



Edmond Town Hall Board of Managers

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, June 8, 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 Guman, Marie Smith, Margot Hall, Anna Wiedemann

Absent: Arnel Romeo Kouassi, Herb Rosenthal

Also Present: Operations Manager - Sheila Torres, Linda Zukauskas – Voices, Kim Chiappetta (clerk)

Call to Order: Ms. Guman called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Public Participation:

None

Chairman Report and Comment Chairman:

Ms. Guman reported to members that for the 20-21 fiscal year they received the expected \$55,000 in trust funds. More than this amount has already been spent on maintenance so the funds will be transferred to the checking account as a reimbursement which will be used for other maintenance items and revenue generating projects. Ms. Hall clarified that the funds are more for repairs and maintenance.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Wiedemann motioned to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on May 11th, 2021. Seconded by Ms. Smith. All in favor.

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

Ms. Torres informed the Board of three items. The first of which is the grease trap that has sprung a leak. While in the process of trying to get the trap repaired, Ms. Torres was made aware that health regulations have changed now requiring grease traps to be underground. This will have to be addressed as a CIP project. Second, when Ms. Torres was on the roof regarding the current roof repair project, she learned there are numerous bats living in the flue. She is trying to figure out what to do as they may be detrimental to the buildings. Thirdly, as part of lighting project, they were hoping to create the ability to easily turn on the lights to show potential customers what the theater would look like for a meeting. It was hoped this could be done via an application on a phone or iPad. Ms. Torres will continue to look into this item.

Ms. Torres also reminded members that she had emailed the official working CIP document to everyone. The Director of Finance, Bob Tait, has asked that they focus on year 5 which addresses key renovations to make the building more modern such as mini split air conditioning units for the offices. She has added a line item for the replacement of windows on the back of the building which have some signs of rot around them and do not have screens. After the roof



project is the parking lot project, followed by the plumbing project. Ms. Torres asked the Board to let her know if they felt any projects needed to be moved around and she would forward their request to the Director of Finance.

Unfinished Business:

COVID – Governor Guidelines Update:

Ms. Guman told the group that the meetings have been done via Zoom for one-year now, and asked if anyone had any concerns with meeting in person. The group discussed that they may need to meet in a different room in order to space everyone out. Board members had no real concerns with meeting in person, so the plan is to resume in person meetings in August.

Annual Review of tenant leases:

Ms. Guman told members she left this on the agenda from the last meeting. There were no changes or questions.

Mary Hawley Society Update:

Ms. Wiedemann began by informing members that Aquila's Nest will begin holding fundraisers on Wednesdays and that she forwarded this information to Ms. Olszewski. Ms. Wiedemann will follow-up. Ms. Guman reminded members that Ms. Olszewski is working on obtaining access to the Mary Hawley Society bank account so funds raised during Fairfield County Giving Day could be transferred to the ETH to cover the costs of the Mail Chimp platform.

Lack of Video and Audio Support:

Ms. Guman reminded everyone of the last meeting when Ms. Torres had a follow-up to try to find a support company for the theater video and audio. Ms. Torres said that she was only able to find companies that provide per event support at a fairly high price; not contractual support. There is per diem support that has filled the gap in some ways at this time. Ms. Torres expressed the importance of having this support with the upcoming live events. Ms. Guman told Ms. Torres and the Board that she received the names of two companies who might be good resources to fill the role or point them in the right direction. Both companies are local.

New Business:

NewArts Rental Space:

Ms. Torres reminded the Board of the proposal from NewArts to rent additional space for their rehearsals. This rehearsal space could be another space in the building and would occur in the month of November. This would be in addition to the rehearsals in December. NewArts is asking if they can pay the same fee they are currently paying at another location. Ms. Guman clarified that NewArts would want to use the space at what they paid at their previous location which is lower than what the ETH currently charges. Ms. Torres said that the amount is not much lower and noted it is more revenue than what was planned for November. Ms. Guman added that she felt this is also a good relationship builder. Ms. Hall asked if the ETH will be able to accommodate them. Ms. Torres said she checked the calendar and found other spaces that were available in the building.

Ms. Guman asked for a motion to approve the change to the proposal made for NewArts to change their rehearsal rate.



Ms. Wiedemann made the motion. Seconded by Ms. Smith. All in favor.

NYFS Request for Outdoor Vendors during Holiday Festival:

Ms. Torres reminded members that the ETH has been the host location for the Newtown Youth and Family Services Holiday Festival. This year they are proposing to use the Alexandria room for an indoor vendor bazaar. In addition, they are planning to have vendors outside in front of building so Ms. Torres is presenting this to the Board for their approval. In the event of inclement weather, vendors will be moved into the gym. The Board had no concerns.

