

Agenda
Town of Skowhegan
Opera House Committee Meeting
2:00 pm
Wednesday February 28, 2024
Municipal Building – Council Room

Committee Members:

Cara Mason, Chairman
Lyn Govoni
Jeff Hewett
Fred Liebfried
Todd Smith
Donna Ferenc McGorty
William Finley

Recording Secretary:

Lisa Gallant

Call meeting to order.

- 1. Discussion and decision to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2024 meeting.**
- 2. Discussion and decision regarding the Lease Agreement and Business Plan from “Light’s Up Production”.**
- 3. Discussion and decision to recommend \$100,000.00 for the reserve account in the FY 2025 budget.**
- 4. Other business.**

Adjourn meeting.

Minutes
Town of Skowhegan
Opera House Committee Meeting
3:00 PM
Tuesday January 9, 2024
Municipal Building -Council Room

Members:

Cara Mason, Chairman
Lyn Govoni
Jeff Hewett
Donna Ferenc McGorty
Todd Smith

Absent:

Fred Liebfried

Recording Secretary:

Lisa Gallant

Call meeting to order.

Cara Mason called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm

- 1. Discussion and decision to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2023 meeting.**
Jeff 1st / Donna 2nd Vote 5/0 passes

- 2. Discussion and decision on the Lease Agreement and Business Plan from “Light’s Up Production”.**

Todd Smith asked Lyn Govoni if she could recap or give an overview on what the committee is looking at.

Lyn Govoni explained, “Light’s Up Production” is looking to become the managing and producing entity for the Skowhegan Opera House in collaboration with the Town of Skowhegan. Also in the Lease agreement, the Town agrees to give us space in the building to use as an office. Also, it talks about all of the space that they would be managing, the Opera House itself and the lobby area. Lyn said that is a very basic synopsis.

Todd Smith says he was happy to see that “Lights Up Production” won the Pitch contest. He did review the Lease, and he is not a big fan of it. He has concerns and feels that things need to be addressed.

Jeff Hewett asked about the Concession stand, and where it would be located?

Lyn Govoni said, in the lobby upstairs and it would have regular concession items.

Todd Smith said the Selectmen approved water only for the Opera House.

Todd Smith asked about the 90-day notice that would be expected if the Town were to need the space. He doesn’t think a 90-day notice will work. More of a 30-day notice, might be reasonable.

Jeff Hewett suggested a shared calendar, so everyone would know what is coming for productions.

Donna McGorty added, nothing could be booked for Tuesdays due to alternating Selectman Meetings and Planning Board Meetings on Tuesdays.

Jeff Hewett mentioned that if this Lease happens there would need to be one or two that are responsible for having a code to the building.

Todd mentioned that there are no rights of council in the lease. Meaning that if things do not work out, the town will not be able to stop the lease.

Donna McGorty asked if termination of the lease, what happens with Opera House Renovation money that would be raised.

Jeff Hewett said with SEDC, if that goes away, all assets revert back to the town.

We need some type of preapproval if there will be structural changes. The town needs to raise funds for the stairs to be fixed. Also, we need a way to separate the heat, lights, cooling. He said we could maybe track it for a few months to see what the change in bills are.

Cara said we could go over budget if there a lot of shows. There may also be penalty's if we go over on propane as we have a contract.

Cara also mentioned the Lease says the Town would put "Lights Up Production" under their insurance policy. But it needs to say that "Lights Up Production" will add the Town of Skowhegan under their policy.

Several items in the Lease Agreement and Business Plan need rewriting or reworded.

Jeff, Todd and Cara all mentioned the Lease and Business Plan needs to be fixed and brought back to the Opera House Committee. If in agreement then, take it to the Selectman to see if they have interest in leasing and then to the Attorney.

3. Other Business.

Adjourn meeting. 4:32 pm

LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN AND LIGHTS UP PRODUCTIONS

This Agreement made and entered into as of the ____ day of _____, 2024, by and between the Town of Skowhegan, Lessor, and the Lights Up Productions, Lessee. The terms and conditions of this Lease are as follows:

ARTICLE 1 - LEASE TERM

The period of this lease shall be for a period of three (3) years to be measured from the date written above. The term shall be extended by one year for each One hundred thousand (\$100,000) dollars invested in the infrastructure of the lease premises.

