

Ankeny Community Theatre Board Meeting Minutes

June 4, 2018

Held at Café Diem

Members Present: Scott Nielsen, Stacie Bendixen, Becky Plager, Susan Casber, Tammy Sposeto, Whitney Welp, James Machamer, Nicole Titus, Doug Moon, Valerie Stratton

Members Absent: Adam Haselhuhn

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Stacie.

Treasurer's Report:

Reviewed the treasurer's report presented by Doug.

Doug unsure where the costume charges are for A Few Good Men. Stacie confirmed that they were debit card charges and will find the documentation so Doug can make sure they get accounted for as expenses for this show.

Donation of \$18 sent through Midwestix. Stacie clarified which category it goes under.

Ticket income for April shows isn't accounted for yet – Doug will look into it.

Doug needs info about debit card expenses within 24 hours – just Doug and Cheryl Clark have debit cards.

James moved to accept the report, Susan seconded, and the motion was passed.

May Meeting Minutes:

Minutes were reviewed. No corrections needed.

Susan moved to accept the minutes, James seconded, and the motion was passed.

Committee Reports: See end of minutes for full reports.

Building & Operations:

Scott updated regarding door repairs.

No other new info.

Data Management:

No additional information.

Education:

No additional information.

Finance:

See treasurer's report above. No additional info.

Doug will schedule a finance committee meeting.

Fundraising:

No report – meeting scheduled for June 13.

Marketing:

No meeting was held this month.

Nicole made actor ballots for Honk today and audition poster for Over the River and Through the Woods.

2018-19 season ad for Standing Ovation is due July 1st.

Discussion will be held regarding when to send emails for Michael Hollister's classes at the next marketing meeting.

Membership & Sales:

See new business below.

Play Selection:

No additional information.

Production:

Becky has transitioned to chair as Nicole's term on board is ending this year. Big thanks to Nicole for all she has accomplished during her term!

Conversation with John Butz regarding directing Happily Ever After and he has been offered and accepted the position. John Claes will be his assistant director.

Volunteers:

Whitney need a lead volunteer and support volunteer for the matinee on Father's Day. James' wife will be there as James is doing box office.

Reminder: NO NUTS in treats for Honk show. There are Rice Krispie treats as alternative.

Old Business:

Passing Notes show rating:

Doug Moon reported some of the language requires changing G rating to PG.

New Business:

Annual Meeting – Sept. 17th:

If you have other ideas for venue, let Stacie know. Ideally, we won't have to pay for use so we are checking into churches where we have relationships because we offer ACT summer camps there. Will need to come up with questions for the Trivia or Jeopardy game.

Ticket prices proposal:

Stacie presented financial rationale for raising ticket prices for musicals. Will not raise prices for plays this year. Play prices will have to go up later and hoping if we have a newer facility, patrons will be more understanding of the price increase.

Nicole motioned to accept this proposal, Susan seconded, and motion passed.

Throwback Thursday prices: plays remain the same special price (\$12/\$10/\$8); for musicals will be \$18/\$15/\$12.

Whitney motioned to accept this proposal, Nicole seconded, and motion passed.

Doug brought up idea of moving Thursday night performances to 7:00 PM. Concerns are that it would be too confusing for everyone, and posters/ads, etc. to have different times. Although could consider moving all the shows to 7:00 PM. Production committee will discuss this.

Board recruitment update:

Cheryl Clark, John Claes, and Matt Tuttle are all willing to serve a 3-year term. Still need 4th person and Adam is working on this.

Also need someone to fill Al's position (one year remaining as of this fall).

Theater reservations calendar:

Stacie presented the new Google calendar for the theater (see committee reports).

Ankeny Summerfest Family Fun Day Presentation:

ACT was invited to have 30-45 minutes to be on their stage for the family fun day on Sun., July 15th between 3-6 PM at Prairie Ridge stadium.

Discussion held regarding ideas of what to do:

Honk content – songs/scenes

Pros: already polished

Cons: royalty fees; microphones?

Talent show?

Kids from summer camp?

Improv?

“Christmas Chaos” snippet – “Christmas in July”?

Other future shows?

***Only 5 weeks away! Stacie will continue discussion with ad-hoc group.

Summerfest parade: Tammy will check if we can still get registered to be in it.

Other:

Whitney will serve as secretary at the July 9th board meeting during Valerie's vacation.

Nicole motioned for the meeting to be adjourned; Scott seconded it; and motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:59 PM.

