BELLOWS FALLS OPERA HOUSE POLICY COMMITTEE

Friday, August 9, 2019
5:30 p.m.

LOCATION:
Bellows Falls Opera House Lower Theater, 7 Village Square, Bellows Falls, VT

DRAFT MINUTES

Call to Order
Meeting called to order at 5:38 pm, with Hunter, Rowley, Sheehy, Howard, Stern, Watson, Hammond present. Theater Manager Angers and Town Manager Harrison were also present.

Additions to the Agenda for Routine Administrative Matters and/or Pressing Matters that will require ratification at a future meeting
The resignation of Committee member Sauer was noted and thanks given for her service. It was recommended by Chr Hunter that no new member be appointed.

Approve Minutes of May 22, 2019
Motion by Howard to accept. Sheehy second. Voted unanimously.

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda (3 minutes per person)
None.

Agenda Items:

1. BFOH Manager’s Report
Manager Angers reported that they have added a Thursday showing of Classic Films during the summer months. He feels that if they have underwriting, with as low as 40 paid over the two nights and even with additional labor costs, operation is breakeven or slightly better.

Fathers Restaurant is running a “Dinner and a Movie” promotion on Wednesdays and Thursdays, whereby restaurant patrons 3pm onward buy dinner and receive a ticket to that night’s Classic Film.

After speaking with J&H Hardware, Rock & Hammer, Windham Antiques, Village Square Books and Halliday’s and determining parking wouldn’t be negatively impacted, the BFOH has started showing some Tuesday daytime screenings of current movies, aiming at a children’s audience. Angers feels the month of July was the cinema’s best performing month since he started working there.

2. Classic Film Wednesday Matinee - progress report (R Angers)
Angers chose not to start a Wednesday matinee, instead thinking, for this summer, a Thursday evening showing is a better idea.

3. Chad Free Q&A about Springfield/Keene movie operations (L. Watson)
Leroy Watson read through an extensive report about operations at the Springfield, VT and Keene, NH multiplexes, run by Chad Free. This report is hereby read into the minutes (to be attached).

4. Lower Theater feasibility - plans exist? (E Howard)
Ellen Howard distributed floorplans of the downstairs of the Town Hall, showing where work was
done during the renovations of the 2000’s. Basically, the Lower Theater area received a coat of paint. At some point conduit was installed, and a simple lighting rig added. Nobody knows when. Howard warned that costs to make it a functioning venue space might be extensive - she listed antiquated electrical, single-source heat, an unimproved fire escape, side curtains possibly obscuring exits, and very slow lift for handicapped persons as challenges facing the space, let alone sound insulation to isolate it from PG-rated explosions emanating from upstairs.

Town Manager Harrison asked the Committee to brainstorm a wish list of what uses the Lower Theater might be put to and what improvements might need to be made to make the downstairs more functional. The committee will do so next meeting.

5. Future Programming Options for BFOH - how to envision
The committee voted unanimously (motion by Stern, 2nd by Sheehy) to have David Stern develop a prioritized list of improvements facilitating live events to use in seeking grant funding for the BFOH.

Stern mentioned one short term improvement, costing around $2000, of installation of one "Line set" (a rope set that would operate a moving pipe or baton). Stern plans to begin to price this out, and look at options. Main Street Arts may contribute a good deal of the labor, and possibly split the cost on this.

**Agenda Items for Next Meeting**
- Next meeting scheduled for Mon., Sept. 23, 5:30 pm, at the Lower Theater.
- Lower Theater Wish List (Uses and Improvements) Brainstorming Session.
- BFOH Facility Improvement List presentation by Stern.

**Other Business**
Harrison said she had conducted two tours of the BFOH recently and wished there was a brochure about the history of the BFOH and Town Hall. Chr Hunter suggested she speak to Susan Reing of the Rockingham Historical Commission, and asked that it be conveyed that he would be happy to volunteer to do the design work once the copy had been written and photos procured.

Sheehy wondered if security at the BFOH was being thought about, given the grim events of recent days (several mass shootings across the US). Harrison said the Town is investigating a security camera system.

**Adjourn**
Motion to adjourn made by XXXX at XXXX pm, seconded by XXXX, and moved unanimously.

Posted, mailed & emailed: