



Edmond Town Hall Board of Managers

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, February 09, 2021 - 6:30 P.M.

This meeting was held remotely due to COVID-19 mandates and precautions.

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING.

Present: Jen Chaudhary, Marie Smith, Margot Hall, Jen Guman, Herb Rosenthal,

Absent: Anna Wiedemann

Also Present: Operations Manager - Sheila Torres, Kim Chiappetta (clerk)

Call to Order: Ms. Chaudhary called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Public Participation:

None

Chairman Report and Comment Chairman:

Ms. Chaudhary will discuss later in the meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Hall motioned to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on January 12th 2020.

Seconded by Mr. Rosenthal. All in favor.

Ms. Guman motioned to approve the minutes from the special meeting on January 26th 2021.

Seconded by Ms. Smith. All in favor.

Operations Manager/Theater Report (Refer to Attachment A):

Ms. Torres told members that she and Ms. DiMartino continue to look for grants. One grant the Edmond Town Hall will apply for is the Shuttered Venue Operations grant.

The ADA bathroom work is scheduled to begin soon and will continue through to July. Ms. Torres added that due to the length of the project they will need to ensure the work does not interfere with theater activities. The exterior renovations require working with many different vendors, so Ms. Torres will be reaching out to the town's Purchasing Agent for assistance with the bidding process. They are still waiting for the Fire Marshall's inspection report which is received by certified mail.

Ms. Torres returned the conversation to grants telling the Board that grants requiring a not-for-profit are documented by Ms. DiMartino and then handed over to the Mary Hawley Society.

COVID – Governor Guidelines Update:

Ms. Chaudhary explained to the group that the topic *COVID – Governor Guidelines Update* has been left on agenda because of the frequent changes. Ms. Torres said that the recent updates



have had no impact to the ETH. The public school winter break is coming up and the ETH will be offering movies for that weekend adhering to the current State guidelines. Ms. Torres has been in contact with the Bridge Club who is still planning to return to the ETH. Mr. Rosenthal informed the group that all of the Governors executive orders end April 20th. Both Ms. Chaudhary and Ms. Torres were contacted by a school regarding use of the drive-in. Member briefly discussed private groups expressing interest in the drive-in.

2021/22 Budget Update:

No updates.

Accounting Update:

Ms. Chaudhary told everyone that she, Ms. Torres and Ms. Guman attended the Board of Selectmen meeting where they gave a presentation and took questions. There were only minor questions and everything went well.

Ms. Torres updated the group that the transition to eFinance is moving forward and is scheduled for July 1st. Ms. Chaudhary added that it will be beneficial for the town to have the ETH on eFinance so they can pull off actuals in real time and that it will provide consistency in the way the budget is presented.

Ticketing Platform Discussion:

Ms. Chaudhary explained to the group that Ms. Torres is getting a few more quotes on ticketing platforms and Mr. Guman has been assisting. Ms. Torres informed everyone of the special offer from the application AudienceView where they will waive monthly subscription fees if you sign-up for 5 years. This application provides a newsletter that works with either Constant Contact or Mail Chimp and provides the ability to scan tickets. Ms. Torres explained that the cost for the newsletters is separate and she prefers to use Constant Contact which is currently used by the Community Center. There is an opportunity for a 50% discount with Constant Contact if you sign up for 3 years. Ms. Guman asked how the price per ticket compares to the other companies and if it was dependent upon ticket fees. Ms. Torres replied that the price per ticket is in line with the other companies and costs can be recovered by making the customer pay a fee. Ms. Guman then asked when they needed to make a decision. Ms. Torres said a decision must be made by the end of this week. Ms. Chaudhary asked if they would be able to terminate at any time during that 3-year period. Ms. Torres explained that if they were dissatisfied and wanted to terminate they have to pay back the monthly fees. Mr. Rosenthal said there must be something in the contract regarding terminating prior to the end of the 3 years. Ms. Chaudhary said she would be concerned with approving without seeing the contract. Ms. Hall agreed and asked if they could send Ms. Torres the contract papers for review. Ms. Torres added that she would like to use another platform for movies. Members agreed that more information was necessary to make a decision.

Ms. Hall moved to table the discussion until the next meeting. Mr. Rosenthal seconded. All in favor.

Ms. Chaudhary mentioned that Sensible Cinema is the platform currently used for the concession stand and movies. They are now offering on-line ticketing and charge a little less than Square for credit card processing. There would be a one-time costs for a swiper, also for



the tool to put the tickets on-line and a monitor that would show which seating was still available. If the Board decides to not go with Sensible Cinema, then they would have to continue with the home spun process developed for the drive-in last year. Members asked Ms. Torres to document a proposal to be presented in the next meeting. Ms. Chaudhary asked Ms. Torres to thank Mr. Guman for his assistance.

