



VANCOUVER CIVIC THEATRES BOARD

MINUTES

JANUARY 24, 2013

A meeting of the Vancouver Civic Theatres Board was held on Thursday, January 24, 2013, at 12:04 pm, in the Queen Elizabeth Theatre Salon.

PRESENT: Rob Haynes, Chair
Susan Adams
Michael Noon
Karole Sutherland, Vice-Chair
Karen Wilson
Iris Woo

ABSENT: Wendy Soobis

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Elizabeth Ball
Todd Ayotte, Interim Director of Civic Theatres
Richard Newirth, Managing Director, Cultural Services

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Charlene Imai, Meeting Coordinator

Leave of Absence Requests

There were no Leaves of Absence requested.

Approval of Minutes

MOVED by Iris Woo
SECONDED by Michael Noon

THAT the Minutes of the Vancouver Civic Theatres Board meeting held on December 13, 2012, be approved as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1. Chair's Comments

Rob Haynes informed Board members he had sent a letter to Mayor and Councillors advising them of a number of issues the Board will continue to address in 2013. Mr. Haynes' letter highlighted:

- the current Board's experience and knowledge;
- 2013 Board direction;
- Board's focus for the coming months, including sales and marketing, customer service/care, research, and arts and culture community and resident company relations.

Mr. Haynes advised he recently met with Brenda Proskan, General Manager, Community Services, and Richard Newirth, Managing Director, Cultural Services. At that meeting Ms. Proskan expressed an interest in meeting with Mr. Haynes and another Board member on a quarterly basis to keep each other informed. Mr. Haynes then suggested the other Board member to attend these meetings be the Vice-Chair, Karole Sutherland.

Mr. Haynes, Todd Ayotte and Richard Newirth then spoke to the following and responded to questions:

- Vancouver Civic Theatres website;
- meetings with individual Board members for which he thanked them;
- 80 plus-page 2010-2011 Cultural Tourism Strategy for Whistler which was provided to him by Sue Adams. Due to the length of the document, Ms. Adams agreed to send Board members the Executive Summary;
- City of Vancouver Culture Plan dated January 2008.

2. Financial Update

Todd Ayotte advised the Finance Department is currently working on year-end clean up, and he, together with Karole Sutherland, will provide an extensive financial report, including the Board's perspective, at the next meeting.

Board members requested the financial data be provided to them in advance so that they may review the information prior to the next meeting. Mr. Ayotte agreed to do so.

3. Success Measurement Discussion

Karole Sutherland commented the budget is not the way to measure how the civic theatres are doing and proposed that staff look at tracking alternate measures such as:

- % of dark nights in each venue for 2012 (baseline)
- % of event nights which are grant-based and % which are non grant-based for 2012 (baseline)
- Create a 2013 target for % of dark nights for each venue
- Create a 2013 target for % of event nights for each of grantees and non-grantees
- Report quarterly on actual vs. plan.

Following discussion and staff response to questions, it was suggested staff look into the feasibility of the proposed metrics as well as the Civic Theatres break-even costs for each venue and report back at the February meeting.

4. Licensee Relations and Report on Dance Companies

As agreed to at the last meeting, Karen Wilson reported on the meeting held on November 27, 2012, with 15 members of the dance community. Ms. Wilson, along with staff, Todd Ayotte, Margeret Specht and Doug Durand, attended the meeting.

The meeting discussion included:

- the 3-week rule, which staff suggested the parties sort out themselves, with staff facilitating;
- the feeling that the Playhouse does not have a “Brand”;
- the evolution of current rental practices;
- the attendees’ concerns about the costs of renting the civic theatres;
- the helpfulness and professionalism of the entire Civic Theatres staff.

Following discussion, Todd Ayotte and Richard Newirth responded to questions regarding IATSE technicians; the \$100,000 contribution by Metro Vancouver for the entire region, not just Vancouver; and meetings, like the one with the dance community, with other arts genres.

5. Vancouver Concert Hall and Theatre Society

Rob Haynes advised that representatives of the Vancouver Concert Hall and Theatre Society had presented to the Board some time ago (March 24, 2011). At that time, the presenters introduced the proposal for a concert hall complex in Vancouver and explained the concept.

The Concert Hall and Theatre Society met with senior staff to discuss another concept and the possibility of moving into the Playhouse Theatre. The Board was not aware of this meeting and it caused some confusion when the Society recently contacted the Board about their proposal. To this end, Mr. Haynes advised he will meet with Brenda Proskan, General Manager, Community Services, to suggest that a member of the Board be present when such meetings are held to avoid confusion. As requested, he will also be following up with the Vancouver Concert Hall and Theatre Society.

6. Strategic Plan Report

Todd Ayotte advised he had met with Penny Ballem, City Manager, and received feedback from her.

Mr. Ayotte also met with staff and went through the list of what has been completed and what is outstanding, noting the scope and players have changed. There is agreement that a consultant be brought in to deal with the pieces of work which need to be done.

Mr. Haynes requested staff to keep the Board informed of the Strategic Plan process, and Board members agreed that Karole Sutherland be involved in the drafts of subsequent versions of the plan.

7. 2013 Goals and Suggested Sub-Committees

Rob Haynes advised of Board member assignments to the following Sub-Committees:

Sales and Marketing: Wendy Soobis will head up this sub-committee. Wendy would like to bring in outside individuals, as well as a marketing person, to sit on this sub-committee. She would also like to hold meetings with marketing directors of each resident company.

Customer Service/Care: Iris Woo and Rob Haynes will continue to meet. Ms. Woo and Mr. Haynes have received responses from staff on what can be done to better improve the theatres, noting very good ideas came forth.

Research: Sue Adams has agreed to head up the Research Sub-Committee, whose task will include the research of theatres in North America, examining their policies, rental rates, websites, how do they connect with their customers.

Arts & Culture Community and Resident Company Relations: Karen Wilson and Michael Noon will head up this Sub-Committee, and one of their tasks will be to identify those groups who do not use the Civic Theatres but possibly could.

8. Director's Report and Board Questions

Todd Ayotte reported, as follows:

- staff of Vancouver Recital Society and Vancouver International Children's Festival will be sharing the Playhouse office space;
- Vancouver Christmas Market's successful event on the Plaza;
- implementation of waste diversion in the civic theatres and staff are working on green options.

Mr. Ayotte responded to questions regarding grants status and advised the 2013 Theatre Rental Grant Allocations report will be considered by Council on January 30, 2013.

9. Ticket Requests

This item was postponed to the next meeting.

10. New Business

None.

11. Adjournment

MOVED by Karole Sutherland
SECONDED by Michael Noon

THAT the Vancouver Civic Theatres Board meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Board adjourned at 1:28 pm.

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Next Meeting

DATE: Thursday, February 21, 2013
TIME: 12:00 noon
PLACE: Queen Elizabeth Theatre Salon