



Edmond Town Hall Board of Managers

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, September 14, 2021 - 6:30 P.M.
The Old Court Room, Edmond Town Hall
45 Main Street, Newtown, Connecticut

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

Present: Jen Guman, Betsy Paynter, Margot Hall, Herb Rosenthal, Marie Smith, Armel Romeo Kouassi (arrived 6:34 p.m.)

Absent: None.

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

Members of the Public: None.

Call to Order: Ms. Guman called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Public Participation:

None

Chairman Report and Comment Chairman:

Ms. Guman had nothing to report.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Hall motioned to amend the minutes from the August 17th special meeting to reflect the meeting location, The Old Court Room, Edmond Town Hall, 45 Main Street, Newtown. Mr. Rosenthal seconded. All in favor.

Ms. Guman asked for a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

Mr. Rosenthal motioned to approve the minutes from the special meeting on August 17th, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Kouassi. All in favor.

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

Ms. Torres began with grants, explaining to members that she has documented a list of building operation items that can be paid with grant funds.

Ms. Torres then informed the Board that the Town already presented the Edmond Town Hall's old CIP. There was a miscommunication between the Town and the ETH administration, so there was never an opportunity to present the updated CIP. Mr. Rosenthal expressed the importance of ensuring the CIP deadline is met next year. Ms. Torres laid out a plan to ensure the date is met. She continued to explain that a difference between the two versions was the addition of the air conditioning unit which will be 30 years old and reaching its end of life. Ms.



Guman asked to have the version of the CIP presented by the First Selectman be distributed to the Board. She continued to note the difference in the order of the projects and expressed that she was comfortable with the order in the older version. She agreed with Mr. Rosenthal that they need to ensure deadlines are met. The group then discussed the budget timeline. Ms. Torres explained that she and Ms. DiMartino are in the process of converting the more detailed ETH budget into the higher-level Town format. The first budget draft will be reviewed with the Board in October. Mr. Rosenthal explained the Finance Director receives the budgets in December. After review, the First Selectman and the Finance Director present the budgets to the Board of Selectman in January. It is then forwarded to the Board of Finance in February, and the Legislative Council in March.

Ms. Torres told the group that the Lathrop School of Dance is requesting to make renovations to their rental space and she is asking them to provide sketches in addition to the description of the requested changes.

Mr. Kouassi asked about the New Arts meeting. Ms. Torres said that they asked for a couple of extra days which wasn't expected. He then asked about masking requirements at events. Ms. Torres explained that she is enforcing the Governor's mask mandate which requires attendees wear masks. In the upcoming show band members on the stage will not be masked, but have been vaccinated and will be socially distanced from the audience as per State guidelines.

Ms. Paynter asked for a status on the Wi-Fi. Ms. Torres explained each tenant pays for their own internet services which has resulted in many messy cables on the outside of the building. She has found out from Spectrum that there is no way around this issue. In addition, she was informed that a vendor must be hired for the interior wiring. The plan is to run wiring inside the building so that new tenants can simply connect making hook-up much easier as tenants come and go.

Ms. Torres told members that currently they have sold 220 tickets for the Destination Motown show scheduled this Friday (9/17). Ms. Paynter asked how many tickets need to be sold to break even. Ms. Guman said they would need to sell 300 tickets to make a profit. Other factors in determining profit are the bar sales and walk-in ticket buyers. The group discussed the Arts Festival Friday night concert as potentially being the reason for less ticket sales. In regards to bar sales, Ms. Torres explained the process will be the security person will check ids and provide bracelets. Patrons will then purchase tickets for drinks at one table, and drinks will be poured at another table. The reason for doing this is so that the person pouring drinks does not have to handle money.

Ms. Torres informed the Board of a *T-Mobil Hometown* grant which if awarded, funds will be used to focus on the gym to make it a space that can be used by the community in the event of a power outage or an emergency. Ms. Paynter recommended looking into AARP grants.

Unfinished Business:

COVID – Governor Guidelines Update:



Ms. Guman told the board she has not seen any updated changes. As everyone is aware, masks have been mandated at the local level. Ms. Torres said that ETH staff and security have been asked to enforce the mask mandate for the Friday evening concert.

CIP:

Ms. Guman briefly recapped what was discussed during Ms. Torres's Manager's report.

Newtown Arts Festival: Board Participation - Confirm shifts:

Days/Hours: Saturday, September 18th 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Sunday, September 19th 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Ms. Torres had distributed a sign-up sheet for members to volunteer at the ETH booth at the Newtown Arts Festival. Ms. Guman expressed the importance of having Board representation. The group discussed the activities and ticket giveaways that will be at the booth. Mr. Kouassi recommended providing the opportunity for visitors to donate.

