28, 2019, 9:00 AM

Attending:

Board: Leighanne Champion, Chris Bierly, Anne Marie Bratton, Robin Hammer, Lauri Posner, Maureen Bousa, Carolyn Durand, Lynne Bolton, Harriette Fox, Bob Doran, Sheri Feigen, Ivy Scricco, Grant Sanders

Staff: Mary Seidel, Michael Kopko, Marion O'Grady

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 AM and the agenda was approved along with the minutes from the previous meeting.

### Chair report

The previous chair Ivy Scricco was it acknowledged for her service to the organization

Also mentioned that she had seen about Alice at the theater for a new audience and was impressed about what it says about the white heron brand. Thanks for giving to Laurie for her help with the audit and financials. And thanks words also offered to Robin for her work on governance

### Artistic Director's report

Past new works were discussed with the review of last seasons productions. The Nantucket Christmas Carol and About Alice was discussed.

The 2019 season was discussed. The hound of the Baskerville's the gala opening with the first play in June, during the film festival the new artistic director at Long Wharf is in touch with the theater. And our pipeline for new plays is expanding. We have become a known entity in the theater world.

The artistic director walks through each of the new productions for 2019. The Long Wharf reading, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Weir*, Fireflies, educational programs, comedy Mondays, perhaps a new production in the fall, and *A Nantucket Christmas Carol*.

It was announced that the 2019 shows will run sequentially and not in rep as before. This will free up a substantial amount of money in housing and it will be technically easier to do changeovers.

### The Executive Director's report

It was announced that some substantial changes to the staff it may have been made since the last board meeting. Namely, the hiring of a marketing director and development director. Marion was found with help from Lauri. This will help us do strategic planning for three years.

Paying for the building was discussed with a template for retiring the overall debt in the coming years. The office manager position was discussed. Barbara will split her time between marketing and office management.

A new bookkeeper position was discussed and whether it was a position that was funded in the current budget or not.

Also mentioned: The new auditing requirements around fundraising and creating a for-profit functional P&L.

Theater Communications Group (TCG) was discussed. Executive director to look into membership in that organization.

Also discussed: Jay Craven's Sarah Lawrence theater workshop project at the theater is underway with film students and crew living in the Yacht Club dorms next-door. 40 adults/students for three months living downtown which is a good story for the I&M and with community groups. This also represents \$10,000 in revenue to the theater. And makes us a year-round entity.

### **Budget report**

The budget was discussed including servicing the debt of the theater building.

Lauri Posner suggested that a SWOT analysis be done for the strategic plan which was met with positive responses. Also, Bob Doran discussed the goals and tactics that we will need and how we should include them in the strategic plan

Lynne, as artistic director, explained that we have a good plan to retire the debt and put us in the black. And the plan B option of Roger and Lynne owning the building and leasing it to the theater company was also mentioned.

The increase in the marketing budget was discussed and it was discussed that we need additional details regarding how we plan to increase box office revenues.

Half-price tickets for locals was mentioned but not voted on.

Lori provided a draft auditor's report for review.

### **Governance report**

Grant's position on the board was discussed and it was announced that he would resign in order to assume the responsibilities of marketing director.

Sally Horchow's resignation from the board was excepted with our thanks for her service. Marcus Fuller's resignation from the board was accepted with thanks for his service.

New board member ideas were discussed. Diversity and inclusion discussed as part of the future board makeup. Establishing an artistic committee was suggested but not voted upon.

### **Education report**

Staffing was discussed with some changes to who would be administering education projects for the theater. Applications for new students are out with good responses. A number of them are on the younger side. We may not be able to accept all of the students that are seeking admission.

The possibility of a playwriting or other adult workshops was discussed

Poetry in motion, which was produced recently, was well reviewed and well received.

NHA internships were discussed along with the idea of having a pre-college public speaking workshop at the theater. Storytelling/docent internships were discussed as well. These kinds of ideas it was agreed are less about income and more about community involvement and optics that benefit development.

New and innovative ways of filling seats were discussed including a hotline to Cisco Brewers and half-price tickets, day of.

There has been some good creative back-and-forth with other organizations. Theater for a new audience was one of the potential partners talked about.

There was a break for lunch, but due to time constraints, the presentations continued during lunch.

### **Marketing report**

Grant, acting as the new marketing director walked through the tactics and strategies for building the audience and transitioning them to become supporters and donors. The board thanked the new marketing director for a thorough presentation. This presentation is available separately online.

The strategic plan was presented to the board in rough outline form, with a copy available for them online.

### **Development report**

There was a discussion of the gala but that was tabled for later because the meeting was running late.

The development plan was discussed by the new development director several sources for revenue were talked about and a lively discussion was had.

The Heron Society membership was discussed with an update from development I knew support levels and a plan for distributing notices.

### **Wrap-up**

Toward the very end of the meeting Bob Doran mentioned the need for updates to the strategic plan including tactics and strategies to achieve goals, The WHTC brand, creating a community around White Heron, diversity in the plan and on the board, obtaining more competitive marketing data, and the need for other success metrics.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 PM.

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