

## **The Audrey Herman Spotlighters Theatre**

### Board of Directors Meeting

January 9, 2017 – 6:30 p.m.

Theatre Lobby

**Present:** Fuzz Roark, Alan Zemla, Michael Tan, Robert Heacock, Carol DeLisle, Lydia James-Harris, Phillip Burgess, Nick Fuhr, Kathy Mosmiller, Stephanie Ruzala, and Jack and Lucy Henningfield (quorum present).

### **Order of Business**

The meeting convened at 6:30 p.m.

#### **Minutes and other business**

November 2016: Michael sent out the minutes from the board meeting on November 14, 2016. Alan moved and Rob seconded to approve the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously.

December 2016: Michael sent out the minutes from the board meeting on December 12, 2016. Alan moved and Phillip seconded to approve the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Kristen Cooley tendered her resignation due to family and work conflicts. Alan moved to accept her resignation, Rob seconded, and it was approved unanimously. The board thanks Kristen for her service on the board.

**Education Report:** Lydia submitted her Education Report (see handouts for details). The fall After-school Program ended on Thursday, December 8, 2016.

In school programs:

- North Bend Elementary School: Actors Tool Box class in Spring for 20 weeks.
- Roland Park Country School: New relationship; Musical Theatre class for 8 weeks for Grades K-5.
- City Neighbors High School: Actors Tool Box class for Grades 9-12.
- Mount Royal Elementary School: In discussion for Spring semester class.

## **Financial Reports:**

Show Report: Fuzz distributed the Show Report. [see handout]

- Averaging ticket price of \$15.50
- Averaging 40.5 seats per show
- Carol asked about the radio announcement and it appears that 25-30 tickets were sold due to the last radio promotion.
- The Game's Afoot is the box office winner so far with ticket sales of \$12,729.67 and an average ticket price of \$16.75.

Profit and Loss Statement:

Fuzz distributed the Profit and Loss Statement. [See handouts.] Ticket sales are down from the same time last year. Part of that was starting the season with a lesser-known show, but that still fulfills an important part of our mission. Subscription sales are down from the same time last year.

The P&L showed a loss of \$4,399.87 for the year. Most of that is from Academy expenses exceeding income. There is about \$7,000 in bank, mostly due to the income from The Game's Afoot, which exceeded expectations.

Sunday, January 28, 2017, is the Brother, Help Thyself grantee reception. Nick Fuhr has offered to go the DC Eagle to represent Spotlighters.

Fuzz is working on grant applications to fund a development position.

Expenses: Insurance went up by 11%. The theatre is running below budget for many production expenses.

Upcoming shows like The Women and The Wiz are already generating social media buzz. Morgan State's mainstage show this year is The Wiz, which will unfortunately overlap runs with Spotlighters production.

## **Planning 17/18 Season**

There is consideration given to cutting Vinegar Tom from the season and moving it to the next season. This would result in about 5 weeks of dark time, without show income, but also allows for theatre maintenance, clean up and preparation for the new

season. No decision has been made yet.

There is also some consideration of continuing the holiday show until the first weekend in January. Fuzz noted that the only theatre last weekend was the Hippodrome show. All other theatres in Baltimore were dark. Robbie noted that Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve falls on Sunday.

## **Interns**

Janae is in discussions with Morgan over her Spring schedule, so Fuzz is not sure what her status will be going forward.

Fuzz mentioned that they have been working on creating Spotlighters' happy hours at local bars and restaurants. There may be some dates in February and March that will require board members and volunteers to participate. Examples: Poets, Spirits, Mt. Vernon Stable and Saloon, and the new Baltimore Eagle.

## **Grants**

Fuzz has sent out 4 letters of inquiry regarding the funding of a development position. He is asking each foundation for full funding of the position for the first year, half funding for the second year and the position to support itself in the third year.

## **Relocation**

### **Howard & Lexington Property/Read's Drug**

Fuzz reported that Jim French has not gotten any support for more than 6 (possibly 9) months for the Exclusive Negotiating Privilege and Right of Entry Agreement ("ENP"). Fuzz laid out a timeline with a nine month ENP, that converts to an LDA, but with a delay for development purposes. Bottom line would be occupancy around 2023. Jim French is not sure what the BDC would do, if the theatre delayed the process for an additional 3 years. We would incur the maintenance, snow removal, etc. fees during the additional time. The only other cost until moving forward with construction is the cost of the theatre's attorney(s) to review the agreements.

The feasibility study outlined issues concerning a lack of capacity to do the

development work, especially without a full-time development person. The other issue being a lack of perception among funders that we are more than a small community theatre.

Fuzz noted that Carole Levine is looking for other properties for us. He has sent the board information on some prospective properties, both in the city and in the suburbs. Kathy asked about the theatre's patronage and whether they would go outside or near the city limits, as opposed to downtown. Fuzz said that the last survey done (a few years ago) had patrons that wanted the theatre to stay in the city. Fuzz said that most people will go outside the city if the facility is accessible, feel safe, and has parking. Fuzz said that he can pull a zip code reference to see where patrons are coming from. There was a general discussion of pros and cons of some of the properties Fuzz sent out. Fuzz ran a zip code analysis.

A discussion ensued concerning the pros and cons of signing the ENP or releasing the building. Bottom line, the theatre has invested about \$6-7,000 in moving forward with the Howard Street property. The question is whether it is worthwhile to pay \$2,200 to secure the ENP. Fuzz summarized the discussion that the board is leaning towards releasing the right to the Howard Street property or at least holding off on signing the ENP, if possible. Fuzz suggests doing a focus group to get feedback from patrons and interested parties. Then he would release an announcement to patrons and interested parties about the status of a location search.

Alan made a motion to not sign the ENP and decline to move forward with 123 N. Howard Street Property. Carol seconded, and the motion was approved by a majority vote of 12, and 1 abstention. Fuzz will notify the BDC and other parties that the theatre is withdrawing from the bid/ENP process.

Rob made a motion to approve the creation of a full-time development position, with a salary of approximately \$45,000 per year, to be funded by grantors for the at least the first two years. Stephy seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Alan moved to adjourn the meeting, Stephy seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

**Working Session in February:** There will be a working session on Monday, February 13, 2017.

**The next board meeting is set for Monday, March 13, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Tan, Secretary