VNA Space:

Ms. Guman asked members for the history of the Visiting Nurses Association (VNA) space. She noted that the space had been closed since the 2020 pandemic shutdown. Ms. Wiedemann told the group that the VNA was open Wednesdays 12 – 3 and Saturdays 9 – 12. She then read old bylaws that had come from Mae Schmidle which documents that the thrift shop was founded in 1938 by 12 local women with the purpose of providing dental equipment and services for local school children. It was originally located in the Chase building where they were housed rent free, and later moved to the town hall. Their present location in the Town Hall was believed to have been originally set aside by the Building Committee for a nurse's office. It was fully utilized by the VNA prior to Medicare. Nurses would be at the location for office hours where people could stop by. Nurses would also go by horse and buggy to make house calls. Ms. Wiedemann noted that the bylaws do not mention anything about the Town giving the space to the VNA rent free. She added that the VNA may have gone to the Board who may have felt that since their work benefited the community it was not right to charge them rent. Ms. Torres said there were no documented connection to the wishes of Mary Hawley. Mary Hawley's will only mentioned that she wanted the Town Hall offices and Probate office in the building. Ms. Guman said that based upon this the space has potential to be rentable. Ms. Torres confirmed that the Board is not bound by anything. Ms. Wiedemann asked if Ms. Torres if she was ever approached by anyone for the space. Ms. Torres said no and that not many people are aware that the VNA thrift shop is there. Ms. Guman said the Board can have a conversation with the VNA members who are running the thrift shop to learn of their vision and plans. The group then discussed the benefits of the space having direct access from the outside and that the renter will have the ability to access the space 24/7. With no objections from the Board, Ms. Guman will follow-up with the VNA.

Marketing Budget:

Ms. Torres told members that she was trying to determine whether the ETH can move forward with spending some of the funds set aside for marketing. Over \$10,000 had been budgeted for the past fiscal year, and she would like to use the funds toward marketing help. In the past, the budget was primarily used to promote movies but they no longer show as many movies. There is a need to advertise to not only let the public know that the ETH is open again, but also to help make the music series successful. In addition, sponsors were promised levels of publicity that must be fulfilled. Providing sponsors with good coverage will allow for the opportunity to approach them again for sponsorship in the future. The group discussed that the 20-21 budget funds must be spent by the end of June and reviewed the budget lines. Ms. Guman noted that the funds will be shifted from marketing movies to marketing live events. Ms. Torres asked if any members had experience in radio marketing. Ms. Guman recommended the possibility of bartering with local radio stations and gave the example of providing them with free tickets if



they will promote the show. Ms. Torres said that the bands' management do try to get interviews but she was not certain how much they could promote the sponsors, but at least the series would be promoted.

Sponsorships:

See *Marketing Budget*.

Restart Custodian Recruitment:

Ms. Torres told the Board that the ETH is getting busy again and the Bridge Club returns next month. She reminded everyone that their custodian left for another job opportunity during the pandemic. Existing staff have been helpful in completing the remaining work, but will have to return to their regular job roles. Ms. Guman asked if Ms. Torres if this job role was funded in the 21-22 budget. Ms. Torres confirmed that the custodian was still employed at the time the budget was approved so the salary for this job role is included in the budget. Ms. Torres will begin searching for a replacement.

CIP Discussion:

Ms. Guman began by explaining that her questions on the CIP are around the timing. Ms. Torres said the Finance Director, Bob Tait, usually sends out schedule which is expected to be coming soon. In the Department Head meeting on the June 3rd, Mr. Tait said to focus on year 5. Ms. Guman asked for clarification. Ms. Torres explained that they need to review year 5 and she will need to obtain new quotes to update the dollars. Ms. Torres told members that the Director of Public Works recommended the installation of the underground grease trap be include in the parking lot paving project, so she will need to update the CIP dollars for this project also. She also informed members of the good news that the test results of the roof showed the potential strength was good so it can be restored and extend the useful life for 10 years. However, this does mean that the leaks are from other areas. The group continued to discuss the other issues. The savings of not having to replace the roof may allow for other areas to be repaired.