ARTICLE 2 - PREMISES

A. The Premises to be rented shall be defined as the stage (including the backstage and dressing room areas), orchestra, balcony and lobby areas of the facility commonly called the Opera House as well as the ancillary areas located on the second floor of the Municipal Building and immediately adjacent to the stage and seating area. The ancillary areas referred to herein specifically include the box office on the ground floor, the office located on the second floor adjacent to the lobby, and the break room on the second floor located next to the current elevator after the room is available. When in production, the premises include the first-floor hallway, council room and public bathrooms.

B. The Lessee intends to undertake, at its own expense and with the approval of the Lessor, the construction of men's and women's dressing rooms. In addition, this renovation and expansion project will include a lighting and sound booth, new lighting rigging, and utilizing the existing newly purchased lights as well as additional lighting as acquired.

C. The entrance Municipal Building utilizing the lower lobby, the stairs to the second floor, and the existing elevator shall not be considered part of the premises. However, Lessee has the right of access to these places as necessary to conduct business.

D. In conjunction with the said Town, the Lessee shall develop and install men's and women's bathrooms, as well as a potential fire escape.

ARTICLE 3 - RENTAL TERMS

A. Lessee shall pay a rental to the Lessor of one dollar (\$1) per year payable on or before December 31 of each year unless the Lessor and Lessee agree to different terms as provided for below.

B. In recognition of the value of the cultural benefits and contribution to the region's economy that Lessee brings to the Town and that of the greater Skowhegan area, Lessor shall pay the cost of the majority of the utilities during the term of this Lease as part of Lessor's contribution

in support of Lessee's activities. Said apportionment to be an agreed-upon portion of utilities based on an analysis of the Municipal Building's heating and electrical systems, with Lessee responsible for usage during its times of use of the second-floor premises.

ARTICLE 4 - RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF THE LESSEE

A. The Lessee shall have full responsibility for the production or booking of shows, lighting, staging, maintenance, janitorial service, and any requirement for security personnel or personnel required by law or fire prevention purposes.

B. The Lessee is a not-for-profit corporation and as such has agreed as a condition of this Lease to utilize all funds resulting from revenue, net of other legitimate and accounted-for expenditures, for the operation, repair, improvement, protection and maintenance of the premises, as well as funding needed for fundraising to achieve the improvements of the premises.

C. The Lessee shall obtain the express written consent of the Town of Skowhegan before undertaking any permanent alteration of any portion of the Premises or additions or fixtures to any portion of the Premises. Any such addition or fixture that is approved becomes a part of the Premises and is owned by the Lessor. The Lessor shall not unreasonably withhold approval of said requests.

D. The Lessee has the right to operate a concession stand and agrees to apply and hold all necessary permits required. The Lessee shall be solely responsible for the cleanliness and maintenance of the concession area.

E. The Lessee shall, at its sole cost and expense, comply with all laws and ordinances pertaining to said Premises and the use thereof. Lessee shall not be required to make major structural repairs at its expense.

F. The Lessor may utilize the Opera House for government purposes at no cost, provided that Lessor makes such a request in writing at least 30 days in advance of proposed use and no conflicting event has been scheduled. Lessee shall not unreasonably withhold approval of said request. Should the Lessor require the space for an emergency need for a date already scheduled by Lessee, said need arising within the 30-day notice period and no other suitable public space is available, the Lessee will make every effort to accommodate the combined use.

G. Lessee agrees not to book the Premises on the date of the annual Town Meeting as it is established each year.

H. Lessee agrees to minimize noise (rehearsals, performances, etc) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Monday through Friday, when the municipal offices are open, and to withhold booking the premises on Tuesdays. However, non-public use by the Lessee is allowed.

ARTICLE 5 - RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF THE PARTIES

The Lessor shall be responsible for the general care and maintenance of the exterior entrance, stairs, walkways, lower lobby, first-floor restrooms, council room, interior stairs to the Opera House, and the elevator (including the outdoor elevator entrance and walkway).

