

Community Players of Salisbury
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
October 4,2023

Board Members Present: Tom Robinson, Presiding, Matt Bogdan, Kate Adkins, Sharon Benchoff, Bobbie Calloway, Cass Dasher, Robin Finley, Kyle Hayes, Ken Johnson, Charlie Linton, Darrell Mullins, Rusty Mumford, Kel Nagel, Shelbie Thompson

Members Present: Tony Broadbent, Pete Cuesta, Melissa Dasher, Sherri Hynes, Betsy Metzger, Debby Nagel, Joshua Smith

Guests Present: Christine Smith

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Approval of the Minutes:

- Rusty Mumford/Bobbie Calloway moved to approve the minutes of the September meeting with the following amendments:
 - Sharon Benchoff, Melissa Dasher, and Shelbie Thompson were not included as Board Members present. They were, in fact, in attendance.
 - Tom Robinson was listed as in attendance when, in fact, he was not.
- Motion Passed

Treasurer's Report:

- Rusty Mumford/Bobbie Calloway moved to approve the Treasurer's Report distributed. Motion Passed

Committee Reports: NOTE: Anything is bold/italics font indicate observations that were not a part of the initial submissions.

Facilities: Ken Johnson reported as follows:

1. Women's Bathroom flooded again with the MASSIVE amounts of rain on Sept 23. Leaking again where the gutter was coming off the building. Possibly clogged? Or was just WAY TOO MUCH RAIN. French Drain apparently couldn't keep up. The rug in the hallway will need to be replaced soon.
2. Warehouse Cleaning is still ongoing!
3. The kitchen sink is fixed! (I hope)
4. Called several places about getting a dumpster for Warehouse Purge. Most places were close in price. The cost is around \$700 for either a 20 or 30 yd Dumpster for a week. Would like to go with Seagull Disposal. Had good reviews and were extremely helpful on the phone.
5. Spoke to Jake about possible conflict with parking lot work. He stated if the dumpster went at the Rear Warehouse Door, then it wouldn't interfere with current work on parking lot.
6. ***Ken Johnson/Kate Adkins moved to spend up to \$800 to rent a dumpster. Motion passed.***
7. ***Ken will need help with removing items into the dumpster.***

Rusty Mumford reported that he recently arrived at Players for a meeting and found that the front office had a lot of trash. Please be sure to clean up the space after using it.

Building: No report submitted.

Grants: Matt Bogdan reported as follows:

1. We have been fulfilling the grant requirements from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore and Beach to Bay Heritage Area with our production of Paths to Freedom: The Underground Railroad on Maryland's Eastern Shore (with scenes from Uncle Tom's Cabin).
2. We also received over \$1500 in donations, and those funds will go into the building fund.
3. A request for grant funds from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore for the purchase of microphones was denied because we already are receiving grant funds for the Paths to Freedom production. We can request it again next year.
4. A request for grant funds from the Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation was denied, with no explanation besides there were many requests. We can re-apply next year.
5. Matt began taking a class on grant writing at Wor-Wic.
6. **We received a grant from the Maryland State Arts Counsel in the amount of \$4,024 to help cover general operational costs.**
7. **Funds remaining after costs of "Paths to Freedom"** will go toward the purchase of new microphones.

Membership: Kel Nagel sought clarification on the waiver of dues for first-time members. After discussion it was decided that the dues waiver would be for those who have been involved with a production during the season. **Melissa Dasher clarified that a waiver of membership dues would be waived for anyone who had not been a member in the past.**

Hospitality: No report received. The Recording Secretary assumes that we plan to remain hospitable. **Rusty Mumford commented that we are indeed still hospitable.**

Social Media: Kate Adkins reported as follows:

1. Facebook is where we reach the most.
2. Instagram does get likes.
3. Kate is looking into doing some TikTok's during "Pippin" more as an experiment to see how they are received.
4. The "Pippin" production team will be featured in an upcoming post to show that there are other ways to be involved in theatre while not acting.
5. Please take time to "like, share, and leave a comment."
6. For any upcoming events (audition, opportunities etc...) please let Kate know asap. For things to be posted on Instagram an image must be a part of the post. Please provide an image or give some context so that one can be created. Kate will work towards having some stock images on hand but variety and individual specific to events images take time.

Season Tickets/Box Office: Rusty Mumford and Darrell Mullins reported as follows:

1. They met with House Manager, Betsy Metzger, to review the seating process as we approach our first show with reserved seating.
2. We agreed that those who come after the show has begun will be seated in rows in the back of the auditorium in order to minimize distraction. Those who come late will be allowed to find their reserved seat at intermission.

3. Rusty Mumford met with Patrons Chair, Kel Nagel to determine how Patrons can get access to preferred seats in our new reserved seating process. We will hold the first six rows in the center for patrons until October 15. After that those rows will be first come first served.
4. Darrell Mullins, in conjunction with "Pippin's" Director and Producer, has arranged for show merchandise to be available for purchase on our ticketing platform. Items available are t-shirts, coffee mugs, and tote bags.
5. Darrell Mullins is in the process of adding "Pippin" cast/crew names and photos to the ticketing platform.

Rusty Mumford requested that we purchase two printers and a credit card reader for processing walk-up tickets. Questions/Observations were as follows:

1. **Sharon Benchoff-Why can't we use the printers we currently have? Response: They are too big.**
2. **Shelbie Thompson-Could the credit card reader be used at venues/locations, at our special productions, for example? Response: Square could work in those instances.**
3. **David Allen-Why not use thermal printers; ink jet printers often jam and run out of ink quickly?**

Rusty Mumford stated that he would keep those issues in mind while researching.

After further discussion Charlie Linton/Bobbie Calloway moved that we approve \$500 or less for the purchase of the printers. Motion passed.

