

**OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 15, 2007**

PRESENT:

Board: Karen Allan, Mary Arnstad, Ray Bacchetti, George Bell, Bertie Bialek, Rick Bleiweiss, Susan Cain, Julie Dixon, Bill Findlay, Bobbie foster, Mort Friedkin, Louise Gund, Lyn Hennion, Rudd Johnson, Peter Koehler, Jr., Ginny Lang, Celia Meese, Jim Risser, Angelica Ruppe, Guy Saperstein, Nancy Tait, Jerry Taylor, Roy Vinyard, Brenda Williams, Elisabeth Zinser

Trustees: Beth Cotner, Chuck Butler, Bill Nichols, Robert Porter, Fred Rehmus, Mick Seidl, Dan Thorndike

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

Tudor Guild: Geri Anderson, Liaison

ABSENT:

Board: Yogen Dalal, Sid DeBoer, Paul Hill, Jody Patton, Penny Percy

- A. Call to Order:** President Jerry Taylor called the meeting to order and a quorum was noted. Taylor asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the last meeting.

Motion by George Bell, second by Lyn Hennion to ratify the Minutes of the March 9, 2007 meeting. Carried unanimously.

- B. President's Report:** Taylor reported this was a special meeting because both Libby Appel and Bill Rauch were in attendance to provide artistic reports. Taylor commented that becoming Board President, has opened up opportunities for him to see what goes on throughout the Festival. He appreciates the quality of the people that work at the theatre; the attention to detail is very impressive. Taylor has attended many lectures, tours etc. and has noticed how enthusiastic company members are about the product, from ushers to actors to production and administrative staff. This kind of attitude makes it a pleasure to support the Festival.
- C. Artistic Presentation: Lisa Loomer, Playwright and Liz Diamond, Director of *Distractions*:** This is the second production for this play; the first was at the Mark Taper Forum. Diamond stated OSF is one of the crown jewels of theatre and has really flourished under Appel's direction. She believes it will continue to do so under Rauch's leadership. Loomer shared that she writes what she knows and as a mother, the whole world comes into your house. The characters that come to this play show the prism that encompasses the family. The play contains current topics involving politics, drug companies, medications for children and attitudes on what defines success.

D. Strategic Issues:

1. Striving for Artistic Excellence (Goal 1): *Artistic Issues 2007*: Appel reported on the three Elizabethan Stage productions that open this weekend. She reported she is going through a series of "lasts". Appel reminded the Board that Shakespeare was totally untraditional and dressed his characters in modern dress. *Romeo and Juliet* has a combination of dress in this production and it works very well. *The Tempest* shows some fresh insight and is very exciting; it is set in Spanish renaissance, but the island is not. *Taming of the Shrew* is wonderful and fresh with new insights; Kate Buckley did a fabulous job directing this production. All three productions are very strong and Appel is very proud of this season. Artistically, the Festival is strong and she said she is "walking out with my plume held high".

Artistic Issues 2008: Rauch reported that this season is his season of firsts; it has been wonderful going through the transition with Appel. This was an exciting week for the artistic department with guest directors and designers for the 2008 season here to visit and see the productions. He has completed a 20 minute interview with all 91 actors where they discuss what roles they want to play

for next season. The actors were very positive about the leadership change and gave their “blessing” on what the future may hold. Offers will be made to the acting company on July 16th; they will have 10 days to respond. Rauch expects to significantly increase the number of Asian-Americans in the acting company to add to the Festival’s diversity. Claudia Alick, Associate Producer-Community, will be here this summer to teach at the Summer Seminar. She will begin full time in September and will be in charge of the Green Show. Allison Carey, Director of the U.S. History Cycle, will begin in September. She will focus on commissioning work that looks at our country’s history; looking to presidents as Shakespeare looked to the monarch to shape the stories.

2. Developing our Audience Partnership (Goal 4): Mallory Pierce, Director of Marketing and Communications reported that attendance is 87% YTD compared with 82% last year at this time; ticket sales for the season are up 7.6% over last year at this time; ticket revenue is up 10.2%; we need to be up 4.6% to make budget. The Flex Pass is selling very well; it has exceeded the goal from two years ago. Pierce reported that an on-site audience survey will be conducted over the summer to gain insights into what our patrons are experiencing.

3. Ensuring Fiscal Health (Goal 6): Angelica Ruppe, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported on the three areas the committee is working on: Risk Management - to make sure the Festival has appropriate coverage; Accounting Policy Manual - it is almost complete and gives a good presentation of proper procedures; Reserves Policy - a sub-committee has been formed to review this issue and finalize a Reserves policy. Jerry Roos, Director of Finance and Administration, provided an overview of the Festival’s finances as of April 2007. Projections for the year are: Total Earned Income of \$18,846,000; Total Operating Expenses of \$24,707,000; Earnings Gap of \$5,860,000; Contributed Income of \$5,865,000; Net Additions to Reserves of \$5,000. Artistic Director Transition is currently \$250,000 which will be mitigated as some of Appel’s senior artistic staff leave for new employment.