When the Lessee is utilizing the premises for events then the Lessee is responsible for the care and maintenance of the exterior entrances, lower lobby, first-floor restrooms, interior stairs to the Opera House the Council Room, and elevator, when in use outside of Municipal Building hours.

ARTICLE 6 - NO RIGHT OF ASSIGNMENT

Lessee shall not have any right to assign or sublet the Premises or any interest herein. However, Lessee shall have the right to rent said Premises for performances. Such rental do not constitute a sublease or assignment within the meaning of this provision.

ARTICLE 7 - INSURANCE

A. Lessor and Lessee shall obtain and keep in effect at all times during the term hereof, a general liability and fire insurance policy.

B. Lessee's policy must specifically provide coverage for Lessee's wrongful acts incident to the use of the Premises. Such insurance shall name Lessor as an additional insured. Lessee shall provide for a certificate of insurance as evidence of such insurance.

C. Lessor's policy must specifically provide coverage for Lessor's wrongful acts incident to the use of the premises. Such insurance shall name Lessee as an additional insured. Lessor shall provide for a certificate of insurance as evidence of such insurance.

D. Such general liability and fire insurance maintained by Lessee and Lessor each shall provide liability limits for not less than one Million (\$1,000,000) for personal injury to or death of one person in one accident, and three Million (\$3,000,000) for personal injury to or death of two or more persons in any one occurrence.

E. Lessee agrees to notify Lessor in writing as soon as is practicable of any claim, demand or action arising out of an occurrence covered hereunder of which Lessee has knowledge. Lessee agrees in any event to indemnify Lessor against any claims which may be made arising out of Lessee's use or neglect of the Leased Premises.

F. Lessor agrees to notify Lessee in writing as soon as is practicable of any claim, demand or action arising out of an occurrence covered hereunder of which Lessor has knowledge. Lessor agrees in any event to indemnify Lessee against any claims which may be made arising out of Lessor's use or neglect of the common areas adjacent to the Leased Premises.

ARTICLE 8 - USE OF FUNDS RAISED

To the extent that funds raised from the public or entities for specific renovations, said funds shall be only used for specific renovations. Funds gathered from the public or entities for general operations, including event proceeds, shall be retained by Lessee for its operational needs and for its share of general maintenance needs of the premises. Lessee shall apportion some general operations funds to renovations as Lessee's financial situation allows.

ARTICLE 9 - DISCRIMINATION

Lessee hereby covenants not to discriminate against any applicant for use of said Premises for any of the reasons that may be prohibited by federal or state law, and to require a similar covenant on the part of any party using said Premises within a notice that in a failure to comply with said covenants, the party's use shall be terminated instantly.

ARTICLE 10 - TERMINATION OF LEASE

The Lessee shall be able to terminate this lease upon ninety (90) days written notice to Lessor in the event that Lessee determines the stated goals of the lease are unobtainable for any reason, including, but not limited to, lack of finding and/or lack of manpower to achieve the goals. Any funds remaining in Lessee's accounts shall be disbursed according to the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code § 501(c)(3), and according to the requirements of the Maine charitable organization laws.

The Lessor shall be able to terminate this lease upon ninety (90) days notice for good and just cause. Should Lessor terminate said lease while there are outstanding contracts for the use of the Opera House, the Lessor shall assume all obligations and proceeds thereunder.

Dated: _____, 2024

TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN

Witness

By: _____

Dated: _____, 2024

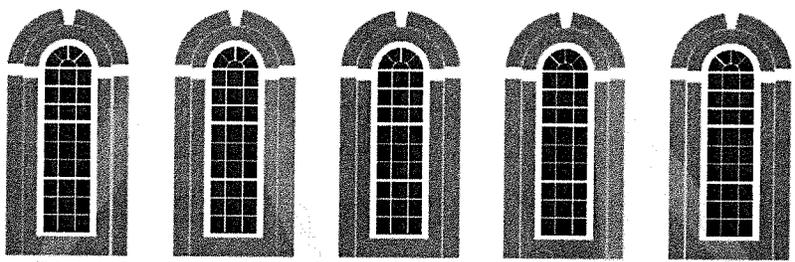
LIGHTS UP PRODUCTIONS

Witness

By: _____

Business Plan For

LIGHTS UP



Five arched window icons, each with a grid pattern, arranged in a horizontal row.