Mary Hawley Society Update:

Ms. Wiedemann was unable to attend the meeting, so there was no update.

Borough Zoning Update:

Ms. Chaudhary told members that the ETH is on the February 10th Borough Zoning agenda. She had a call with the First Selectman and knows that Mr. Benson has been working on the landmark building zoning amendment. Ms. Chaudhary told members that the meeting is through Zoom and encouraged members to attend.

New Business:

Water Pipes:

Ms. Torres reminded the Board of the issues with pipes and told them that the plumbers returned today after professionals removed asbestos numerous times. The steam leak is now fixed and by sometime tomorrow the pipe repairs should be completed. Pipe insulation and patching of holes still needs to be done. Ms. Torres explained that after the insurance company's review she has learned that the ETH has a \$25,000 deductible and when completed the repairs are expected to cost \$20,000. In addition, certain aspects of the work would not have been covered by insurance because they are considered wear and tear. The group discussed the account that will be used to pay the invoices as well as planning for future wear and tear expenses. Ms. Torres also told everyone that she found the furnace does have a gauge so they will be able to see if excess water is being used which is an indicator of a leak.

Drive-in:

Ms. Chaudhary said that she and Ms. Torres have received calls asking about a drive-in for the spring. Ms. Torres said that from a financial standpoint it was not so profitable but from a community standpoint it was something that people needed and was profitable in that respect. The group considered having the drive-in again this season and that the charge would need to be adjusted. Ms. Torres pointed out that they must keep in mind the events scheduled in the theater for June as well as recitals scheduled in May. Ms. Torres then presented a proposal for a tan on-going drive-in:

Last year's drive-in shortcomings:

- No profit
- Expensive to execute.
- Small number of tickets to sell due to COVID requirements.
- Vehicles take-up valuable event parking spaces.
- Bathrooms were far away
- Concessions had to be delivered to cars so more staff was required.

Benefits:



- Introduced younger generations to a new form of entertainment.
- Young kids loved attending.
- Generated allot of buzz and publicity.
- Kept the ETH relevant in front of the community during a difficult time.
- Drive-in can also be an event.
- Recently contacted by someone interested in sponsoring the drive-in.

Recommended changes:

- Use lower parking lot for the drive-in.
- Use the bank parking lot for event overflow parking.
- Provide better concession possibilities.
- Broaden movie selection. (May bring more people out if they show newer movies.)
- Get sponsorship revenue and advertising revenue.

Structures, Location & Other Considerations:

- Hang the screen on shipping containers
- Use a shed for the concession booth.

Mr. Rosenthal noted that the presentation had good thought and creative thinking, but they will need to receive approvals from the Borough.

- Ms. Torres showed members the issues and how they could be resolved with the new recommended model.
- There may be a possibility to have food trucks.
- Can charge more per car.
- Need at least 5 sponsors per event.
- Containers will be placed between the ETH and Newtown Savings bank so there should be no impact to residents on King Street.
- Sound for the movies come from internal car speakers, so the sound should not bother residents on King St.
- Recommend seeing if can get sponsors before approaching Borough.

Costs:

- Will need at least 5 shipping containers. (2 will be used to hold the screen.)
- Screen will cost about \$700 for 2 tarps. (Recommending tarps because they are less expensive and easy to replace.)
- Projector would cost an estimated \$25,000.
- Advertising software estimated at \$1,000.
- 2 refrigerators for concession stand.
- Pending a quote for the 5-month rental of 2 ADA compliant portable toilets including servicing.
- A crane will be needed to stack the containers and hang the tarps.
- The total estimated total cost is \$52,000.



Ms. Guman noted that the Board will need to know the number of months or showings it would take to recoup the costs and begin making money. Ms. Torres explained the drive-in could start as early as June 1 and run through October. The group discussed costs, sponsorships and impact to residents on King Street.

Ms. Chaudhary recommended revisiting the topic in the next meeting and thanked Ms. Torres for a well thought out and presented recommendation.

Mr. Rosenthal moved to table the discussion. Margot seconded. All in favor.

Theater AC unit repair:

Ms. Torres informed the Board that McKinney Mechanical found fan blades need to be replaced during the regular AC maintenance. She would like to have the necessary repairs done before going into the theater season. Ms. Chaudhary questioned if funds for the repair are in the budget. Ms. Torres explained that funds are in the maintenance budget and recognized the town for supporting the ETH.

Mr. Rosenthal moved the authorization to get the air conditioner repaired per the proposal from McKinney for \$2,366. Ms. Hall seconded. All in favor.

