

**Oregon Shakespeare Festival
Board of Directors Meeting
March 9, 2007 Minutes**

Present: Karen Allan, Ray Bacchetti, George Bell, Susan Cain, Sid DeBoer, Bill Findlay, Bobbie Dore Foster, Lew Frederick, Louise Gund, Lyn Hennion, Paul Hill, Peter Koehler, Jr., Celia Meese, Penny Percy, Jim Risser, Angelica Ruppe, Nancy Tait, Jerry Taylor, Roy Vinyard, Noell Webb, Elisabeth Zinser

Board Candidates: Rick Bleiweiss, Brenda Williams

Endowment Trustees: Joanne Howard, Marty Lemke, Chuck Butler, Bill Nichols, Robert Porter, Fred Rehmus, Mick Seidl, Dan Thorndike

Staff: Linda Fern, Joan Langley, Paul Nicholson, Peter Thomas, Mallory Pierce, Bill Rauch, Jerry Roos, Janet Shalda, Bruce Wand

Absent Board: Mary Arnstad, Bertie Bialek, Jack Creighton, Mort Friedkin, Rudd Johnson, Ginny Lang, Ann Otter, Jody Patton, Lee Pelton, Guy Saperstein

Absent Endowment Trustees: Beth Cotner

A. Call to Order: President Nancy Tait called the meeting to order and a quorum was noted. Tait asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes of the last meeting.

Motion by George Bell, second by Jerry Taylor to ratify the Minutes of the January 19, 2007 meeting. Carried unanimously

B. President's Report: Tait commented on the success of Opening Weekend; at the Artistic Director's Dinner, Helen Bing talked about relationship with OSF and how much it means to be a part of the organization. Richard Davis, President of US Bank, spoke as season sponsor and stated he has committed US Bank to support the Festival for many years to come. Tait noted that US Bank has supported the Festival for 27 years and thanked Sid DeBoer for his work in bringing the bank to a higher level of season sponsorship.

C. Tudor Guild Report: Carolyn Peake presented \$85,000 to the Festival as the first of two equal payments; Geri Anderson, Liaison, reported the shop has been remodeled to better accommodate customers. They have installed a new Microsoft sales program; Rajan Kumaran, Web Marketing Manager, will work closely with OSF to join their website for sales. The next General Membership Meeting will feature guest speaker, Deborah Dryden, Resident Costume Designer.

D. Endowment Trustees: Fred Rehmus, President of the Endowment Fund, reported the current Fund balance is \$32.6 million. Rehmus reported that they diversified the portfolio more this past year to spread the assets out; they have focused more in international investments which has helped the fund. Rehmus announced the Festival will receive \$1.35 million this season, which is \$60,000 more than budgeted. Two trustees are retiring, Marty Lemke and Joanne Howard; the two incoming trustees are Robert Porter, of Bellevue, Washington and Mick Seidl of Houston, TX. Rehmus thanked Lemke and Howard for their contributions to the Festival.

E. Strategic Issues:

1. Striving for Artistic Excellence (Goal 1): Bill Rauch, incoming Artistic Director shared his vision for the Festival and the 2008 season. Shakespeare will be the anchor and there will be Shakespeare plays in all three theaters; the season includes three American classics, one of which will be on the Elizabethan stage; one non-Western classic; one world premiere will be featured; there will be a diversity of playwrights, including African-American, Hispanic and Asian. Rauch

stated all plays selected for next season have a message, and those messages will be supported by the Education department with the post-show discussions and Prologues.

2. Developing our Audience Partnership (Goal 4): Mallory Pierce, Director of Marketing and Communications, reported on new initiatives, noting that an increase in mailings, postcards, brochures and e-blasts is generating strong responses. Flex Pass sales were very successful. She commented on local partnerships with the Ashland Food Co-Op, Ashland Community Hospital and a pilot accommodations package with Ashland Springs Hotel, Winchester Inn, Stratford Inn and Plaza Inn and Suites at Ashland Creek. There is an increase in the number of students learning about tickets prices through emails; beginning web specials with ½ off season tickets will help fill the houses. Student groups are our future audience; this season we introduced concierges that encourage students to stay after the matinees and join the discussion groups. New lobby screens have been placed in the Angus Bowmer Lobby to support sponsors and other shows. We initiated two new programs - Family Day, which sold over 220 tickets with 60 patrons staying for the post show discussions; and Under 40 Night - which 94 attended. "Community conversations" to promote next year's season will be held in Portland, Sacramento and Oakland.