Four microphone icons, each on a stand, arranged in a horizontal row.

PRODUCTIONS

Revitalizing the Skowhegan Opera House

To Be Submitted To
The Opera House Committee of The Town of Skowhegan
-Skowhegan, Maine-

Lights Up Productions
Lyn Govoni, President
P.O. Box 724
Skowhegan, ME 04976
207.399.3181
lightsupskowhegan@gmail.com

Executive Summary

The Skowhegan Opera House is an 840-seat hidden gem on the second floor of Skowhegan's Municipal Building. Built in 1907, it is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is currently underutilized, having mostly regularly scheduled dance recitals each year. It is also very much in need of stage equipment updates and renovations. Over the past decade, minimal funds have been raised.

Lights Up Productions is in its start-up phase as a domestic nonprofit corporation in the state of Maine. To create this successful business, its Officers include Lyn Govoni, Bryant Cyr, Kim Kennedy, and Karol Kish Youney. The Officers bring years of experience in arts and entertainment, bookkeeping, and insurance industries as well as being on past fundraising committees. Through fundraising and producing opera house seasons, Lights Up Productions will bring engaging arts and entertainment experiences to the historic Skowhegan Opera House. This "place to watch" will become a destination that residents are proud of and visitors will fall in love with.

To establish Lights Up Productions, all corporation Officers and Directors will be volunteers until we can find, and pay a salary to, an Executive Director. Our number one goal is to fundraise using a variety of methods to secure financial support from individuals, businesses, foundations, or government agencies. We will apply for grants by hiring a grant writer and ask for donations and sponsors, host events in various locations, launch a capital campaign, and eventually create membership and subscription programs.

Secondly, we will produce concerts, plays, and comedy shows, as well as other public events, along with the ongoing, regularly scheduled dance recitals. We plan to add theater camps and school shows to our line-up by the third year of operation. At our arts and entertainment shows, we will offer concessions and Skowhegan Opera House souvenirs. Tickets to our productions will range from \$15.00 to \$30.00 in congruence with industry standards and production expenses. However, we will also have an Arts Access program to allow free access to our arts programming and/or arts education opportunities. Tickets to shows produced through a rental agreement will be priced by the renter.

Updates and renovations for the Skowhegan Opera House will occur in collaboration with the Town of Skowhegan once we have the funding necessary for them. Lights Up Productions will manage our historic opera house using a delicate balance between preservation and modernization, a strong financial strategy, community engagement, and a commitment to providing diverse programming. Ongoing vigilance in addressing any potential risks of our operation is essential for the long-term success of the venue.

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Business Description

Mission Statement: Accessible to all in our community, Lights Up Productions will bring engaging arts and entertainment experiences to the historic Skowhegan Opera House. This “place to watch” will become a destination that residents are proud of and visitors will fall in love with.

Lights Up Productions is a nonprofit corporation in the state of Maine, anticipating beginning our fundraising phase and producing events by March of 2024. Our current Officers are President, Lyn Govoni, Vice President, Bryant Cyr, Treasurer, Kim Kennedy, and Secretary, Karol Kish Youney. Our Corporate Clerk is John W. Youney, Esq. Our current Board of Directors includes Hannah K. Davis, Billie Clark, Grace Lommel, Alicia Nicholls, and Zachary Longyear. Our Advisors and Consultants include Katherine Quinn, Fred Liebfried, Jon Kimbell, and Melvin Burnham. The organization will file a Form 1023 to establish IRC 501(c)(3) status. All corporation Officers and Directors will be volunteers until we can find and pay a salary to an Executive Director. The ideal office space for the organization is within a room in the Skowhegan Opera House lobby area on the second floor of the Municipal Building at 225 Water Street, Skowhegan, Maine. Mail for the nonprofit will be delivered to P.O. Box 724, Skowhegan, ME 04976, across the street from the Municipal Building.