Meeting & Other Dates:

Board meetings for 2017-2018 season:

Mon., July 9th – note date change

Mon., Aug 6th

Mon., Sep 10th

Mon., Sep 17th ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING

Mon., Oct 15th HuHOT FUNDRAISER

ACT Committee Reports & Materials

June 4, 2018

Building & Operations

- Door work was completed by Liberty doors. There may be more work we want to do.
- Concessions have been purchased for Honk.
- Scott is taking over the management of building keys (from Al).

Data Management

16 new names have been added to the email list since March 31.

Theater reservations calendar

We have created a new Google calendar for the theater, to serve as the central place to check theater availability and reserve our space. This is a solution we developed to solve difficulties of coordinating use of the space between rehearsals for multiple productions, committee meetings, set building and maintenance work, and any other needs. Email address with Google calendar associated is calendar@ankenycitytheatre.com. Stacie will manage it for now. The calendar is set as “public” and integrated on our website at <http://www.ankenycitytheatre.com/calendar.html> (how to navigate to it: from our homepage, hover over the “About” tab and click “Calendar” on the dropdown menu). Thus, anyone who needs to see if the theater is available – board members, committee chairs, directors and other production leaders, core volunteers who are organizing something – can look at the calendar on our website.

These instructions are posted above the calendar widget on the website:

Directors, board members, and volunteers needing to reserve the space:

Email requests to calendar@ankenycitytheatre.com, or create your own calendar event and invite calendar@ankenycitytheatre.com as a "guest" (the administrator will accept the event if approved). Events should specify which part of the building will be used (**stage/auditorium, green room, or whole building**), so others looking to reserve a space know if they can hold a simultaneous event in the other area. (For example, for typical rehearsals, only the stage/auditorium needs to be reserved, and another meeting can be held in the green room.)

Please spread the word about this process to all the key contacts in your area of responsibility. Everyone is responsible for checking the calendar before organizing a function to take place at the theater, and for properly reserving the theater when you schedule a function so others will know it's in use. For show rehearsal schedules, the production committee has decided that the producer for each show will be responsible for always having the current rehearsal schedule (i.e. get directors in the habit of always including their producer when communicating schedule changes to cast) and the producer will pass it along to the calendar administrator.

Education

ACT Education Committee Meeting 05/14/2018

Attending: Susan Casber, Lynn Arterburn, Debbie Rasko, Anne Claes

Adult Education-Update from Susan

The Audition workshops for July 21 and July 28 to be taught by Michael Hollister were reviewed. Prices were discussed. They will be \$15 (members) and \$20 (non-members) for one session. Both sessions \$25 (members) and \$30 (non-members). These workshops are now taking registration.

The next meeting will be June 25th at the theatre at 1pm. We will clean the theatre for the June 26 visit from YMCA camp which is expected to host between 50-60 children. Please bring ideas for future educational classes for both youth and adults.

Youth Education-Update from Lynn

Education Committee Meeting Minutes / Camp & Youth Activities – May 14, 2018

1. Discussion with Robin Spahr, Education Director for DM Playhouse. Lynn had two issues that had come up over the past couple of years – background checks and discipline issues. She decided to contact DMP to see what their policies were.

Background Checks – Lynn has had camp staff ask why those who are involved with ACT on a regular basis throughout the year need to go through a yearly check which has been our policy since we started doing these in 2013 or 2014.

The following is DMP's policy.

- Everyone who volunteers or works at DMP must go through a background check every 3-5 years. Lynn couldn't remember which one.
- Staff involved in teaching for their summer programs only who are not involved with DMP throughout the year (namely college students) go through a check every summer.
- DMP pays fees for all background checks.
- DMP uses Inquire Hire to do the checks. It is cheaper than the DCI checks which cost \$15. Robin wasn't sure how much cheaper. DPM director believes that Inquire Hire is better to work with as well. She expressed the importance of using a service that has a fee over what ACT is doing right now (Iowa Courts Online). Paid services are more thorough and can search areas that unpaid services can't – like abuse charges. You certainly want all areas checked in order to do due diligence and protect especially children who may, for one reason or another, be alone with an adult even by accident. Want to protect everyone and avoid a liability issue that could shut down the theater. When ACT started doing checks, we had someone who worked for a law firm. She drew up our current staff contract form and said that Iowa Courts Online was sufficient for what we needed so that is why we are doing what we practice now.

Discipline – ACT camps have seen an increase in behavior issues mostly due to medical or emotional issues the child has over the past few years with each year having a larger increase than the year before. Because of this increase and many of our staff not trained to handle certain situations, Lynn decided to find out if DMP is having a similar uptake in these types of behavior issues and how they handle situations. We have a possible student coming the 2nd week of camp who has many issues.