4. Fostering Strong Development Relationships (Goal 7): Peter Koehler, Jr., Chair of the Development Committee, reported that goals of the committee are as follows: 1) To support and give feedback to staff on their plans; 2) To open doors for staff by networking with Board members’ connections; 3) To personally give. The membership renewal campaign is underway and Rauch will take the baton on personal solicitations to the Artistic Director’s Circle. He has become a willing partner with Thomas and the Board on development issues. Koehler will be sending out a letter to board members asking them to gift the Bowmer Society which supports the Festival’s education programs. Thomas reported that the Oregon Shakespeare Festival Business Alliance broke all expectations and has grown significantly; special thanks are due to Rudd and Barbara Johnson, and Celia and Jed Meese. The production of *Welcome Home, Jenny Sutter* will be going to the Kennedy Center next year; Thomas hopes to create a special tour for Festival donors. Two new supporters are the Ford Foundation and the Kennedy Center Fund for new American Plays.

5. Maintaining and Enhancing Education Programs (Goal 5): Susan Cain, Chair of the Education Committee, reported that the Education department is working with Rauch to learn his thoughts on education and incorporate his vision into the programs. Joan Langley, Director of Education, reported that 67% of school groups are taking part in the educational events offered at the Festival. The number of spring education events reached 626 this year, up 62% over 2005. However, there is a space problem that means we have maxed out on the number of programs that can be offered. Langley noted that the education programs with student audiences have been paying off through much better behavior during performances.

6. Dealing with Space and Facilities Challenges (Goal 11): Paul Nicholson, Executive Director, reviewed the goals of the courtyard renovation project: 1) To improve the design aesthetic of the bricks, ensuring it is in harmony with other OSF public facilities; 2) To enhance the Green Show experience with better sightlines, improved seating and upgraded performance platform; 3) To improve accessibility to the Angus Bowmer and Elizabethan Theatres by reducing slopes and providing pavement with better traction. Greg Covey of Covey Pardee Landscape Architects presented new designs showing the raised seating and planting areas that separate the Green Show area from Pioneer Street. The City of Ashland is requiring that concrete be used on the sidewalks to meet the City’s standards. The signage board outside the box office will be replaced.

To create more excitement on the bricks, flags and banners will be added which relate to the plays in each theatre. The financing for this project will be accomplished through reserves, grants and selling of the old bricks, but this has not yet been finalized. We believe that it may now be possible to have kiosks around the campus that allow patrons to print their own tickets; staff will look at new models in August. The Box Office windows will now be located inside the lower level of Carpenter Hall, which will allow patrons to get out of the elements, reduce the traffic on the Bricks and enable a more gradual slope from the sidewalk to the entrance of the Angus Bowmer Theatre. Covey presented four brick samples. Fired bricks are best for color and durability as compared to concrete cast bricks, which crack under pressure and get tire marks. Bricks will allow for faster accessibility for the production staff and are the best deterrent for skateboarders. Staff presented a preliminary budget showing costs can be expected to be between \$590,000 and \$630,000. Because of continuing design challenges, production staffing changes and the need to have a clearer vision of the new Green Show, staff is recommending that this project be delayed until the fall of 2008. The cost would be approximately 7% higher, but there would be great benefits in waiting until the plans are refined and new production staff is in place.

Motion by Bill Findlay and second by Kevin Cartwright to approve a budget of \$693,000 (\$630,000 plus 10%) for the courtyard renovation project with the understanding that construction will start in the fall of 2008. Passed unanimously.

E. Department Focus – Human Resources: Janet Shalda, Director of Human Resources, provided an in-depth presentation on the department. Areas that Shalda oversees include Administration of HR Policies and Procedures, Benefits and Insurance Administration, Compensation, Employee Relations, Organizational Development, Performance Review Process, Recruitment, FAIR Experience Program, Safety and Wellness Programs, Community Diversity Alliance Work. Shalda noted that the HR program is high touch as well as businesslike; that special efforts are in place to work through transition issues; and that, in a recent survey, 81% of employees rated the Festival as excellent or good as a place to work. This presentation was followed by a question and answer period.

F. Capital Campaign: Because of time restraints this issue will be discussed at the September Board retreat.

G. Tudor Guild: Geri Anderson, Tudor Guild Liaison, reported on Tudor Guild activities, noting that Cosmo Central has been hired to design a new website where patrons can purchase items online. The goal is to offer more of the high-end merchandize which hopefully will generate new customers and sales.

H. Endowment Trustees: Fred Rehmus, President of the Endowment Fund, reported that the balance of the Fund is up 15.4% for the year to April 2007. All managers exceeded their benchmarks. Rehmus stated that the trustees believe the current asset allocations are sound, but continue to research options. The portfolio is diversified, slightly on the aggressive side, without taking undue risk.

I. Forum for Non-Agenda Items: Ray Bacchetti, Chair of the Board Governance Committee reported that eight Board members will reach the end of their terms in March 2008; six are eligible to renew for a second term. Board members were asked to provide names and information to consider for new board prospects. Rehmus also noted that the Endowment is also looking for potential trustees for next year.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Bacchetti
Secretary