On November 14, 2023, Lights Up Productions officially became a nonprofit organization and we have received our Employer Identification Number (EIN). We held our Organizational Meeting and Initial Director’s Meeting on November 29, 2023, to establish our initial governing documents and policies (including our ByLaws). We have obtained our accountant and will apply for 501(c)(3) status through completing and submitting Form 1023 to the IRS. It may take 9 months to 1 year to obtain our 501(c)(3) tax status, so we have sought a Fiscal Sponsor to be eligible to apply for and receive grant money. We will also apply for charitable solicitation and obtain any other business licenses and permits required. With a recommendation from the Opera House Committee of the Town of Skowhegan, we hope to be on the Agenda by March of 2024 for a Town of Skowhegan Board of Selectmen meeting to ask for their vote in favor of Lights Up Productions to use/share the ideal office space within the Municipal Building (mentioned above) and to accept Lights Up Productions as the producing and fundraising entity for Skowhegan Opera House. This would mean that we would become the Opera House Manager for the Town of Skowhegan, working closely with the Town’s Opera House Committee.

Lights Up Productions will be fully insured by Church Mutual Insurance after we are voted in as the producing and fundraising entity by the Board of Selectmen.

Operations and Location

Lights Up Productions currently does not have a physical office. Our plan is for the business to be run part-time by volunteers for the first 6 months. Per our ByLaws, we will have regular board meetings every quarter, special meetings as called for, and an annual meeting held on the 2nd Monday of August of each year at a time and place determined by the Directors. Volunteers will put in their own time to complete tasks based on the agenda items from our board meetings.

Our ideal office space for Lights Up Productions is within a room in the Skowhegan Opera House lobby area on the second floor of the Municipal Building at 225 Water Street, Skowhegan, Maine. To obtain the office space, we have composed a first draft of a Lease Agreement with the Town of Skowhegan. We will present it to the Opera House Committee and, with their recommendation, to the Board of Selectmen. In the agreement, it is noted that we agree to minimize noise (rehearsals, performances, etc.) during their Municipal Building office hours, Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, and to withhold booking the premises on Tuesdays. If we do not obtain the ideal office space, we may hold our meetings and also put in work hours at a variety of other locations, including local restaurants, the Skowhegan Center for Entrepreneurship, or any of the available office locations in Skowhegan. The Skowhegan Economic & Community Development Office has provided Lights Up Productions with a list of spaces and contact information for their owners.

Products and Services

First and foremost, Lights Up Productions will fundraise to update theater equipment and renovate the beautiful and historic Skowhegan Opera House. We will fundraise using a variety of methods to secure financial support from individuals, businesses, foundations, or government agencies. We will ask for donations and sponsors, apply for grants by hiring a grant writer, host events in various locations, launch a capital campaign, and create membership and subscription programs.

Once we are on a roll and increasing our bank account balance, we will produce concerts, plays, and comedy shows, along with the ongoing, regularly scheduled dance recitals. We plan to add theater camps and school shows to our line-up by the third year of operation. At our arts and entertainment shows, we will offer concessions and Skowhegan Opera House souvenirs. Tickets to our productions will range from \$15.00 to \$30.00 in congruence with industry standards and production expenses. However, we will also have an Arts Access program to allow free access to our arts programming and/or arts education opportunities. Tickets to shows produced through a rental agreement will be priced by the renter.

Market/Industry Analysis

Opera Houses in Maine

1. Market:

Opera houses in Maine cater to a niche audience interested in opera, classical music, theater, and cultural events.

They often host a variety of performances beyond opera, such as concerts, ballet, and drama, making them cultural hubs for the community.

2. Size:

Maine has several notable opera houses, including the Merrill Auditorium in Portland, the Collins Center for the Arts in Orono, and the Camden Opera House.

The size of these opera houses can vary significantly, with seating capacities ranging from a few hundred to several thousand.

3. Growth Potential:

The growth potential of opera houses depends on various factors, including their location, programming, community support, and the broader cultural landscape.

To assess growth potential, consider factors such as audience demographics, funding opportunities, and ability to adapt to changing cultural and technological trends.

4. Industry Trends (as of 2022):

Diversification of Programming: Opera houses have been diversifying their programming to attract a wider audience. This includes hosting a range of cultural events, from classical performances to pop concerts and community gatherings.

Digital Engagement: The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital platforms for live streaming and virtual events. Opera houses have been exploring online engagement to reach wider audiences.