- DMP has also seen an increase in the enrollment of youth having more behavior issues – a lot of anxiety issues - but also with other medical needs that require more attention from the staff. They also have problems with parents identifying those special needs on their registration forms, as do we.
- DMP – if a child has a 1 on 1 situation at school, the parent must provide a 1 on 1 for the child at camp. This has been a tremendous help. However, many times DMP doesn't know this is the situation until the child comes that first day.
- All their lead teachers are required to be certified in education who are teachers in school districts in the area. Reasoning for this is first because it is a teaching position and those leading need to know how to teach in order for classes to be effective. Second, since they are employed with a school district, they receive regular training on how to handle children with special needs or who have other needs (behavioral or emotional) through their school district. Because of ACT's setup with our camps, having a certified teacher for a lead instructor in every camp would be difficult to do. Lynn tries her hardest to place teachers in those lead positions, but for the years that we struggle to get instructors, we sometimes have to be happy with college students working towards their degree or like John Claes who has Anne as his assistant who works in the school district.
- DMP does provide some training for their staff if they see the need for it or if staff requests it. All lead teachers teach year round at DMP so they do have several meetings throughout the year where they can share information or bring in someone to lead training. ACT camp staff do discuss classroom and behavior management at their camp staff meeting.
- #1 thing when working with parents – keep the line of communication open and be positive. Also, never be afraid to tell a parent that it's just not working out and the child needs to be removed from the camp. Open communication can be a hard thing to do when parents aren't open with their communication with you. Many parents don't want their child to be labeled when attending an activity that only lasts a short amount of time. They are doing a disservice to everyone involved.
- Lynn has emailed the parent of the possible student to describe what a week in the life of a camper looks like so the parent can prepare the son for the challenge he is facing or for her to remove his name from the class list. She strongly suggested that this may not be the place for him. She had discussed with other camp staff who are teachers and also agreed that this camp would be difficult for him. In a nutshell, his issues are ADHD, anxiety and is very sensitive to a lot of things. Has behavior issues if he thinks people are laughing at him even if they aren't (most of our activities have class laughing at each other while they are doing the activity and many of the plays the kids do are funny and there will be laughter during the show). Doesn't do well with transitions unless warned far in advance and may act out if he feels he didn't get enough warning (this is not always an easy thing to do either). He needs to be the helper of the group and he is a 6th grader in a mostly 7-8th grade group so helping other campers isn't going to work well. Note: Since the Education Meeting, Lynn recently received his registration fees and mom says she has discussed things with him and he thinks he can handle it. He will sit and watch the activity for a while before he will do it. He will be doing a lot of just observing that week. Lynn has had a lengthy discussion with the two instructors who will be working with him and has let the director assistant know that he may be working with this child as well if he needs to be removed from the room. Luckily the lead instructor is a teacher at Webster City. Lynn will

monitor closely. If things do not go well, will speak to the parent about removing him from the camp.

2. Library Workshops are done until next fall. Held 3 workshops in May with total of 27 attending.

3. May 24 Westwood Workshops – Since the Education meeting was held, Lynn had to back out of this event. Teachers didn't pass on the information that she needed to have a background check done until it was too late for it to be done. Lynn would have had to pay \$15 to have the check done. Teachers tried to get her in anyway but district policy is if a person coming into the school will be doing anything but just sitting, observing, and not talking to students, they need to go through a check even if a teacher is present at all time.

4. YMCA Visit – Lynn is working with the Y to get things set up for the morning of June 26. Asking that they divide up the children and bring them in two groups due to the large number of youth. One hour time limit for each group which will include a tour and activities. Lynn will plan the activities and Ed. Committee will assist carrying those out. Clean up of theater will be June 25.

Lynn's New Info Since the Meeting

Camp Staff: All spots filled. Held staff meeting May 23. Lynn followed up on May 31 with the few that couldn't attend. Please see attached list of the staff assignments.

Scholarship: Only one application. Awarded \$100 for a \$175 camp. Have another application coming as of June 1 from a family with three youth who just registered.

Registration as of June 2:

June 11

Hogwarts 3-4	11/20
Hogwarts 5-6	15/20
Hogwarts 7-8	12/20

June 18

Live on Stage (k-1)	9/10
Once Upon a Stage AM (2-3)	10/10
Wacky Dr. Seuss PM (2-3)	10/10
Acting Out (4-5)	13/15
In the Spotlight (6-10)	15/15

July 16

Pirates on the High Seas (K-1)	10/10
Scooby Doo AM (2-3)	10/10
Pirates Life for Me PM (2-3)	9/10
Superhero Spectacular (4-5)	9/10
FanFiction (6-10)	13/15

Total Spots Filled 145

Kids Enrolled 117

Have waiting lists for 5 of the filled camps.

