

The Audrey Herman Spotlighters Theatre

Minutes of Board Meeting

March 20, 2010

Call to Order/Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 10:17 a.m. in the lobby of the theater. In attendance were: Susan Luchey, Michael Sullivan, Michael Tan, and Fuzz Roark.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the January 11, 2010 meeting were reviewed and approved (motion by Michael Sullivan, second by Fuzz Roark, and unanimously approved).

Financial Report

Fuzz Roark presented the financial report. The theater is operating in the black by \$3,800, but with \$12,000 less than the budgeted revenue. Some budgeted expenses have not been incurred due to lack of corresponding revenue. For example, the theatre received \$5000 rather than \$12000 from the NEA, as well as smaller grant amounts for the Summer Youth Academy and Booth Tech Renovations. Expenses have been less than budgeted, but the power bill was \$1700 in February (mainly due to the sub-freezing temperatures). According to the Balance Sheet, we have about \$13,000 (\$5,200 is Academy grant funding) in the bank.

John Springer, our PNC consultant, suggested the theatre get rid of the credit cards and obtain a revolving line of credit through PNC, which would cut the current interest rates by half or even two-thirds. Michael Sullivan moved and Susan Luchey seconded (unanimously approved) that Fuzz apply for a line of credit with PNC, if the interest rate is at least 5% less than the current credit card rates, and that Fuzz, as Executive Director, will be the primary signatory on the line of credit in order to open the line of credit.

Fuzz reminded the board that the May 10th board meeting is a budget meeting. Michael Sullivan and Fuzz will set up a time to meet before that meeting.

Production Report

This year, the theatre has booked 23 less performances than last year. This includes 3 lost Cinderella shows and 2 lost Gaslight shows due to snow. According to Fuzz, Partition is bringing in small houses and reviewers are having trouble understanding it, but the houses are picking up. Advance sales for BINGO are doing well.

Average numbers of seats for main stage shows are actually higher than last year (for shows that actually happened), but the average ticket price is down slightly from last year (\$.20/ticket).

Ticket Turtle now allows us to track repeat patrons. This season has had a large number of one-time patrons, compared to the last 2 years.

Marketing/Grants Report

We filed a grant with Constellation.

A UB student, Katrina Gardner, has applied for the marketing internship.

Michael Sullivan suggested we canvas the BINGO halls in the area to promote the upcoming show. We will also look at a Barnes and Noble promotional event.

Focus Group Meeting

The meeting is set for April 7 at 7:00 p.m., 5th floor of the UB student center. There are a 113 people who will be receiving invitations, each of whom is a new patron since 2007 who has seen at least 4 shows.

2010/11 Season Proposals

Fuzz Roark distributed the list of production proposals. The production committee is meeting later this afternoon. The suggestion was to look for another well-known comedy to balance the season. The board has asked to read Augie Praley Masturbates, which Fuzz will send to us.

Fuzz suggested that we consider changing our ticket pricing to \$20 and \$17, with a “membership” (that would cost the patron a fee or a certain donation level) that would drop tickets back down to \$17 and \$14 for the members. The board approved the higher ticket price.

New Program Proposal (Readers’ Theatre – Michael Spellman)

Michael Spellman is proposing a regularly scheduled, free event to be held at the theater. Once a month, there would be a staged reading of new plays, poetry readings, and a venue for actors to practice monologues. The event leadership will provide the staffing for the event and its promotion, which means that Fuzz and the regular volunteers will not have to do anything with the new event. The theatre’s cost would be utilities and wear and tear on the space.

2010 Summer Youth Academy

Jay Gilman is a part time director, paid for by grant funding. Marianne Angelella will run the middle school program, which will have space in an upstairs apartment.

There will be a theater day at UB in May, which Fuzz and Susan are coordinating.

Facilities Report

The Coke machine needs to be fixed. The options are to fix the machine or replace it with a 15 cu.ft. refrigerator. The machine probably needs a new compressor, which would be costly to repalce. The board suggests getting rid of the machine and replacing it with a refrigerator.

Fuzz met with Albert Aaron, who is pleasantly predisposed towards the theater right now. He is pleased with the renovations and with the upcoming major renovation plans has said that he would give us a “letter” of rental for a longer term, 5-10 years.

2012 Renovation Update

We have a project manager, Kim McCalla, willing to work on the major upcoming renovation. By law, we need 4 wheelchair spaces for the theater. One wheelchair means losing 2 seats; four would mean losing 6 seats. The bathrooms will need to be expanded, which would mean losing 3 feet of lobby space by moving the current wall. She has submitted a proposal for her cost as project manager (\$27,000). She estimates at least \$100K for the cost of the elevator and renovations. Michael Sullivan suggested also changing the heating/cooling units to something more efficient as part of the renovation.

Fuzz will talk to Kim about building in contingencies of funding into her contract, so that we will limit our liability as much as possible.

Educational Programming

Fuzz wants to hire someone to do educational programming for the theater; someone to schedule and recruit/coordinator teachers for adult workshops. He has Marianne Angelella in mind. There is a possibility of approaching the Wright Foundation for funding next year. Susan suggested offering her a commission rate per event with a base amount to get started.

Clean Up Day (Friday, April 16 – UB Students and Staff)

Will go from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 12:21 p.m. (motion by Susan Luchey, seconded by Fuzz Roark, unanimously approved).

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Tan, Secretary