Community Engagement: Opera houses are increasingly focused on community engagement and educational programs to foster a love for the arts, particularly among younger generations.

Sustainability: Sustainability and environmental responsibility have become important trends. Many cultural institutions, including opera houses, are taking steps to reduce their carbon footprint.

Competition

Lights Up Productions has two local competitors. Waterville Opera House is located 30 minutes southeast of Skowhegan Opera House and is fairly close to Interstate 95. It is well-established and has a full season of arts and entertainment and children's theater camps each year. Our other competition would be Lakewood Theater. It is located 10 minutes northwest of Skowhegan Opera House on U.S. Route 201. They have a summer season of 9 shows, running from late May to late September each year. They also offer children's and teen's summer theater camps. To be respectful of our sister theater, we will not have stage productions (other than the summer dance recitals) during the very warm months of June, July, and August. We will continue to hold different fundraising events, however.

Lights Up Productions' events on the Skowhegan Opera House stage will be attended by residents and tourists who do not wish to travel 30 minutes away to see shows. Our venue is conveniently located at the southern end of the Old Canada Road National Scenic Byway for our customers traveling from the north. Because of our free access option, and our low ticket prices, people will choose to come to the Skowhegan Opera House. There are several downtown restaurants to have a meal and there are nearby hotels and motels. Once the Spinning Mill has hotel rooms available, what a fantastic get-away it would be to see a show and stroll a few blocks away to stay overnight or for a weekend!

Marketing Strategy

Target Market Defined:

Lights Up Productions has looked at marketing strategies for both opera house renovations and programming.

For opera house renovations, there is a diverse group of individuals, organizations, and stakeholders who share an interest in preserving, promoting, and enhancing the cultural and artistic significance of opera houses. This group can include arts and culture enthusiasts, philanthropists and donors, local and national governments, arts and educational institutions, corporate sponsors, opera companies and performers, historic preservation advocates, the tourism and hospitality industry, local communities, and/or arts and cultural nonprofits.

For opera house programming, the target market also can be quite diverse and typically includes opera enthusiasts, classical music lovers, theatergoers, families, students, tourists, visitors, season subscribers, corporate and VIP clients, local communities, cultural and art organizations, emerging audiences (contemporary/experimental productions), donors and sponsors, and online and digital audiences.

Together our Officers and Directors will identify which top 5 markets to target for renovations and programming once we are an established nonprofit.

Offline Strategy:

Lights Up Productions plans to hold community outreach events, such as whiteboard brainstorming meetings regularly at local restaurants. We will periodically schedule public presentations by conducting Skowhegan Opera House tours and having a local History House affiliate, Melvin Burnham, give his presentation called "A Handsome Structure" to residents and visitors alike. We will report on our activities at Skowhegan Board of Selectmen meetings once as requested. They are in session every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month and can be accessed online as well. We will partner with local businesses, schools, and community groups to host joint fundraisers and events. We will organize fundraising galas to attract potential donors and supporters. We will partner with schools to organize field trips to the opera house for tours and children's theatrical performances. We will recognize donors and supporters on acknowledgment boards in the opera house, in our programs and advertisements, and in our opening comments on stage. One of our future dreams is to have colorful, moving spotlights shining onto the Skowhegan Opera House windows at night on the Water Street side and the Kennebec River side from three days before our events until its completion (not during night performances, of course).

Online Strategy:

Lights Up Productions will utilize social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to share regular updates, behind-the-scenes content, stories, and visually appealing posts about Skowhegan Opera House's history and revitalization journey. We will create a dedicated, informative website for our project, including our goals, progress updates, and ways for website visitors to get involved or donate. We will build an email list of subscribers interested in our revitalization efforts. We will use online surveys and feedback forms to gather input and opinions from the online community, allowing them to have a say in the revitalization process.

Risk Analysis & Response

Running programming at a historical opera house can be a rewarding endeavor, but it also comes with certain potential risks. To effectively overcome them and ensure the successful operation of our beautiful gem of a venue, we will need to consider several risks. Successful management of a historical opera house requires a delicate balance between preservation and modernization, a strong financial strategy, community engagement, and a commitment to providing diverse programming. Ongoing vigilance in addressing these potential risks is essential for the long-term success of the venue.

