

Board of Directors Meeting
August 18, 2011
Minutes

Present at the meeting were Maye Hart, John Charron, Jon Martin, Doris George, Kate Mara, Carole Neveax, Geri Veroneau. Absent was Dee Dee Pitcher. Guests were Jen Kearns and Mal Cameron.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm. The Board reviewed the agenda for any additions to the agenda. The Secretary's Report was the next item discussed. Jon Martin said he had trouble printing a copy out and that he had asked Maye to send it some other way so he could print it out. Maye asked Jon if he could read it on his computer, Jon said he didn't care to do that, Geri said that she would give Maye another email address to send the minutes to so that she could get them. Doris made a motion to accept the Secretary's Report, Jon Martin seconded and the motion passed.

Doris then presented the Treasurer's Report. A brief discussion ensued regarding the items in the report. Doris also had an accounting of money being repaid to the Players from Jeff Gregoire. Carole gave Doris the money from The Odd Couple and from the 50/50 raffles at that show. Carole asked how much money we needed for the sprinkler system and Maye said around \$20,000 and that the bulk of the expense is for the pipe from the water system to the theater. Maye then made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, Jon Martin seconded, and the motion passed.

Because Dee Dee was not at the meeting, the subject of the Christmas Show was tabled until the next meeting. Carole gave a recap of The Odd Couple. Maye said the show was fabulous. Carole said that the publicity should have been better. John talked about his attempt at using Facebook for LaMancha auditions. Maye said that she would work with Jim to try to get a Players' Facebook page for future events. Carole said that Friday night was their best house for reservations and for the show. She said that Mike Hobson and Nella helped with publicity but that the person who does publicity for Northwood was sick and so the publicity was a bit thin. But she thought that for what they had gotten out to the public, it was a good house.

Maye reported on Encore. She said that they did not have a show this Tuesday, but that there were reservations for next week that were fairly good. She said that she was still working with Plausawa Valley Country Club about a show on September 16, due to the fact that the manager of the restaurant and the general manager had both left. Maye said that she had offered to cook the dinner and have the show and let Plausawa have the proceeds from the bar and the Players

keep the rest. The turnout last year was 50 or so people, so the Players made \$500 that night. She also said that the folks who left Plausawa are opening a restaurant in Henniker, and that she has talked to them about doing the show there, either this year, or next, either variety or drama and that they were interested. She also said that the date of September 16 could be in Henniker rather than at Plausawa, but she wouldn't know until negotiations were final. Maye also said that she didn't think that Steele Hill was going to be an option for the Players anymore and she said that after twenty years, that's enough of that anyway. Maye said that putting together a show is not much work because we have talented singers and performers who have done many of the songs before so they can pick it up really fast. John asked where Maye saw Encore going in the future and Maye said that she really didn't know. She said she thought dinner theater as we've done it before might not be a viable option in the future because many people don't have the money. We used to think that the resort areas were the place to market the show but that's changed and the lower the economy goes the harder it will be for groups like Encore to exist. Maye said that she would look at a "Straw Hat Review" that we would run at the theater for a couple of weekend in the summer. She said that we have to replace Encore with something to make up the money that would lose by not doing it. John said that proceed from the show had dwindled and Doris said that this year we're not even breaking even with the show mainly because of what we're paying the accompanist. Maye said that we were paying that accompanist way too much money in her opinion. John said that we need to scrutinize Encore and figure out what we need to do to come to a decision about Encore. Maye said that a decision probably didn't need to be made until the beginning of the year. John said that if it's not making any money, then we shouldn't be doing it. Maye agreed and said that after twenty years, it might be time to put Encore to bed and look instead at a Straw Hat Review. John said that by February we need to make a decision about whether to cut Encore or what to keep. Carole said that the Majestic used to do a dessert theater at a lower cost. John said it's not just the cost. Maye said that it needs different direction and that one of the reasons that she stopped directing Encore was that she had too many friends in the cast which made it difficult for her to get them to do what she wanted them to do when she needed them to do it and that she saw that problem again with this years' cast. Jon Martin brought up publicity and Maye said that she had given Larry Mossbrucker everything he needed and he just didn't go with a lot of publicity. Maye said it was time for us to look for another venue, possibly another format and different direction to make whatever we do a success. Maye said if we could get a monthly gig in Henniker, we could throw together something impromptu each month, as simple as that. Carole said we could change up the show each month from a variety to a drama. John said we would keep Encore on the agenda. It was decided that Maye would form a committee to look at Encore alternatives and that Carole and Jen would help with that.

We then went on to Man of LaMancha. John reported that they had 5 people on the Wednesday audition, Sunday they had 7 people, but that on Monday the majority of folks came out, enough to more than cast the show. They were meeting after the Board meeting to select the cast. John said that there was no question that Man of LaMancha was very man heavy as far as the cast was concerned, and that some of the men were in Encore and were tired by the time it came to LaMancha, and many other groups have their shows at the same time, so that reduces the pool of actors. So John thought we should maybe move the musical into the late spring. He said we were lucky to get the folks we did, some of them new to the Players, but that it took a lot of knocking on doors to bring those folks out and he said it shouldn't have to be this difficult. Maye said that she thought it was difficult for everybody to cast shows. John said that all the shows are musicals in the fall and he said there at least seven folks that said they would have loved to have done our show but that they had committed to other groups for their musicals. Carole said that she didn't agree 100 percent and said that she had to work to get the men that she had. She said that men don't audition for shows, they wait to be called. She said she didn't think it was the time of year as much as it was the pool of men that we have to draw from. Maye then talked about the problem with 1776, a very man heavy show, and that TJ Rand worked very hard for months to gather the men that he needed for that show, and when you have a man heavy show you have to do that. She said that if you select a show that needs men you have to be prepared to bust your buns to recruit the folks you need. John said maybe we should audition in June or July for the fall show, but how do you know those folks will show up when it comes time to do the show. Maye said that there's no such thing as a contract in Community Theater. John also suggested that we take a look at our ticket price, with an advance price and a different price at the door. Maye said that then the \$2 membership price could be negated. Carole asked whether changing the time slot would affect NTW's slot, and Maye said that it could also affect people who would direct, like her, who is gone in the early spring. John said he was just throwing out ideas. Maye asked to be included in the production meeting as the publicity chair.

