

Board of Directors Meeting
February 16, 2012
Minutes

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

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm. John asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Kate asked that we add St. John's school to the agenda as she had been in conversations with them about leasing the theater.

The Secretary's report had been emailed to everyone prior to the meeting. Maye said that Dee Dee's email had bounced back to her with an incorrect address. Maye asked Dee Dee to send her an email with the correct email address. Geri made a motion to accept the Secretary's Report and the motion passed.

The Treasurer's Report was tabled until the March meeting as Doris was ill and was not there to present one.

John then talked about the Christmas Show and said that the money has been set aside and that Kate and Dee Dee were supposed to come up with a plan for the show. Maye said that we had not yet heard back from the Sanderson Fund as to whether we had the money for the show. It was agreed that Kate and Dee Dee would get together and report back with a plan at the April meeting. Kate asked if the folks from Northwood wanted to be part of the show pending our official merger and Geri said she saw no reason why they wouldn't participate. Kate thought that the intent was to bring in some outside personnel for a variety show, and Maye suggested again that they use the music we already had for a variety type show. They will report back in April with a plan.

Maye reported that G2K State Fair was in hell week and that things were progressing well with the show. She said that she had finished up the painting that afternoon and that they would be hanging legs and that Jim would be doing lights that night. She reported that she had Pittsfield Elementary kids coming in for the Wednesday matinee and Barnstead Elementary for the Wednesday show, along with home schoolers. She said that ticket sales were slow, but the publicity in the Suncook Valley Sun was good so she hoped that sales would pick up. Maye asked if the Board could help with box office and Kate said that she could help on Thursday night and that we had Dee Dee there each night anyway. Geri offered to do box office on Friday.

Maye reported that she was handling TicketLeap and that it was going well, but that we were being forced to move to the higher platform, where customers could not pick their seats. Maye said that she would talk to Jay Sydow about another format. Maye said that no further events could be posted on the old format. Kate

asked why they didn't have the seat selection feature anymore and Maye said that that feature would be phased in, but wasn't available right now. She said that the person from TicketLeap said that seat selection would be available later, but not now, and that they would assign seats on best available. Maye said that right now it was easy to do. Kate asked if we had a contract with TicketLeap and John said that we didn't, and Maye said that she was still looking at other options besides TicketLeap for a program that did have seat selection. John asked if we could sneak Proof onto the old format before State Fair is done and Maye said she would try to do that. There was a discussion of what the handling fee was and Maye said it was \$1.87 per ticket. John said that the problem was that even folks who called in to reserve seats wanted to select their seat, so this was a feature the Players need to keep regardless of who our ticket vendor is.

Maye then moved on to Proof. She said that Mal Cameron had sent out a budget for Proof and that John and Doris had been copied on the email. Maye had made copies for the Board, but forgot them at home. She said that basically he had budgeted \$500 for each item – royalties, set, advertising, etc. Kate then asked why we had to have a Board member do the box office. John said that it was probably due to the trust factor, as we've had situations where the sales didn't match the cash and we wanted to keep it in the family so to speak. Maye then said that Mal needed to know from the Board how much to charge for tickets. It was agreed that, because it was a straight play, tickets should be \$12 per person. Maye then said that she had a meeting with Meggin Dail and Nella Hobson, who are taking over publicity for Proof, partly because they are both interested in doing it and partly because Maye was going to be doing the publicity from the Caribbean. She said that they had discussed where the publicity should be directed. She then said that she had run into two people at Home depot who were unaware of the Players or even that there was a theater group in Pittsfield, One of those folks was from Loudon, and so Meggin and Nella will be trying to focus on Loudon. The other person recommended using the radio station at St. Paul's school in Concord and Maye had passed that on to Meggin and Nella as well. John suggested using the Loudon Ledger, but Maye said that you had to have selectmen's approval to put something in the Ledger. John said that everyone in town got the Ledger, and Maye said that Meggin was looking into it. Kate said that she had volunteered to work on publicity too, and she asked about using the Hippo Press for Proof. Kate said that she thought there were a lot of Concord people didn't know that the Players existed either and she wondered if we shouldn't go back to road signage. John said that Maye had done that with the Chamber of Commerce sign for Man of LaMancha. Maye said she would make sure that we did the same for Proof. Kate made the suggestion that we reach out to colleges for Proof and Maye said that Meggin was going to use Keith Belanger who works at UNH as a conduit for that aspect of publicity.

