

## **Camden Opera House Advisory Committee**

**Monday January 14, 2013**

### **Minutes of the Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by Kate Bates at 5:07 PM

New member Judy Godwin was welcomed.

In attendance were: George Mueller (MidCoast Business Advisors, Inc.) Don White, Camden Select Board Member and Committee liaison; OH Committee Members: Mary Ann Shanahan, Raymond Brunyanski, Howard Jones, Judy Godwin, Kate Bates Not Present: Susan Dorr

George Mueller was introduced and he led a discussion regarding what it would take to embark on a Capital Campaign/Fundraising initiative. Kerry expressed her concerns about the commitment needed from volunteers and additional resources required in order to be successful. She asked what the cost to raise money would be.

George discussed the need to form a fundraising committee that is dedicated, passionate and committed for the long haul - 4 years? He raised about 10 million for the Y project and is in process of helping Ragged Mtn Foundation raise 6.5 million. He said for the Y it took a full 9 months just to get key committee chairs on board. George also pointed out that timing is important – who else is on the tarmac about to take off and is now or when a good time to start? He stressed that Ragged Mtn had two dedicated, smart completely involved co-chairs and a committee that meets weekly that will have given a total of 4 – 5 years when project is completed. He said cost to raise money is about 10% of total amount raised. The Snow Bowl staff is not involved with the campaign other than to give it support – he and his staff work with a committee of volunteers. Ragged Mtn. Foundation provided the money to hire him. He suggested a minimum of 8 – 10 good people on working committee. It's important to have a good story and communicate it well. Test story first. Have list of projects and good reason why want to complete them. He suggested that 20 years from last campaign (1994) is a good time to enact one – to put us in good stead for the next 20 years. He felt that there are people in the community who would be supportive of an effort like this.

Committee discussed raising just funds to develop the third floor (\$350,000) versus a larger wish list amount. Majority of committee members present voiced their support for a larger campaign so you wouldn't have to return "to the well" in future years using George's 20 year out suggestion.

George Mueller pointed out that we should not approach a campaign with "Stop and Go" fundraising – more successful is a "big picture" approach. An extended vision is required to appeal to donors and volunteers. He said if volunteers don't commit in blood then they should not try to do it.

He said that fundraising in general is textbook but lacks creativity which needs to be customized for each individual campaign to be successful. He reviewed grants, foundations, Corporate Sponsorships and a Friends group. He likes to have 2/3 of total amount needed raised privately before embarking publically.

501c3 status is recommended to help ease way. It was noted that donations to the town are in fact tax exempt. Feasibility study suggested if raising 2 million or more; under \$2 million he does not recommend it.

Kerry said donor management software is needed – does he provide? (no) and that new ticketing software she is looking at could provide that as well as Constant Contact, a newsletter. George does not agree with phasing in the projects - he recommends raising total amount prior to doing any of the work.

Next Meeting date Monday January 28, 2013 at Noon – the committee has agreed to meet every two weeks for the next 4 – 5 months in order to move these ideas forward.

First on the agenda on Monday will be the budget review, then a regrouping on Capital discussion.

Maryanne S. suggested that the pronouns for our discussion be “we” instead of “you”. There was agreement and a discussion about the role of the current board members. Ownership of the issues and taking on and completing duties was discussed as a way to be more successful moving forward.

It was agreed that the OH Committee as it stands will develop the purview of this endeavor and create a separate fundraising committee, which members of the advisory committee could also be part of.

Kate Bates motioned to adjourn.

6:32 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Godwin