3. Ensuring Fiscal Health and Strong Development Relationships (Goal 6 & 9): Angelica Ruppe, Chair of the Finance Committee, reviewed the audit process and results; the result was a clean audit with minimal adjustments. There were no significant issues or problems. The management letter provided recommendations as follows: 1) clarify policies on recording pledge receivables, 2) document IT disaster recovery plan, 3) introduce training and background checks for staff involved with credit cards. Ruppe congratulated Jerry Roos, Director of Finance and Administration, and his staff for the quality of their work. The financial result for 2006 was a net gain of \$406,000. The financial statements show Endowment investment income of \$4.8 million and combined net asset increase of \$3.9 million. Nicholson noted that the costume rental business would not break even this year as planned. A decision about its continuation will need to be considered soon. Peter Thomas, Director of Development, reported on fundraising activities and results. He noted that over Opening Weekend a panel discussion was held for major donors with Lue Douthit, Director of Literary and Dramaturg and seven actors; topics included the Opening, the transition, how change is a constant for actors; one donor complimented the Festival for its handling of the transition. Rauch will be calling major donors this summer. The theatre cruise for this November has sold out with 125 people registered.

4. Maintaining and Enhancing Education Programs (Goal 5): Ray Bacchetti, chair of the Education Committee, reported that two actor/teachers in the School Visit Program talked with the committee about their recent tour, stating that this was some of the most important work they do. They see students open up to the world of theatre; students came away from this experience with a broader range of words for expression. Teachers are given follow up curriculum. Joan Langley, Director of Education, reported they are currently refocusing their energy of the school groups that come to the Festival. Board members are invited to sit in on workshops or classes. Langley praised Bacchetti for his leadership as chair of this Committee.

5. Dealing with Space and Facilities Challenges (Goal 11):

- **Courtyard Reconstruction Project:** Greg Covey of Covey Pardee Landscape Architects, reported on the status of the project. He noted that areas of concern include access for deliveries trucks, pedestrians, eleven fixed access points, the need for improved handicap access. We are currently working with the City Planning Department on several of these issues. Major goals for the project are to improve accessibility by reducing the cross slope, increase seating, keep the feel of the Bricks, retain the lawn, improve technical abilities, enhance the outmoded design of the Courtyard and redesign the stage area. Proposed seating capacity is 250-275 with standing room for around 500. \$21,000 has been spent so far on design and survey; the next phase will cost \$60,000 for design and civil engineering. The current rough estimate of construction costs is \$590,000. Covey noted that there is a

time constraint of two months to complete this project. He expects to begin conversations with construction companies in June. No decision has been made yet regarding the type of surface that will be used. Nicholson reminded the board that this is a project that must be done whole; it does not lend itself to partial solutions. **Motion by Susan Cain and second by Bill Findlay to authorize \$60,000 to move forward with the construction documents phase. Passed unanimously.**

Nicholson stated he will work with the Executive Committee to determine whether we should put the project out to bid or work with one company to negotiate a contract with a guaranteed maximum price.

- Nicholson has been in discussions with a property owner regarding the purchase of land for a new scene shop. However, the current asking price is higher than Nicholson feels is acceptable; he is continuing negotiations.

F. Capital Campaign: Due to time restraints, this subject will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

G. Discussion with Bill Rauch on Artistic Plans: Rauch reviewed his plans for the new artistic staff: Chris Acebo, Associate Artistic Director; Alison Carey, Director of US History Cycle; and Claudia Alick, Associate Producer for Community. The position of Associate Producer for Company has not been filled at this time; the full team will be arriving during the summer and ready to go in the fall. Rauch stated he has listened to the Production staff and is supportive of their concerns; he will be using a wider range of guest directors and designers to give more perspective and voice. He had a good meeting with the acting company today. Rauch has plans to commission many more new plays and feels the proposed history cycle reflects the scope of Shakespeare's history plays. There will be more involvement with the community through the Green Show. The Board expressed support to Rauch and his vision.

H. Department of Human Resource: Due to time restraints, this subject will be presented at the next Board meeting.

I. Forum for Non-Agenda Items: Nothing to report.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:30pm.