We then moved on to You're a Good Man Charlie Brown. Geri reported that she had not yet filled out the forms to request a license and that she and Maye would be working together to fill out the form. Maye said that we have 150 seats and we

always say that we have $\frac{3}{4}$ houses. Kate asked for the dates and Geri said it would be in June, no definite dates yet. Geri said that they have both an updated version of the show and the original one, so that she would ask for both scores for perusal and see if the old one would cost less to do than the new version.

Carole wasn't there to talk about the summer show, but John said she was up in the air about what to do. Geri said that Carole was thinking about a musical review but that John talked to her and said that he thought she should do a comedy. John said he thought maybe there would be too much music in both the shows, but Geri said she thought that music was good in the summer. It was agreed that it was up to Carole what she wanted to do.

We then moved to the fall musical and Maye reported that she still had not heard from Samuel French as to whether we had the rights to do the show, or to advertise that we are going to do it. Maye said she would contact them again prior to leaving for vacation. Kate asked if we shouldn't consider something else and Maye said that she's thinking of other shows, particularly Gigi, which the WinniPlayers recently did, but she said her heart was still with Grease.

Kate asked that when we had final dates for the June and August shows she'd like to go back to schedule the band night fundraiser.

Maye reported that she would be putting out another newsletter before G2K State Fair and that issue would be for February and March. She said that she got three more people who wanted to do an enewsletter, which brings the total up to twenty members, out of 120 total members. So she still has to do the regular mailing. She said that she was going to put it in the newsletter that, until more members sign up for an emailing, she's just going to stay with snail mail. Kate asked how much the newsletter cost to be printed and Maye said she thought it was \$58 and then counting in the postage for 140, at 46 cents each. Dee Dee asked if we needed to do one every month and Maye said that she skips March and August, and she said she felt that it's important as a communication and advertising vehicle. Dee Dee suggested that we do it quarterly, but Maye said that when we have a show going on it's important to have that vehicle to advertise. Maye said that the membership remains high at this point.

Dee Dee then brought up the issue of Flex Tickets and issues with abuse of the original idea. Maye said that the original idea of the Flex Ticket was that you got a punch for the Fall musical, one for the drama, one for the comedy, etc., so it was five shows for the price of four. John then said that the Board changed that so that the ticket could be used for one show. Maye said that if you couple the discount on the flex ticket with the membership discount, we're losing money. John said that if they have a flex ticket, they shouldn't be getting a membership discount. Kate said that maybe we needed to limit the number of punches on the Flex ticket to two per show. Dee Dee asked when this policy needed to be changed and it was agreed that we'd do it at our annual meeting. Maye said that

she has been telling her parents, who are opting for the afternoon \$3 shows, that if they don't pay the adult ticket price, the program may not survive. John said that folks get around paying for tickets all the time, like during Man of LaMancha and other shows, where you have six ushers who are all seeing the show for free. Maye said that she had a question from one of her kids' Moms about the membership discount being applied to her in-laws and Maye told her that it was for immediate family only. Kate asked whether we should even give a discount on the kid's show. Maye said that she's even asked for a donation for \$10 for grandparents for the matinee show. John said that the afternoon shows should be marketed at \$3 for the kids and students and others pay the evening price. Maye said that for now, the membership discount would only be for immediate family for the kids' show. Dee Dee asked about the parents who come to the show to drop their kids off and then stay to watch the show without paying. Maye said that some of the parents are working at the show, and Kate said that the volunteers need to be able to watch the show if they're working there. Maye said that if she does box office for a show and she plans on staying for the show, she buys a ticket. John said that the ushers don't do that, though. Kate said that we need to communicate going forward with the House Manager that we need two ushers only per show for free, and any beyond that number has to buy a ticket.