Maye reported that the Kid's Theater Workshop would be doing State Fair. She reported that she and Jim Hart are starting to look at stage design to try to uncomplicate it from the design they had before so it's more manageable for the kids', and they're looking around at props to see what is still around for use. She has not set a date for auditions.

Mal Cameron came to talk about directing Proof in the spring. He had already proposed it last year but he couldn't get the rights to it so now he's back. He chose Proof because he had seen it, it's won a Tony Award, and he likes working with a small cast with one set. There is the question of language as there's a bit of swearing in it, but it's an adult show. He passed out copies of the synopsis, and described the plot. He said that he would need at least two months for rehearsals, with maybe casting a month before that. Mal has already discussed the stage design with Scott Aubertin. He said that publicity would be key. Kate said that the concern would be for the gate, because first the cast is small, so they're not bringing in a lot of folks. She said she was concerned about filling the seats because comedy fills seats but drama not so much. She said if we agree to this, we need to know how we're going to make it fly. John asked what play will attract playgoers. He said that in some areas, like Manchester, a show like Proof would sell, but with the demographics around Pittsfield, would that sell. Mal asked if John meant that Pittsfield doesn't go for quality. John said it has nothing to do with the quality; it's the marketability of the play. Jon said the problem is marketability of a drama, and then he asked whether the Players were going to eliminate drama from their repertoire, and he said he didn't think that we should. Kate said that it's not whether we're going to eliminate drama but whether we're going to eliminate drama until we kind of get up on our feet again financially. Jon said we're probably never going to be financially secure as a non-profit, and then Kate said maybe we'd need corporate sponsorship for a drama or marketing to specific targeted groups such as senior centers. Mal said that this play was really more for a contemporary group rather than seniors. Kate then said that it would need to be a collaboration of cast, director and publicity because we don't have a publicity committee of thirteen people to do the job. Maye said that we have to look at where we're going to market a show like Proof, and that you can't just market it in the Suncook Valley Sun, because you won't get the people you want to come to the show, but if you advertise in Foster's daily Democrat on the seacoast near the colleges and in Manchester and in the Hippo Press and the like, then that's a totally different approach. Mal said that it used to be that the Concord Monitor would come out and do a spread for the entertainment section and that hasn't been done for a long time. Maye said that the reason that hasn't happened is that there are more and more groups in the area that are competing for space in that paper and the best thing to do for that is to buy an ad or two in the paper to get their attention. Maye said that the Players are straying away from putting drama in our production rotation, and that we need to take this show and go after a different group of audience through radio and let's see if we can't make an effort because she doesn't think that the effort was there for Doubt. As the Publicity Chairman Maye said she will make the effort to try to sell this as much as possible and let's see if we can't do better than Doubt. John said that

the Board would take the play Proof into consideration and that we'll make a decision at the next meeting. Mal also asked that we give him a time frame if we decide to let him do the play.

Maye reported that the membership cards would go out in the newsletters in September. John will be adding members through LaMancha. The email list is up-to-date, although Maye is having problems with metrocast. Kate asked if we could include a thank you for the folks who worked on the float and at the balloon rally in the September issue.

This is where my tape ran out of room so the rest is as I remember it by item on the agenda.

Maye talked about the pie sale fundraiser. She has not talked to Lori at Dominic's yet, but she has Jean Gentile and Nella working with her on the project. Other committee members will be contacted this month. Kate said that Kevin would make his famous apple pies, and Doris said that Mike would make some too. Carole and Maye talked about the dinner theater fundraiser, slated for sometime in January. They will get together to talk about scripts and logistics. Kate mentioned that she had investigated a wine tasting but that the cost of the temporary liquor license was going to be too expensive. She then talked about having a band night, where a number of bands come into play during an evening. Each band has to sell 20 tickets and they get a percent of the gate. If we had five bands and ran it until midnight we might be able to make some money. Jen said that she was thinking more toward an acoustic café – no amps of electric guitars just music and some singing. Maye said that at the last meeting it had been decided that Jen would bring the acoustic idea to PYW for collaboration on the event and Jen said she would bring it to their first meeting. No decision was made on that fundraiser. Kate also talked about having Andrew Pinard perform his magic show as a fundraiser. It was agreed that Kate would contact Andy for more information.

Jon Martin reported that he would be contacting the fire chief this week. Kate asked whether John Maddox was going to take care of fixing the heaters and preparing them for winter. Jon reported that he was having trouble reaching John Maddox, but that the door project and the front façade project was supposed to begin right after Labor Day. John Charron said that we needed to get back to the Production Manual project. The Fiddler contest has already been scheduled for May 2012. Maye will contact Diane Reuffert of Encore Dance regarding her spring recital. We talked briefly about the website.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maye Hart, Secretary