

Minutes of the December 8, 2021 Meeting of the Arena Theater Board of Directors

1. Call to Order –Beattie called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call – Present – Beattie, Joakimides, Andersen, Archer, McMurtry, Wilkinson, Crutcher, Sussman, More, Boyd, Marrinan, Moseley, Kat Gleeson and Steve McLaughlin

Absent – None

3. Privilege of the Floor/Correspondence/Suggestion Box – Andersen indicated that he is disheartened and disappointed in what has developed over the last few weeks regarding the proof of vaccination issue. He urged civility and explained that disagreeing without disrespect was necessary, as was trying to find common ground.

Moseley reported that there is nothing in the suggestion box or correspondence.

4. Approval of Minutes from October 27, 2021 Board meeting – McMurtry moved, and Beattie seconded the Motion, that the Minutes be approved. The Minutes were approved.

REPORTS:

5. President's Report – Beattie noted that it was a difficult time going into the holidays and that we need to get through these difficult times together.

6. Treasurer's Report – Andersen reported the October figures. Cinema losses continued and increased by \$3,826 in part due to declining ticket sales. Film Club resumed as pre-pandemic and losses increased to \$695. Opera broke even at \$90, and posted revenue in September of \$1,135 from passes. Exhibition on Screen broke even.

Total contributions/income was \$8,855 and Operating Expenses were \$8,184. For the month of October we had net income of -\$3,870. SVO Grant funds covered the loss.

A Grant Update confirmed that we received a SVO Grant of \$91,000 to be spent by 12/31. WE have used \$70,000 by 10/1 and anticipate spending the rest by the close of the year in compliance with the Grant's terms. We received a second SVO Grant of \$54,644 to be spent by 6/30/22. Since this is under \$10,000/mo., we project that we will fulfill these Grant terms as well.

7. Standing Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee – Archer reported on the carpet estimate being approved. We will apply for a Community Foundation Grant for this and it will require a matching contribution. We've earmarked the contribution from Surf Market as being our matching share.

b. Membership Committee – Joakimides reported that the Committee has not met since the last meeting. The December meeting is next week. We have received some additional donations in the last month.

b. Fund Development Committee - There was no meeting in November. Wilkinson noted that the Committee is waiting to see the response to the Fall/Winter Fundraising Letter and Legacy Giving brochure.

A second SVO Grant was received in the amount of \$54,000.

Community Foundation Grant has been submitted for carpet replacement costs, but we won't know until March whether we have received it. McMurtry noted that the bid we received has some

variables as to material costs, availability, and the extent of any “hidden” issues that might need remediation.

c. Programming Committee (includes cinema, live, telecasts, publicity, and film club)

Cinema – Marrinen reported that upcoming features include House of Gucci, Ghostbusters Afterlife, Julia, Encanto, with West Side Story to follow in January.

Moseley noted that staff working our showings believe that attendance is picking up a little and she is encouraged as the Winter approaches.

Live – Boyd reported that the Committee met and has a few shows on the calendar that have been confirmed (but which can be cancelled if necessary depending on the status of the pandemic). They include:

2/12/22 – Chris Pierce

3/19/22 – Blues show

7/ /22 – Tommy Castro

Kat Gleeson suggested that the Live Committee wants to conduct a survey of members, only, to get their opinions re proof of vaccination for their live events. Sussman cautioned that the wording of the questions needs to be carefully drafted to be neutral. Steve McLaughlin described the recent Film Club survey which was, inadvertently, limited to 40 responses. A second survey obtained more responses. He discussed some of the technical problems that he’s encountered. More asked questions about the problems that were encountered to try to better understand and avoid the same problem in the future. She agreed that the survey would be designed to find out what our members want. Joakimides reminded of a past Google survey which seemed to work better than SurveyMonkey and suggested that she could begin to work to make sure that she has email addresses for all members.

The Committee is considering hiring a “House Manager” for live events. We’ve had volunteers in the past but given the current protocols and safety steps we’ve taken the Committee feels that this might be an important post to fill going forward.

Telecast – Exhibition on Screen – The Danish Collector – will screen next Sunday to be followed a week later by The Nutcracker Ballet.

NT Live – is scheduled for January 15 – Cyrano de Bergerac w/ James McEvoy

Telecast – Nothing to report.

Opera – The Met Live version of Cinderella will screen on January 1.

Publicity – Marrinan has been putting up posters to advertise our programs. Moseley has received more clarity to update announcements and requirements re proof of vaccinations for some of our programs. She clarified that all telecasts will require a proof of vaccination.

Film Club – Steve McLaughlin reported that there have been smaller audiences for some of the recent films. He reported on the past shows beginning with the Club’s reopening showing of Casablanca. The Club has booked films through March, 2022.

d. Facilities Committee – McMurtry reported

e. Personnel Committee – Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS

8. Reopening Committee update – Boyd reported that the Committee checked in re mask enforcement during performances and it seems patrons are receptive. Moseley sent out an analysis of the how the screenings are doing and which days are best attended. Seniors are the largest group of the audience. The last 12 Wednesday afternoons have the lowest attendance, Friday evenings are the highest attended. The discussed increasing seating capacity at the Theater for all programs. She had circulated a 50% capacity seating chart earlier today, which was displayed, and explained why this was being recommended by the Committee. McMurtry added that he viewed the new seating chart and it had 87 seats as opposed to the 55 seats we now have available, and he supported the increase in seating capacity. Joakimides added that this version allows greater distance between seats and made a lot of additional seats available and she, too, supported this change. McMurtry asked when this was to begin and was told shortly after the New Year. Moseley cautioned that there was a lot of work to do to transition the online ticket sales programming and that should be considered, and she would appreciate as much lead time as possible.