July Tour: Hope Lutheran Church of West Des Moines bringing their summer day care group (approximately 25 kids grades K-5) for a tour and talk on morning of July 30. As of right now, Lynn will cover but will talk to Ed. Committee about another person as backup or to help.

Finance

- Timing of the shows/reports shows lack of activity. Director Expenses for A Few Good Men (\$184.89) and Doubt (\$84.76) were paid in May, thus not reflective within the financial reports as yet because reports are a month in arrears.
- Costume expenses for A Few Good Men?
- Insurance (Philadelphia Insurance): \$1,376.00 – paid in May; \$2,841.00 will be paid in June.
- Door Repair (Liberty Doors): \$556.50 – paid in May.
- AACT Membership: \$372.45 – will be paid in June.
- Rent: Was double paid in April due to my error. Only 1 check cashed thus far. No additional check was cut for May.
- New e-mail address: treasurer@ankenycommunitytheatre.com

Fundraising

No report. Meeting June 13.

Marketing

No report.

Membership & Sales

Proposals for board vote:

1. **Starting in 2018-19 season, raise musical prices only: Increase to \$20 adults, \$17 seniors, \$15 students** (from \$18 adults, \$15 seniors, \$12 students).
2. **In 2018-19 season, continue Throwback Thursday pricing.** For plays, same Thursday prices as this year (\$12 adults, \$10 seniors, \$8 students). For musicals, Throwback Thursday price will go back to the musical prices we're deciding to increase from: \$18, \$15, \$12.

Membership and Sales Committee meeting notes

June 2, 2018

Attendance: Stacie, Scott, Lynn, Adam, Tammy

Set Annual Member Meeting date: **Monday, Sept. 17, 2018**

Time: Probably 6:00 p.m. Ask for venue starting at 5 p.m. probably start meal at 6:00. Will solidify when venue is confirmed.

Venue: Brainstormed ideas other than the theater that would work better for serving a meal.

- Event venue at Prairie Trail – The District Venue. See if they would give us a deal.
- Look into other cheap venues, like churches or VFW
- **Hope Lutheran Church (we hold camps there) – Lynn will ask. They have a little stage.**
- **Prairie Ridge Church (we hold camps there) – Lynn will ask.**
- Another option: Christian Life Center (CLC – Methodist)

- Brewery and wine place in District – could see if they’re open those nights, or closed so could loan it out.

Food: Will serve dinner

- Direction may depend on venue.
- Tammy can get Burke to donate (or sell at a discount) taco meat or meatballs. Could do taco bar or walking tacos – if we have a venue with table seating.
- Or, if we can grill, seek donations of burgers and buns from Hy-Vee as we’ve done before.
- Ask board members to contribute sides, etc.

Entertainment ideas:

- Funny awards, like a roast. E.g. worst line drop of the past season.
- Camp showcase
- Improv style game, where some of our actors are prepared to do something and audience members are drawn in. Interactive. Joe Gentzler is in an improv troupe.
- Snippet from several shows
- Script-tease-style readings from a few of the shows. What about taking volunteers from the audience to read a part?
- **Decided on: Trivia or Jeopardy. Longtime members might have fun answering questions about ACT’s history. And everyone else would learn stuff about ACT’s history.**
 - **Adam volunteered to be the host.**

Member business (voting)

- Will sent out ballots to members mid-August.
- At July board meeting, board needs to decide slates/candidates to be put forward to membership to vote on.
 - New board members (4)
 - President-elect for 2018-19
 - Darel Award (outstanding volunteer) nominees – 3 or 4. **Stacie: Talk to Whitney about this process.**

Talk to Nicole about certificates

- Favorite Actor awards
- Recognition for outgoing board members
- Darel Award winner and nominees
- Maybe: new actors. Do we want to do certificates, or just verbally recognize them?
 - Reason is to welcome them to community, get them to come to meeting
 - **Instead of certificate, what if we had someone write them a thank-you note to hand them onstage? Like their director? Or board members? Like the idea of board members doing this even better.**
 - **Also do this for new volunteers? Talk to Whitney about whether this is doable. Would be nice to have the numbers anyway – how many people volunteered during the season? How many volunteered for the first time?**
- Any bylaws changes needed? No