New Business:

Review Movie Performance/consider changing:

Ms. Torres thanked the Board for their patience with letting the staff run the movies this summer. The end results show it is most beneficial to run weekend movies at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m., which can be scheduled around lucrative events. An exception to the recommended movie schedule would be the upcoming Rocky Horror Picture which would be shown at a later time. The group also discussed the Ingersoll movies and Ms. Torres noted the donor's generosity and flexibility in scheduling movies. Members discussed planning for the next fiscal year. Ms. Guman pointed out that there are no ETH sponsored events running after February and if the scheduled events are not profitable they will not be able to schedule events for the remainder of the fiscal year. Ms. Paynter recommended reaching out to other businesses for sponsorship. Ms. Guman explained the high amount of work required to get sponsors. Ms. Paynter recommended considering including in the budget funds additional help for soliciting sponsors and marketing. Ms. Guman clarified that the ETH must find funds to hold events from January through June. Mr. Kouassi asked if the Board has reached out to other Newtown businesses for sponsorship. Ms. Torres said that Newtown Saving Bank has been a sponsor. Mr. Kouassi asked about the timing and popularity of the movies. Ms. Torres then explained the contractual obligations in running movies and that the digital key only works for the contracted dates. Ms. Guman circled back to the recommended movie schedule of 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. on weekends, with a senior matinee on Friday at 1 p.m. Ms. Torres added if the movie being shown is a blockbuster movie they may want to have an extra show.

Ms. Guman asked for a motion to make the change to the movie schedule.

Mr. Kouassi motioned. Ms. Hall seconded. All in favor.

Ms. Torres told the Board that the Rocky Horror Picture Show is being shown, which is an R-rated movie that attracts an older crowd. Ms. Torres said she would like to offer the purchase of wine and beer at these shows. They are also planning to sell bags with props that attendees will use during the show. Ms. Paynter asked if there would be pre-ticket sales. Ms. Torres said yes, which will help them determine how many bags to make. Members discussed how much to sell tickets. Ms. Paynter recommended selling beer from local breweries. Ms. Torres explained



that local breweries do not deliver which makes it difficult. Currently the ETH is getting its liquor from Premier Wine & Liquor in Highland plaza. Ms. Guman said people should be encouraged to come dressed and make it an event.

LSOD (Lathrop School of Dance) Remodeling Plans:

Ms. Torres recapped that the Lathrop School of Dance needs to provide a simple drawing of the renovations they would like to make, and once received she will forward it to the board. She continued to explain that they plan to use the space differently to allow for more area for a removable dance floor. Mr. Rosenthal asked if the school said who they would be using for the renovations. Ms. Torres said she was only made aware of the electrician. Ms. Guman questioned if the ETH had a list of approved vendors. Ms. Torres said no. Mr. Rosenthal said they need to ensure people are insured. Ms. Paynter asked if the school could present their proposed renovation. Ms. Torres said that she could invite them to the next meeting.

Mary Hawley Society:

Ms. Paynter informed the Board that she will be meeting with the Chair of the Mary Hawley Society, Ms. Olszewski, on Thursday. Ms. Guman reminded members that the former treasurer stepped down and transferred the finances to Ms. Olszewski during a meeting. As she understands it, the minutes from this meeting should be sufficient proof for the bank of the transfer. Ms. Paynter asked for confirmation that the roll of the Mary Hawley Society was to perform fundraising for the ETH. Ms. Hall explained that the Board of Managers publishes a wish list and the Mary Hawley Society holds fundraisers to raise money for those items. Ms. Paynter asked if funds could be used to pay musicians. Ms. Hall replied that you have to explain to the Society what the money will be used for. The group discussed how the funds would be transferred. Mr. Rosenthal explained that non-profits can give to other non-profits depending upon their by-laws. The by-laws of the non-profits state what the money can be spent on. Ms. Paynter expressed the importance of having the Mary Hawley Society engaged so there can be on-going projects. The group then discussed how the *Friends of the Library* works with the C.H. Booth Library.

Comments from Board Members:

Ms. Paynter expressed that she felt there is an opportunity for the ETH to work with the Cultural Arts Commission. She recommended an art display that would draw people to visit the ETH. Ms. Torres noted some concerns with insuring the art. She mentioned the Arts Commission used to sponsor the Someday Cinema Series. Members discussed the need for communication with the Arts Commission and other groups such as the Library.

Ms. Hall thanked Ms. Torres for sending the report out early to provide time for review prior to the meeting.

Adjournment:

Mr. Rosenthal motioned to adjourn at 7:56 p.m. Ms. Paynter seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted, Kim Chiappetta, Clerk

ETH MANAGER'S REPORT – 14 Sep 2021 – Sheila Torres

Live Shows – As of Sat Sep 11 we have 187 tickets sold for Destination Motown, we may get up to 40 walk-in tickets, per Rich Goldberg of Ultra Artists. Rich explained that the musicians for Destination Motown will provide proof of vaccination. Audience members will be asked to wear a mask. No proof of vaccination will be required for the audience for this concert or Best of the Eagles, unless regulations require it. Best of the Eagles has sold 118 tickets for the Oct 9 concert.