Joakimides moved that we increase capacity to 50% effective December 31, 2021. Moseley pointed out that January 1 is a Saturday and suggested that it might start effective January 7 and that would provide her with enough time. Andersen suggested we consider making the change on the 31st so it will be in effect over the New Year's weekend. Moseley agreed that would be enough time for her work. The Motion was amended to begin on December 31. Sussman seconded the Motion. This Motion is for all events, regardless of whether a proof of vaccination is required. The Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

9. Discussion/decision on allowing Film Club Committee to require Proof of Vaccination –

Steve McLaughlin reported on the recent survey and shared the results with the Board. The majority of the respondents did not favor requiring a Proof of Vaccination at Film Club showings. The responses included 46% who were not members of the Association. Archer questioned whether the results of this survey were reliable because the survey was not limited to members and would be contrary to the survey plan for Live events and the software did not allow for second votes from partners of members using the same computer with the result being that the data is corrupted. He suggested the Board table the request for now and re-run the survey along the lines of the Live survey discussed above.

Joakimides thinks the survey is fine, as is, and that non-members should be allowed to vote. Steve McLaughlin responded that there were no duplicate votes from the same IP address which would indicate that some partners were prevented from voting. Joakimides thought the whole community should be involved and felt that our other safety steps were adequate. More added that assuming that some partners could not have voted is questionable since there is not way to know how they would have voted. Sussman asked whether Film Club could be included in the Live survey which would avoid this confusion. Wilkinson noted that a survey would be conducted through the newspaper and recognized the results, so he favored relying on those results. More added that she agreed with Wilkinson and we should accept the results and suggested that if we were to re-vote this we should revisit all other prior votes re Poof of Vaccination. Beattie added that, technically, this is the second Film Club survey. Boyd responded that the survey responses from the other Committees/Producers involved a very specific group of people, and they might not have all been members. She agreed that the data for Film Club seems flawed and explained why she felt that way. She felt that we should not reconsider our earlier decisions. Wilkinson added that we should table

this and have further discussion as to how to hold the future survey while allowing Film Club to continue to proceed as is. Steve McLaughlin agreed to continue pending another survey. Andersen disagreed with a revote, that we could never get enough responses to be statistically valid and felt that we should rely on this survey. Archer reiterated that any survey should be of members, only. Moseley and Crutcher agreed that the group to be surveyed should be the same for a valid sample and Crutcher added that she felt that the survey population should be members. The motion was tabled to allow for a broader sampling.

10. Discussion/ decision on ICO letter – Archer reminded the Board that there was discussion at our last meeting about preparing a letter to the ICO. There was an article in the ICO about our prior meeting and decision regarding Proof of Vaccination. Drafts were circulated and there was some support from the Board to a letter to the ICO to take ownership of our decision. The drafting process got hung up over several misconceptions. To clarify, individual Board members would not be required to sign the letter since it would be sent on behalf of the Board and all Board members did not have to agree on all of the language of the letter which, instead, was subject to majority vote.

McMurtry supported this letter previously because he felt that we have been operating in a bubble and we should explain to our members and our community what our plans are in detail. The ICO article was good, but not complete. He still believes that we should reach out to our community to explain our decision-making process and rationale. More added that she is fine with the letter, and had suggested some things to be clarified so the tone was evenhanded. Sussman suggested that Moseley's edit version be circulated and agreed that the letter should be more personal and honestly directed to our community with diverse issues and opinions. Boyd agreed and suggested that any letter include a mention of the upcoming Live survey for members. More offered to circulate her redline draft as a starting point of further discussion. Sussman suggested that any survey not be limited to members only but that the data be collected in a way that would allow us to know the results of members and non-members. Joakimides agreed that we should be transparent in the letter for our community. Boyd noted that it would be easier to survey members only.

11. Discussion/decision regarding adding a Proof of Vaccination (vaccinated-only) movie screening – Boyd reported that this was discussed at the Reopening Committee and suggested that we add a screening rather than changing an existing screening to require proof of vaccination. She suggested adding a Wednesday night screening and try this for six weeks or so, beginning after the first of the year. The Finance Committee suggested we consider our lowest performing showing (Wednesday matinee) requiring a proof of vaccination. Joakimides added that several people have asked her for an evening showing with a proof of vaccination requirement. The idea of adding a Wednesday evening showing was because we already have a matinee, have enough time between showings, and don't have the same conflicts as Saturday night might bring. McMurtry supported the Wednesday evening showing which might increase attendance and would not discriminate against those who are vaccinated. Marrinan noted that Wednesday evening showings would be easier logistically for staffing. Archer pointed out that our Wednesday afternoon showing is the worst-performing event on our schedule. Beattie added that, historically, the Wednesday afternoon matinee has been attended by kids and he is concerned that they be excluded by a proof requirement. Sussman moved that we add a Wednesday evening showing with a proof of vaccination requirement. Joakimides seconded the motion and the Motion passed to beginning on the first Wednesday in January for 6 weeks.

12. Next meeting date and time—January 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