Staff Review Process:

Ms. Torres began by recommending the Board review how the ETH is being staffed at this time. She has found that theater assistance is a technical and specialized role. She asked the group to consider the shift to more live events and the expertise required. If the ETH is awarded the *Shuttered Venue Operators grant*, Ms. Torres hopes to use the funds for theater capacity building. She would like to staff the ETH as some other theaters do which works well and is not expensive. Ms. Guman said that Ms. Torres raised a good point with the need to review existing staff and the shift in how they will operate. Ms. Torres emphasized the need for an expert who can assist in determining the different key skills sets required for the shift in operation. Ms. Guman asked Ms. Torres that, based upon her experience, she begin documenting the needs she has observed. Ms. Guman told the Board that the First Selectman put her in touch with a father and son who have extensive backgrounds in live events. The son is a new resident of Newtown. Both would like to assist the ETH in any way possible and would make themselves available when necessary until the ETH is able to find a contractor. They may also be able to assist with documenting what the future staff should look like.



Ms. Torres shifted the conversation to employee performance reviews. She reminded the Board that last year the Town did not approve ETH funds for wage increases. Ms. Torres told everybody of the many employees who are working very hard and that the building cannot operate without them. She expressed her gratitude of the staff and how customers have reached out telling her of their wonderful experiences with the great staff. The staff is definitely worth more and it is unfair. Ms. Wiedemann added that it is demoralizing. Ms. Hall proposed that an annual performance review be scheduled. Ms. Guman said the annual review needs to be a consistent annual process. Ms. Torres asked if this would be necessary if there is no money in the budget for wage increases. Ms. Guman recognized the important of maintaining the business and the valuable employees. She continued to express that the Board is setting up the ETH to turn a corner and feels they will be able to get to a good place. Ms. Guman continued to explain the importance of having annual reviews on file in the event there are funds made available for the Board to show staff appreciation thorough an increase or bonus. There may also be opportunities to add job roles that can possibly be filled by reviewing current staff accomplishment. Ms. Torres said she will update the existing performance review document and submit it to the Board for review. Ms. Guman expressed the importance of doing this even for the past fiscal year.

Comments from Board Members:

No comments.

Adjournment:

Ms. Wiedemann motioned to adjourn at 7:59 p.m. Ms. Hall 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 6/8/2021 meeting](#)

ETH MANAGER'S REPORT – 8 Jun 2021 – Sheila Torres

Highlights/Issues

Building and CIP Projects – Have been very busy managing vendors and details with both the ADA bathrooms and the roof and building renovations. Will be meeting with mason vendor on Thursday to look at the masonry part of the project.

Bob Tait has asked that we focus our CIP planning efforts on year 5. Year 5 for us involves the improvement of key areas of the building. I may also need to add the grease trap to the parking lot project. This is based on advice from Fred Hurley who said that since the plumbing has to go underground based on regulations, we might as well do it when we do the parking lot. Need to find out pricing and design because the Borough may need to be consulted on this if the work involves changes to the outside of the building.

Grease Trap Leak – Our grease trap in the kitchen is leaking. We have put in a stop gap repair but need to replace it. I am trying to find a plumber who can do this type of work. I will be reaching out to the vendor who installed our kitchen to find out if they can help with this because regulations have changed and we may need to do something quite different.

Bats – During the evening roof inspection I discovered that a large bat colony is living in the flue. I am trying to determine what to do about this. Bats can cause damage to buildings and they can be a health risk, but they are also protected. I have to reach out to a few vendors to find out what can be done.

Ap for Lighting Application – this work was not completed as I had hoped. It was going to be part of the lighting work that DNR was going to finish off, but they ran out of time on our contract. This means I am unable to easily light the theater when a potential renter comes by to look for a simple meeting or similar event

Live Shows – Have set up the ticketing for the upcoming live shows but have not yet made them go live. Need to determine pricing for all concerts. Need to pay the deposit for Destination Motown his coming week.

Overview

- **Grants** – Have not heard yet on the grant that Lauren submitted but we are in the third priority group. We don't believe there were any red flags in our application. Will keep you posted.
- **ADA Bathroom** – The work has begun and already we are going to need to submit a change order because the wiring we need needs to be extricated from the wiring in the CVH Foundation office.
- **CIP Exterior Renovations** – Moisture test results came back. The roofs, both the 1950s and the theater, are eligible for restoration rather than replacement. They were last done in 1997.
- **Ticketing Tool** – Have been working with Ticketleap

Work Completed

- **The fire alarm system and rolling fire door have been tested.** All batteries are in good condition. One will need to be replaced in two years, so I will put it in the 22/23 budget. The other two batteries will need to be replaced in 2024, so they will need to go into the 23/24 budget year.
- **Mailchimp has been set up** and Jen Guman sent out the first issue.
- **Website Page for Movies** has been updated to include links to rentals and online concession and to allow for a better graphic way to advertise the movies on a monthly basis.