1. Structural and Maintenance Issues:

 Risk: The Skowhegan Opera House has structural issues due to its age. Specifically, the antiquated rigging system is not safe to pull lights or curtains up and down and the ceiling above the stage area is not sound enough to hold the weights of up-to-date rigging, lights, and curtains.

 Solution: Work with preservation experts and engineers who specialize in historic structures to ensure the venue remains safe and sound. Regularly schedule inspections and maintain the space to address issues promptly.

2. Financial Sustainability:

 Risk: Operating a historical opera house can be expensive and it may be challenging to generate enough revenue to cover costs.

 Solution: Diversify revenue sources by offering a variety of programming, including concerts, lectures, and private events. Develop strong fundraising and sponsorship strategies. Engage with the local community and seek public and private grants to support operations.:

3. Cultural Relevance/Challenging Audience Demographics:

 Risk: Historical opera houses may struggle to remain culturally relevant, posing challenges to maintaining contemporary audiences.

 Solution: Develop a diverse programming lineup that appeals to the changing demographics of a broad audience. Engage with community and cultural groups to understand local interests.

4. Community Engagement and Support:

 Risk: Fostering community engagement and garnering local support can be challenging.

 Solution: Actively involve the local community in decision-making, and promote Skowhegan Opera House as a cultural asset to the area. Organize events and programs that cater to the interests and needs of the local population

5. Funding Shortfalls:

 Risk: Programming may face funding shortfalls that will impact the quality and quantity of performances.

 Solution: Create a strong financial plan that accounts for various revenue streams, including ticket sales, donations, grants, and sponsorships. Regularly evaluate and adjust the budget to ensure financial stability.

Management

Lyn Govoni is the President of Lights Up Productions, Bryant Cyr is the Vice President, Kim Kennedy is the Treasurer, and Karol Kish Youney is the Secretary. Lyn comes to this organization with 4 years of experience as Chair for the Friends of Skowhegan Opera House, a committee of Wesserunsett Arts Council, established to support the programs and fundraising goals of the Skowhegan Opera House Committee to perform necessary renovations. Lyn has received many donations and sponsorships for events held throughout Somerset County and on the Skowhegan Opera House stage and has been responsible for the marketing and bookkeeping for those events. Bryant Cyr owns a freelance company called Points North Entertainment and is also the Production Manager for Waterville Opera House. He has worked for theaters throughout the United States. Kim Kennedy is a Business Administration Department faculty member at Kennebec Community College and has experience on the boards of Skowhegan Nursery School and Lake George Regional Park. Karol Kish Youney is an insurance specialist with experience as Secretary for the Friends of Skowhegan Opera House, as stage manager for Aqua City Actors Theater (ACAT) in Waterville, Sparrow's Nest Theater in Industry, and Skowhegan's Park Street Players.

Lights Up Productions will use Skowhegan Savings Bank for any necessary bank funding because they are an amazing community-oriented bank. We have opened a nonprofit bank account there using a winning check from the Skowhegan Center for Entrepreneurship Fall 2023 Business Pitch Contest. Gervais & Associates, LLC in Waterville is our nonprofit accounting firm. This accounting firm also works with Lake George Regional Park. Our insurance provider will be Church Mutual Insurance. They bring specialized insurance expertise and innovation solutions to purpose-driven organizations of all kinds. Lights Up Productions has obtained an attorney who will represent us and provide legal services for \$300.00 per hour or pro bono in some instances.

Board of Directors:

Lyn Govoni, President - Theater Artist, Office Manager at Wentworth Partners & Associates, and SLP
Bryant Cyr, Vice President - Production Manager at Waterville Opera House
Kim Kennedy, Treasurer - Faculty, Business Administration Department at Kennebec Valley Community College
Karol Kish Youney, Secretary - Insurance Specialist

Board:

Hannah K. Davis, Costume and Wardrobe Supervisor
Billie Clark, Owner of Unwined Skowhegan
Grace Lommel, Promoter
Alicia Nicholls, Assistant to General Counsel and Chief Financial Officer at Editas Medicine
Zachary Longyear, Principal at Skowhegan Area Middle School, MSAD54

Advisors:

Katherine Quinn, President at Lakewood Theater/Performer for Lakewood Jesters
Fred Liebfried, Artistic Director at Sparrow's Nest Theater
John W. Youney, Esq, Clerk of the corporation, and President of Merrill, Hyde, Fortier & Youney, P.A.