Movie support proposal:

Ms. Torres told the group that she has obtained a proposal for the maintenance of the movie equipment from Total Cinema Solutions out of Massachusetts who used to support the Bethel Cinema as well as other cinemas around the country. She explained that there are packages at various levels from as little as \$50/month to as much as \$220/month. Total Cinema will be able to help automate the ETH movies and would be available in the event of an emergency such as a movie going down. They would also provide training, including what can be done on a regular basis to maintain a booth and how to set-up the movie. Mr. Rosenthal asked if this group would replace DNR. Ms. Torres explained that DNR also supports events, but only the movie support would be moved to Total Cinema. Mr. Rosenthal expressed concerns with having support across two businesses and the potential for increased costs. After some discussion the Board concluded that they will need additional information to make a decision.

Mr. Rosenthal moved to table the discussion. Ms. Hall seconded. All in favor.

Comments from Board Members:

None

Adjournment:

Ms. Guman motioned to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Ms. Smith seconded. All in favor.

*A recording of the meeting can be found using the link below, or contact
Kimberly.Chiappetta@newtown-ct.gov.*

[Edmond Town Hall Board of Managers 2-9-2021 meeting](#)

ETH MANAGER'S REPORT – 9 February 2021 – Sheila Torres

Overview

Additional challenges this month include dealing with vendors to resolve the plumbing issues and trying to update movie systems again so we can provide movie offerings. We have secured Wonder Woman for the week of Valentine's Day and plan to offer the following two weekends as the free movies from the library. The library would also like to do a magic show in our theater one Saturday in March. I have been working with the vendors for several hours to update all the systems, which have not been used since last March: point of sale, projector, etc. Not surprising, some minor issues have been found which need to be addressed before we can show movies again. I reached out to Andy Clure to get assistance to train Kat and Belle on the advertising system and he has graciously offered to train. He also offered to help us in any way he could if we decide to move forward with the drive-in. I have had four or five requests and I have begun asking for sponsorship assistance.

- **Grants** – Lauren and I have been working to try to get some grant assistance from the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant as well as others. Lauren applied for a grant through a private foundation and we have been gathering the information necessary so that when the SBA announces the SVOG Grant we are ready to go. Lauren will keep looking and will apply to any grants that she thinks we may be able to get.
- **ADA Bathroom** – Project has officially begun. Timeline given was Feb 1 – Jul 30, 2021. Permit was requested on Feb 1. and I am meeting with the construction company Tuesday, 2/9 10 am to 12 p.m. to go over the specs and project plan and discuss what dates may need to be revised due to events.
- **CIP Exterior Renovations** – I received information back from the two roof vendors and will be scheduling the cleaning and inspection of all gutters and downspouts with one and sending that invoice to Rick Spreyer as agreed. My next move is to put together a plan for the bids with Rick.
- **Plumbing Issues** - I met with the CIRMA insurance adjuster Thursday. The remediation work was completed on Friday 2/6 and McKenney will be here Tue 2/9 to begin the replacement of the faulty waste pipes, water pipes and steam pipes. Our water usage has increased by about 2/3 from 900 gallons last year to about 3000 this year due to the steam leak. It's not likely that we will receive reimbursement from CIRMA. The leak was caused by age and normal wear and tear so they will only cover the incidentals, for example the breaking and repairing of the walls and floors to get to the leak and the remediation needed but they will not cover the new pipes, or the pipe install.
- **eFinance System** - The town has decided to switch to this system effective July 1. Lauren plans to work with the town to include us in the rollover. During our meeting with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the 21/22 Budget, we were asked about our participation in eFinance.
- **Newsletter Changes** – Constant Contact and MailChimp are the two newsletters of choice for email marketing. MailChimp has fewer technical upgrades. Constant Contact would cost about \$90 monthly based on our number of subscribers. I am trying to determine whether it would be better to simply pay for a subscription to a ticketing platform that has a newsletter as part of the subscription. I will know better on Mon. 2/8 after I meet with Audience View (formerly Vendini) representatives.
- **Ticketing Tool** – Mike Guman has been helping me with the research on potential ticketing tools. He has professional experience in this area and volunteered to help. I gave him the business

requirements and he has developed a very useful spreadsheet and done research on several of the potential vendors I had been considering so that we can compare and determine what works best. We are very close to deciding what would be best. His help is welcomed and appreciated.

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- **Rentals for Live Events/Movies/Bookings** – I have been booking more theater events, both as birthday party rentals and recitals. Presently every weekend in June has a recital booked in our theater and we have some new customers from Danbury and Brewster. I have some event rentals booked for March in Alexandria Room but I'm afraid we may have to put them off or cancel them due to capacity restrictions, which have not been lifted for venues like ours.

Work/Inspections Completed

Fire Marshal Inspection – Completed in January, have not received report yet.

Boiler Fire Inspections – Hartford Steam Boiler, completed Feb 2021 (correction from Jan 2021 minutes).

Fire Extinguishers Inspection Completed Jan 2021