CIP – Approval needed from Board. Need to continue to refine the numbers. Met with some vendors to try to get AC prices for gym. Will do the same for the theater unit, which will need to be replaced around 2032, the last year on the current CIP planning document. I also hope to get some quotes for tenant offices. The unit will be reaching the end of its useful life by then.

NewArts – Met with NewArts to go over schedule. They removed some dates from their show schedule and added some additional rooms for Nov. rehearsals. Dave Brooker has been contacted to begin discussions.

Lighting Issues – The issue of basic lighting programs for easy use has not yet been addressed. Perhaps when a decision is made about theater support vendor.

LSOD Renovations – Lathrop would like to change its studio space to allow for more dancing space. They have talked with the Building Department and will be providing us with an approved plan for changes.

Wi-Fi – Working to find an easier way to provide wi-fi access to south side offices without the mess of wires outside the building. Both new tenants will need to get wi-fi. When I spoke with Spectrum they said they do only outside wiring and that we must get our own vendor to do the inside wiring. I am first checking with our IT support vendor, since he has installed some wiring for us in the past.

Overview

- **Grants** – I have developed a list of items needed for building operations that can be purchased with some of the grant funds. Most will be related to gym improvements and items that can expand use of the gym. Others are related to Alexandria Room improvements. (See Attachment)
- **CIP Exterior Renovations**–The contractor for the exterior renovations project came back to have another look. They sent me a high-level outline and I want to be sure that everything is covered. They will be sending a plumber out in the next week or so to look at the leaking drainage pipe in Suite 103 (Borough Office).
- **Transition to eFinance** – After speaking with Matt Ariniello of the Community Center, Al Miles in IT and meeting with Bob Tait, it's clear we will need to keep QuickBooks for the customer (receivables) end of our processes and eFinance for the processes. Lauren will have to produce manual reports transferring data from QB to eFinance. I will speak with Carmela at the Board of Education, based on suggestion from Bob Tait and let you know if this changes. In addition, reports to the Board will come from eFinance in the future. They will look different from QuickBooks but the Board will be able to extract the necessary information. Lauren will be sending those eFinance reports to the Board.

Work Completed

- **ADA Bathroom** and lobby women's room improvements are finished. Grab bar in back of toilet was installed as requested by building inspector. We also had to put in different hardware because people were locking themselves out of the bathroom with the previous hardware. The new hardware does not allow that to happen.
- **Lease** completed for Sabrina's Enterprise Productions for Suite 103A. She moved in effective September 9.

ETH MANAGER'S REPORT – 14 Sep 2021 – Sheila Torres - Attachment

ALEXANDRIA ROOM

- 13 new Mity Lite Tables for the Alexandria Room
- 20 new or reupholstered banquet chairs for Alexandria Room
- Sound curtain for outside of Alexandria Room to be used during concerts
- Install donated projector in the Alexandria Room
- Install large retractable screen
- Expand speakers/receiver in Alexandria Room to allow for music, not just voice
- Additional hotel cart
- Rug for Alexandria Room elevator lobby to reduce tracking o
- Divider to conceal bridge tables stored in Alex lobby

GYMNASIUM

- Paint gymnasium walls
- Replace broken wall mats
- Install shades in all windows that can be controlled by remote
- Install divider wall that allows for additional rooms in the gym
- Acquire large portable screen, warming ovens, refrigerator, sink, counter ice maker for warming kitchenette.
- Install P.A. system that allows for voice and music
- Replace ceiling tiles or lock them in place using lathe
- Install sound barrier in ceiling of gym to reduce sound
- Replace gym closet door and hardware
- Purchase additional easy to use chairs and carts that comply with fire code
- Reverse or replace the bathroom staircase to allow for a kitchenette to reside underneath
- Acquire portable staging and drum risers that can be set up in the gym or in other areas

OLD COURT ROOM

- Install sound proofing or acoustical panels to reduce the echo in the room allowing the room to be used for more types of activities

MAIN LOBBY

- Install digital information board that can feature events/movies, building directory and other information.
- Move memorial plaques to other part of the lobby

BUILDING

- Install uniform signage for the suites and for the building
- Develop user friendly directory signage and digital signage with help of designer
- Develop user-friendly rental forms with help of graphic designer
- Acquire consistent point of sale hardware
- Acquire scanning hardware for ticketing
- Acquire laptop/kiosk computer for employees and rentals
- Repair walls, ceiling and windows in staff room.
- Install digital entry on south side gym door for staff to enter staff room.
- Install camera view in box office for use by building manager in the evenings.