

Camden Opera House Committee

Minutes of the Meeting

April 7, 2014

Present: Judy Godwin, Maryanne Shanahan, Don White, Kerry Hadley, Susan Dorr, Marc Ratner, Kate Bates

Guests: Nora Eldredge, Suzanne Lufkin Weiss, Renee Hutchins

Meeting called to order at 5:00 by Maryanne Shanahan

Minutes: Minutes of the meeting of February 3 were accepted.

Introduction of guests: **Nora Eldredge** grew up attending the CSO, theater and music. She has a degree in arts management and has been working in PR and marketing with Bay Chamber. She is eager to participate in the COH and hopes to help bring more kid oriented programming. **Suzanne Lufkin Weiss** grew up in Camden and has returned after 30 years away. She has been working in arts administration and was a music and theater major. She ran the Chocolate Church in Bath in the 90's. Suzanne feels that Camden doesn't fully appreciate the value of the COH since the schools don't use the COH as their primary performance space any longer. She sees an opportunity for Camden "kids" who are returning to town to renew community involvement with the COH. We need to build capacity to people see the value of the facility. Are their possible community partnerships? **Renee Hutchins** is eager to work on the 120th anniversary events and displays. She has had several conversations with Barbara Dyer and is thinking of having a COH history display in one of the rooms at the Garden Club holiday show house. Renee also suggested a float in the Christmas by the Sea parade and a sign over the box office announcing the 120th Anniversary.

Manager's Report: Budget Committee process review: The COH budget was approved unanimously by the Budget Committee. There was some discussion at the budget committee regarding revenues that have come into the COH funds but that are not reflected in the budget, specifically the Annual Appeal. In our COH committee discussion it was suggested that Kerry include some explanation in her narrative to the budget committee about those funds and how they are held and distributed, what their intended use is. Kerry also detailed final budget distribution of funding Dave Morrison's position from 20% Town, 80% COH to 25% Town, 75% COH to take into consideration the additional time Dave is spending setting up meetings for the town in the Washington St. Conference Room and all other spaces – in particular, for Ec. Dev Dept.

Presentations by McLean Hospital: The first one was very well attended but the second one wasn't as well done and had a smaller audience. It was agreed that there needs to be more promotion to get the numbers up. McLean is planning to program the year in advance so all of the talks can be promoted. Also, with enough notice, accommodations can be offered to speakers from away. (Better for local businesses too.)

The Ellis Paul concert was excellent, well received, great audience response. There was free ice cream and coffee afterward. With 106 paid and 140 total, including comped tickets, the event broke even. There was some crackling in the speakers which Dave will be sorting out.

popTech! They have a new theme and a new moderator which will, hopefully, reinvigorate the conference. There are so many competing events that participation has dropped in the last few years. There is a great video promoting Camden on the popTech! site.

Will Neals is a new producer who is interested in working with the COH. He has booked the Mallet Brothers for August and plans on utilizing the third floor for a video feed from the stage and food/alcohol consumption.

Tech report: COH purchased a camera for \$100 which is connected by wi-fi with a monitor in the Green Room. It doesn't have very high resolution, but it is good for performers waiting to know the progress of the show. It also has a date and time stamp so Kerry can verify the amount of time renters have used the facilities and also what occurred.

New Business:

Discussion of sponsorship opportunities for programs. Kerry has developed a new brochure for renters outlining the details of show production. Awaits word from Bangor Savings Bank on sponsorship for next year.

Discussion of Specticast – we have the box and can choose opera, live theater. COH receives 1/2 of the ticket revenue and we need 70 people in order to break even. There are many interesting offerings. Is there an audience? Publicity is required to make it work.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 6:30

Respectfully submitted, Susan Dorr