Pete Cuesta requested that we consider having a QR code, perhaps through Venmo, in the lobby during the run of "Pippin" for the purpose of requesting donations. Questions/Comments were as follows:

1. **Charlie Linton, having checked with our accountant, expressed concern that we would not have a record of who made the donation. Pete Cuesta responded that this would be for donations only.**
2. **Shelbie Thompson asked whether or not people could just use their phones to scan the QR code.**
3. **Tom Robinson suggested that Charlie Linton research the issue.**
4. **Cass Dasher/Rusty Mumford moved to proceed using Venmo. Motion passed.**

Patrons: Kel Nagel reported on the agreement, detailed in the Season Ticket/Box Office Committee report above, granting advance notice to Patrons to reserve seats.

Historical: No Report Submitted.

Concessions: Brenda Allen reported as follows:

1. Concessions were provided for the two "Paths to Freedom" performances that occurred at our facility. The audience seemed to appreciate the brownies, cookies and drinks. Their donations were added to the money collected at the door.
2. The next planned concessions at this time will be for "Pippin." We will be needing help with those performances. Please let Brenda know if you can help.

Program/Program Ads: Tom Robinson reported as follows:

1. Program ads would be both physical (in the program) as well as digital via a QR code.
2. All but 9 repeat advertisers have renewed.

3. There are 4 new advertisers.

Publicity: Debby Nagel reported that there were changes from last month.

Nominating: Nothing to report.

Production: Matt Bogdan reported that 8 of the 9 required committee seats have been filled. Anyone interested in the final seat should contact him.

Scholarship: Lynne Bratten reported that scholarship information will be distributed to counselors, drama teachers and others who are involved with youth drama programs that are in the contact area in December and will be ready for distribution via the newsletter at that time.

Lifetime Achievement: Sharon Benchhoff reported that the committee met on Sunday, Oct. 1st to decide this year's recipients. ***The recipients will be announced at the Sunday matinee performance of "Pippin."***

Introduction of Guest: Lynne Bratten introduced Kris A who is interested in becoming involved in CPOS.

Old Business

Paths to Freedom Update: Matt Bogdan reported as follows:

1. The cast had five members new to Players.
2. We need to do more diverse shows so we can attract a wider variety of members.
3. He expressed gratitude to Players for trusting him.
4. Thanks to Sharon Benchhoff for hard work and support.
5. The production raised \$1500.

Pete Cuesta suggested we perform the show at the Maryland Folk Festival next year.

Betsy Metzger asked if we had received any feedback from audience members. Sharon Benchhoff responded saying that there were many appreciative audience members as well as those who allowed performances in their venues.

Tom Robinson commented that the show was live-streamed and is still available on the Facebook page of Christ United Methodist Church.

Edgar Allan Poe Show Update: Matt Bogdan reported as follows:

1. There are currently four performances scheduled-October 20, 21, 27 and 28.
2. One performance will be at our facility. Matt coordinated with Pete Cuesta in order to make sure that there would be no impact on "Pippin" rehearsal.

Pippin:

Pete Cuesta reported as follows:

1. He has an excellent, diverse cast.
2. He has guaranteed those participating that we are an inclusive, safe space.
3. The show is almost completely blocked.
4. Billboards will be coming soon.

5. A show banner at the fence at the corner of College Avenue and Division Street will be there soon.
6. He encouraged us to share posts on social media.
7. He is focused on getting full houses to all performances.
8. He is reaching out to Charlie Paparella for the “Travels With Charlie” program on WBOC.

Matt Bogdan suggested doing a performance as part of “Third Friday.” Cass Dasher stated that they could help coordinate that effort.

Sharon Benchoff asked Tom Robinson if he could provide show postcards for Third Friday.

Cass Dasher raised a concern about the use of live animals in the show. They just wanted to make sure that the Board of Education would object since we will be performing in one of its auditoriums. Pete Cuesta responded that the animal has a professional handler and has signed a liability waiver. Tom Robinson suggested we operate on the principle of asking forgiveness rather than asking for permission.

Parking Lot Paving:

Tom Robinson reported as follows:

1. The process has begun.
2. Blacktop should be in place within the next two weeks.
3. Some Pippin rehearsals may have to move to Christ Church.
4. The lot will not be as wide as it is currently.
5. The lot will be lower in order to avoid flooding.
6. The facility may lose wifi temporarily.

Update on “Rumors” at Wor-Wic:

Tom Robinson reported that we should get confirmed performance dates by October 15.

Performance Space:

Kel Nagel reported as follows:

1. As we did not receive a grant to hire a theater consultant, we will be relying on the technical expertise within our membership.
2. Tom Robinson suggested that he should contact 3 architects for bids for an RFP
3. He reached out to architects for bids.

New Business

Rusty Mumford reported that Lynne Bratten called him and asked him to say that she is doing well and has been appreciate of support from Players. She thanked us for sending flowers.

Matt Bogdan reported on fundraising as follows:

1. “Giving Tuesday” is coming.
2. He is planning a special production of “A Christmas Carol.” He will be sure to coordinate with Sherri Hynes so that it will not interfere with “Rumors.”

Regarding special productions, Tom Robinson stated that anyone who buys an ad for a special production should clarify that those ads are not included in the programs for our mainstage productions.

Sharon Benchoff reported on “Giving Tuesday” as follows:

1. We are registered.
2. She will make sure our advertisers are notified.
3. This year's goal is \$1,500.
4. She will send the information to Rusty Mumford for the newsletter and to Kate Adkins for social media.

Robin Finley commented that we should work on making our Board of Directors more diverse.

Rusty Mumford/Robin Finley moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:09 pm.

DRAFT