Membership levels

- No changes

Season ticket packages

- Idea: sell a Thursday-only package. Discount price lower than regular season ticket. Create a guaranteed audience for Thursdays, incentivize coming on Thursdays
 - Regular season punch card = \$2 off per performance for members. How much discount for Thursday?
 - Could use Thursday punch card as something we give away for strategic purposes. Like give a group like Rotary Club a Thursday punch card that anyone in the group can use, only good for Thursday. Some of those people would bring someone who would buy a ticket. Way to bring in new people and raise awareness of ACT.
 - To enforce, make the Thursday ticket a different color, etc. Would we be flexible and let them use it for another day if they can't come on a Thursday for a show?
 - **Consensus: No special Thursday package. Too complicated to manage. Leave it the same.**
 - **But we like the idea of doing special Thursday punch cards as promotional giveaways - Tammy will take to Marketing Committee.**
- **Continue Throwback Thursday pricing. For plays, same as this year. For musicals, Throwback Thursday price will go back to the musical prices we're deciding to increase from (see below): \$18, \$15, \$12**
- Lynn will adjust punch card prices to reflect new musical prices. So it's consistently \$2 off per performance for members, \$1 off per performance for non-members.
- Should we continue selling punch cards throughout the season? Thing we need to figure out: process for when someone buys a punch card online through Midwestix outside the typical beginning of season timeframe. Who's responsible for checking? Is there a way for someone to get notified?
 - **Adam will ask Midwestix if there's a way for us to get a notification when someone buys a punch card online. E.g. could we set it that information@ankencommunitytheatre.com gets a copy of the receipt when someone buys a punch card?**
 - We sold 6 punch cards after October 2017

Ticket prices

- **Proposal for board: Raise musical prices only. Increase to \$20 adults, \$17 seniors, \$15 students** (from \$18 adults, \$15 seniors, \$12 students). These make musicals consistently \$5 more than plays.
 - Rationale: Looking at financials of productions so far this season, we make much more on plays than musicals; cost to produce musicals is higher. So this justifies charging a larger difference for musicals. Raising prices for only musicals, not plays at this time, is a middle ground. We hope to be moving to a new facility in the near future, which would then justify raising play prices as well.

Publicizing membership campaign and season punch cards

- Special edition of newsletter in July will have the info about membership and season punch card sales, and "save the date" for member meeting. Lynn will create the traditional layout into PDF, like old newsletter format.
 - We mail it to all members.
 - Email it to whole email list, like all newsletters.

- Talk further about strategies to reach people who aren't currently members
 - E.g. pull lists from Midwestix of ticket buyers
- Early bird incentive for membership? Become a member by X date and get in a drawing? Yes, want to do this
 - **Scott will start seeing how many restaurant gift cards he can get. Include Hy-Vee- Adam will provide our contact.**
 - **Lynn will determine the early bird deadline.**
- When do we want season punch card sales to go live on Midwestix? Whenever, after board approves prices.
- **Lynn will have newsletter ready by July 15 or 16. Stacie will work on language for all the sections.**
- **Adam will build a new "campaign" in Donorbox for 2018-19 membership donations.** This will make it easier to track who has made their current-year membership donation, and we can still see a person's full donation history by searching their name.

Play Selection

Monday, May 28 we did our fourth official script tease of the current selection season. As with the other ones, we had very strong participation by the group and the script was very well received. We handed out scripts for group 5 and we'll be reviewing that group in detail over the next 6 weeks. Group 5 has a good mix of new scripts and returning scripts that the group tended to like last year or the year before, but for some reason didn't fit into our other seasons we have picked. We have started to cut some scripts that had very low grades and reviews in order to make our job more manageable later this summer.

The first of our mini script tease reads will probably occur later June. (Scripts that we read aloud over and above the official 5 script teases.) Also, reminder that because the script reading committee process has been fine tuned and organized a bit more recently, Cheryl and I feel that we should have a really solid group of 10-20 frontrunners for the season AFTER the one we are working on selecting now to start us off on the right foot day one in the fall of 2018 after we finalize and present the season we are working on now.

In addition, the musical sub-committee is working hard on narrowing down the musicals. They will have the finalists ready to present to us probably mid summer.

Troy and Cheryl

Production

- Becky Plager is now the Chair person. Thank you Nicole for all your hard work.
- 2018-2019 Season Directors and Producers have all been selected and notified. A detailed list of Directors, Producers, Assistant Directors and Dates will be forth coming.
- Directors for the 2018 -2019 season have a meeting scheduled for Monday, June 11.

Volunteer

- Sent out 2 e-mails for call for volunteers for Honk!
- Responded to e-mails from volunteers
- Updated job descriptions to include "1 ticket per volunteer."