Consultants:

Jon Kimbell, Theater Consultant - Broadway, NYC
Melvin Burnham, Skowhegan History House Museum & Research Center Consultant

Lights Up Productions

Financials: Source & Use of Funds

Notes:

By December 29, 2023, we submitted a request for funding from the Town of Skowhegan by petitioning for the insertion of an article in the Town Meeting Warrant. We are asking for \$60,000.00. This may be raised and appropriated by July 1st, 2024, but annual town funding typically is not disbursed until October. \$30,000.00 will go directly to hiring an Executive Director who will be in charge of fundraising and productions. This will include strategic leadership to oversee and develop Lights Up Productions' financial management, fundraising, artistic programming, operations, community engagement, marketing, board relations, legal and regulatory compliance, and long-term planning. The Executive Director plays a crucial role in the overall success of the Opera House by providing leadership, strategic direction, and effective management across various functional areas.

Please refer to Appendix A - Budget & Planning Workbook for more information.

Financials: Income Statement

For our Profit and Loss Statement, please refer to Appendix A – Budget & Planning Workbook.

Appendix A

Lights Up Productions Budget and Planning Workbook

Lights Up Productions filed its Articles of Incorporation as a Domestic Nonprofit Corporation in the state of Maine on 11/14/23 and received its Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service on 11/17/23. We opened our checking account at Skowhegan Savings Bank on 12/1/23 with a \$5,000.00 deposit of the check from Main Street Skowhegan for winning the Skowhegan Center for Entrepreneurship’s Business Pitch Contest on 11/1/23.

Notes about expenses: **1.** We cannot apply for grants unless we are already a 501(c)(3) or we have a Fiscal Sponsor. With the Board’s vote on 12/11/23 to move forward with finding a Fiscal Sponsor, we will apply for grants under the Fiscal Sponsor’s umbrella. Thus, we are limited in grant applications in 2024. **2.** The Municipal Fiscal Year (FY) is from July to June and Lights Up Productions’ FY is from January to December. **3.** The hiring of an Executive Director is anticipated after October 2024.

	Previous Jan-Dec FY Budget	Jan-Dec 2023 FY Budget	Jan-Dec 2024 FY Budget
REVENUE:	n/a		
Federal & State Grants *1.	n/a	\$5,000.00	\$35,000.00
Municipal Funding *2.	n/a	\$0	\$30,000.00 (1/2 \$60K)
United Way	n/a	n/a	n/a
Foundations	n/a	n/a	n/a
Corporate Donations	n/a	\$0	\$10,000.00
Religious Institutions	n/a	n/a	n/a
Individual Contributions	n/a	\$0	\$2,000.00
Fundraising Events	n/a	\$0	\$2,000.00
Membership Income	n/a	n/a	n/a
Fees for Services	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sales/Rental	n/a	n/a	\$14,000.00
*Other	n/a	n/a	n/a
TOTAL REVENUE:	n/a	\$5,000.00	\$93,000.00
	Previous Jan-Dec FY Budget	Jan-Dec 2023 FY Budget	Jan-Dec 2024 FY Budget
EXPENSES:	n/a		
Staff Payroll & Benefits *3.	n/a	n/a	\$15,000.00 (1/2 \$30K)
Occupancy (rent & utilities)	n/a	\$0	\$4,800.00
Insurance	n/a	\$0	\$2,102.00
Consultant & Professional Fees	n/a	\$0	\$1,700.00
Travel & Meetings	n/a	\$0	\$1,200.00
Equipment	n/a	\$0	\$2,000.00
Supplies	n/a	\$33.00	\$700.00
Staff Development	n/a	n/a	n/a
Printing & Copying	n/a	\$0	\$2,000.00
Postage & Delivery	n/a	\$0	\$250.00
Fundraising Fees	n/a	\$0	\$150.00
*Other	n/a	\$0	\$2,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES:	n/a	\$33.00	\$31,902.00