Maye reported that she and Carole have yet to set a date for the dinner theater fundraiser, but that they had decided to do Suitehearts, the show that Carole is currently directing. She said the cast had agreed to one more performance and Maye said that she was looking toward the last weekend in April for the event, around the 28th. She said that the date would be more definite at the next meeting. Maye also said that she had recruited a few volunteers to help with the dinner. She also said that she would be running a 50/50 raffle for her evening shows of G2K State Fair.

Kate said that she has been having a dialogue with St. John's school in Concord. They have been renting the Concord City Auditorium for their school productions and it's been getting expensive for them. Kate asked them if they would think about leasing the Scenic Theatre instead. She said that they would be looking at doing their show in mid to late April and they would need the theater for a week. She said that the director knows lights and that we wouldn't have to do lights for him, just hand him the keys, very much like we did with Northwood Theater Workshop, and he'd pay us \$900 for the week. Maye asked who would clean the theater, and Kate said that we could put that in his contract. Kate said his name was Fred Gagne, and that Kate had lent him costume items before and he returns them neatly boxed up and put together, and she said that she didn't think it would be a problem to ask him to clean the theater if we made it part of the agreement. Maye said she was curious as to why he would want to go from the Audi, which has 800 seats, to a theater with 150 seats, and Kate said that he felt that was about what he needed. Kate said that we were not talking about this year, but 2013, which gives us some planning time to book and to get a rental agreement together. Kate said that the kids were pretty young, so she didn't think

they'd be doing late night rehearsals. The Board agreed that Kate would continue her dialogue with the school about renting the theater going forward.

Geri then asked if we had any new information about the Balloon Rally concession and Maye said that she and Laura Okrent were playing phone tag partially because Maye has been busy, but negotiations had not yet begun.

John said he had included painting the front of the theater, and Dee Dee said that would be a spring project. Maye mentioned that the emergency lights were not working and that Doris had called John Maddox to get them fixed before the kids' show. She said she would test them again to see if they've been fixed or not, but she said she'd keep on it because we couldn't do a show without the emergency lights working.

John said that we had a date for the Fiddler's contest and Maye said she wasn't sure when it was, but that it was in May, the first or second weekend. Maye reported that Diane Reuffert had not returned her call, so she assumed that she was not interested in coming back to the theater. Kate suggested that we reach out to other dance troupes regarding recitals for the Scenic. Dee Dee asked if we had set a date for our Annual Meeting and John said we could do that next month. Maye then talked about programs and the expense of including the ads as part of the program. She said she had made the decision not to include the ads this time because of the expense. She also said that she had talked to Mal about it too. She said that she had gotten an estimate from Granite Image on how much it would cost for a four page program, without ads, versus a program with the ads. The four page program was \$70 and the one with the ads was \$250 for three shows. So she had warned Mal about that expense. Maye said that bookkeeping wise, the program should probably be charged as a general Players' expense, rather than a show expense, because we make the money on the advertising and in turn we print a program booklet. She said that we promise our advertisers that their ad will appear in every one of our program books and that's not happening because it's too expensive. Dee Dee asked why we didn't just print the ads in a booklet and then do the program as an insert, and Maye said that her recommendation for next year is to go back to that format so that the money from advertising goes right into the ad book and then each show could do their own program, at home, if they wanted to. John said that we should then go back to recycling programs, which we can't do now in the current format. Maye said that we wouldn't have to print all the ad books at once, but in batches, as we needed them. Maye said that we would start selling ads in the summer and have the new (old) format back in the fall. The Board agreed that we would go back to the previous system.

Maye then brought up that Chuck Emmons from the New Hampshire community Theater Association had sent her an email about facilities grants that are now available through the NH Council on the Arts. She said she would look into it and see if the Sprinkler Fund would qualify. She said he also sent an email about

high priced raffles, and we may not be in the right demographic. Kate mentioned the MTI Smash grant for new programs and their giving a license and a stipend. Maye said that she had the impression that it was just for schools. Kate said she would call them to find out what the grant was about. She said that you'd get a Broadway, Jr. show, a stipend for the director, and a workshop in NY to train your director. Kate said it might be for a summer workshop, which would be a new program, not an established one. Kate said she would call them for information.

A motion was made to adjourn by Kate, seconded by Dee Dee and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.