

MINUTES
OPERA HOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING
May 15, 2018
3:00 PM
Municipal Building – Council Room

Present:

Jon Kimball
Gene Rouse
Cara Mason (left 4:10 p.m.)
Jeff Hewett
Fred Liebfried (arrived 3:25 p.m.)
Mary Haley
Jim Preble

Absent:

Brad Adams

Others Present:

Dena Rich, Recording Secretary
Mary Haley

1. Call Opera House Committee Meeting to order.

Jon Kimball called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m., quorum was met.

2. Chair's Report

No report from the Chair at this meeting.

3. Items by the Committee

No items by the Committee at this meeting.

4. Approve and sign Minutes for the following:

• Opera House Meeting April 17, 2018

Motion by Jeff Hewett, seconded by Cara Mason to approve the April 15, 2018 meeting minutes as written. Vote 5-0, motion carried.

Mary Haley was sworn in by Gail Pelotte at the meeting.

5. Discussion of Opera House Business Plan and addendums:
a. Draft Business Plan

Jeff Hewett said that the way the plan as he read it is about that the Opera House day to day operations is going to be controlled by Wes Arts and Main Street? And are the existing events we have going, is that still going to be going thru Cara Mason or is that going to all be built into this new operating plan.

Jon Kimball said that is a great question, he said his thinking is that this plan would cover the producing entity of the events that the plan produced but they would work with Cara Mason/Opera House Manager to fit in with the schedule for the Opera House. So, there would be essentially two producing entities; Cara Mason and what she books in and then this new producing entity that would be bringing in other kinds of events.

Jeff Hewett said if that is what we agree on doing the Business Plan should show that, because what he read over does not state about the Opera House Manager.

Jon Kimball said that Cara Mason right now does four wall rentals; she does not produce any events in the Opera House. Cara Mason makes sure that the space is available and has been cleaned and ready for the event. The new entity doesn't have anything to do with that; Cara would treat the new entity the same way she treats someone wanting to book the Opera House.

Jeff Hewett said that helped to clear up what he had read. But he still felt it should have the operation during the shows placed in the Plan.

Cara Mason said for instance now we require that a Town Employee be here during a show; they are paid per hour by the entity renting the facility not by the Town.

Jeff Hewett asked so would we do that the same way when we start using this new entity?

Jon Kimball said he would think so and that it is negotiable and depending on how many dates are reserved.

Jeff Hewett said he didn't see that it was referenced in the Plan. So maybe he said we should state in the Plan that the normal maintenance of the facility still stays with the Town and the Business Plans only references the producing side of the shows.

Gene Rouse asked Jeff Hewett what section of the Plan he found this confusion in because when he read through it he did not find it.

Jeff Hewett said because it was not stated at all in the Plan. He said the way he took it from the Plan was that this new organization was going to handle everything.

Cara Mason said she had taken it that way too from reading over the Plan.

Mary Haley said then we just need to add in that this producing entity works in collaboration with the Town who will facilitate the basic operations of the Opera House.

Jeff Hewett suggested that it should be Christine Almand who puts the welcome message in at the beginning of the Plan. He said he hasn't asked her to do that but thought it would be a good idea.

Cara Mason agreed that she thought of that as well but had not asked her either.

Jeff Hewett also thought we should ask a group of people around Town who would put in supporting comments about the Opera House. For example, someone saying possibly that they remember a big show that was played at the Opera House.

Mary Haley said having them comment on the potential value they see in restoring the Opera House.

Jeff Hewett asked if this producing entity would be the fourth committee under the WesArts?

Jim Kimball said he did not think that was actually decided this business plan is the first step in a long line of decision making.

Mary Haley said it could be if like ten years down the road we need a full time paid production person it would fall under a WesArt position. At this time, she said it doesn't need to be but things change as business plans develop.

Jon Kimball said he sees the first three years that this producing entity is producing ten concerts in the Opera House throughout the year.

Jeff Hewett said on page 10 of the Plan, he said we have already discussed this before that on the stage the raised nail heads should be taken out we have refinished the stage.

Jeff Hewett said on page 15 of the Plan should list the Opera House Committee under Stakeholders.

Mary Haley also said that throughout the Plan we need to change the name of the Committee from Skowhegan Opera House Renovation Committee to just Skowhegan Opera House Committee.

There was brief discussion when Fred Liebfried arrived at the meeting about how Waterville Opera House is run. He said he had to sit down and talk with them but if anyone had any specific questions they would like asked he would bring them to be asked as well.

The Committee briefly discussed the Draft Budget for WesArts Performance Series.

Jon Kimball did say that this budget is based on ten concerts, six children shows and a holiday show. This budget is to just show that at 25% compacity you loose money, at 50% compacity you break even, and 75% compacity you could make a little money if you could bring in the contributions as listed on the budget.

Cara Mason said we also need to deal with the parking issues.

Jeff Hewett said he would work on a map of all the locations for parking and bring back to the Committee to discuss and work it into the Business Plan.

b. WesArts Opera House Producer Job Description

This was briefly discussed during the business plan.

c. Somerset Rural Cultural Plan-Final

The Committee agreed as long as the Town voted to accept the Somerset Rural Cultural Plan at the June Town Meeting it should be added into the Business Plan.

Jon Kimball did say it is important to know that if the plan is adopted by the Town as it has been adopted throughout the county, it doesn't require any financial input from the Town. All it is a foot print of suggestions of the cultural health of Somerset County can become stronger.

d. Tim Sample Starring in ACC 11-9-16

This document was not discussed during the meeting.

6. Discussion of List of Names for "Friends of the Opera House"

Jim Kimball brought a list of names he got from Kristina Cannon and Matt Dubois of people they thought would be good for the Friends of the Opera House group.

The Committee suggested that we add Pat Dickey, Jim Hastings, Sam Hight, Warren Shay, George Allen, Channel 11, Georgiana Wright, Anne Rossevelt, Karen Hart and Margi Brown.

7. Other Business

No Other Business at this meeting.

8. Upcoming topics for discussion at future meetings:

- **Discussion of a fundraising plan.**
- **Discussion of a business plan for the operation of the Opera House.**
- **Discussion of adopting the Somerset County Rural Cultural Plan as a guide for future use of cultural assets.**

These topics were touched on during meeting and will be discussed in more detail at future meetings.

Adjourn Skowhegan Opera House Committee's Meeting.

Motion by Jeff Hewett, seconded by Gene Rouse to adjourn.