BELLOWS FALLS OPERA HOUSE POLICY COMMITTEE Monday, Sept. 23, 2019
5:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Rockingham Town Hall – Lower Theater

DRAFT MINUTES

Call to Order at 5:34.

Additions to the Agenda for Routine Administrative Matters and/or Pressing Matters that will require ratification at a future meeting: none.

Approve Minutes of August 9, 2019 - moved by Howard, 2nd by Sheehy, unanimously approved.

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda (3 minutes per person):
Town Manager Harrison advised the committee that she had approved a purchase of two “line sets” for the theater, in coordination with Cinema Manager Angers and Town Finance Director Burbela, for $6400 that would allow additional backdrops to be used (among other things) and that these would be the only capital improvement for this fiscal year. Harrison: “It’s a similar situation to the purchase of the LED lights last year. That does not mean we won’t do repairs. We will repair the plaster in the theater and anything else that comes up. Also working on a plan for the curtains.”

Manager’s Report

310 paid for Eaglemania live concert. $353 in concession sales (approximately $1.15 per head).

Classic Films go on hiatus for month of October. Start up again Wed & Thurs after SECRET GARDEN is done.
Tuesday matinee attendance has been fluctuating. Angers speaking to L. Simoneaux regarding home schoolers possibly starting to attend, depending on film.

Lower Theater Wish List (Uses and Improvements) Brainstorming Session.
Per request of Mgr Harrison, committee members brainstormed the following possible uses and improvements. Sheehy: similar space in Dover/Foxcroft, NH is using space for pot luck socials, dance recitals, meetings, theater and poetry clubs, craft fairs, foreign films, documentaries, cribbage tournaments, midnight movies. Stern: dances - look at Wunderbar success w/soul line dancing, movies (foreign, documentaries, less-mainstream, etc.). Projector around 10k? Notes that ceilings must float if hung. Sound from upstairs would affect downstairs, rather than vice versa. Rowley: live music, contradances. Howard: Infrastructure - fire escape, lift, wiring, etc. Cloggers can damage floors. Hunter: Infrastructure - what Howard said, plus
kitchen, soundproofing. Notes lack of promoters in town for live music. Angers: art walks, 2 person-type-theater events. Harrison: second movie screen, risers, new chairs, sound insulation, more foreign films and documentaries, etc. Gamers?

BFOH Facility Improvement List (by Stern).

Stern read letter from David Naone, of Production Advantage (attached). Stern said letter had just been received that day, and that organization is well-respected in region. Other price quotes should be solicited; prices felt a bit high to him. Some of what was suggested was top-of-the-line, whereas more mid-level quality might be sufficient.

Stern addressed the letter point-by-point:
Rigging: 1. Grid upgrade - current BFOH system is obsolete, but can be used - to upgrade to modern grid, spending 50-100k possible. 2. Fly Lines - 7 to 12 line sets at 15k/line set.
Lighting: Stern says regarding…. Control: Main Street Arts has, and he would advocate BFOH acquire, an ETC Element, costing around 5k. Air flow mods can be purchased used for around $200 each.
Front-of-House position: this is needed, and would cost around 20k.
Follow Spots: can be obtained for 2-5k each.
Audio: Small used board could be obtained for 1.5-2k. Intercomm wireless should be obtained. 18k for system may be a bit high.
Stern feels the Intercomm wireless and the FOH position are the two items of greatest importance. Also, fireproofing of curtains, costing around 13k.
Angers brought up issue of seats wearing out and parts being hard to find. Stern suggested replacing a row in the balcony at a time, and using replaced seats as source for replacement parts.

Howard stated, and the committee agreed, that existing Bellows Falls Opera House infrastructure must be maintained and not be allowed to deteriorate. Water damaged walls and ceilings are a case in point. Town Mgr. Harrison noted that these are already on the docket for repair.

It was agreed Stern, Harrison and Angers would talk, and work to put critical items in FY 2021 budget and look for applicable grants.

Review Agenda Items for Next Meeting
1. BFOH theatrical improvement list (Stern)
   2. Lower Theater Infrastructure Improvement list (Harrison and Angers)

Next meeting scheduled for Mon. 10/14, 5:30 pm

Other Business: none
Adjourn. 6:50 pm. Motion Howard, Sheehy seconded. Voted unanimously.

Bellows Falls Opera House

To provide the town of Rockingham and village of Bellows Falls with a comprehensive plan and budgetary costing for upgrades to the Rigging, Sound and Lighting infrastructures as well as structural and consultative services within the Bellows Falls Opera House to provide for a better atmosphere for touring theatre and music events as well as local usage beyond the showing of movies without impeding the venue from its year round movie schedule.

**Rigging** – To provide an incremental plan to upgrade the current fly system and grid to at the very least a minimum standard arbor counterweight fly system.

Grid upgrade – To replace the existing wooden grid to a steel grid. To bring in a structural engineer to review the current grid and to replace the existing wooded grid with steel and prepare for an updated fly system. Unfortunately we have no access to estimating the cost of replacing the wooden grid with steel.

  Engineering costs $8000.00

Fly lines – To upgrade the current 7 line set hemp system to at minimum 12 line set arbor/counterweight system or motorized system incrementally 1 or 2 line sets at a time to minimize costs.

  Costs per line set $15,000.00/line set installed over 8 to 12 years roughly or as the budget can withstand

**Audio** – Currently there is no audio system in place other then the system that supports the movie theatre. Ultimately, they would like to have a system that can support theatre productions and the small touring musical acts.

Small console (16 to 24 ch) no larger than 32 channels

  32 channel console $12,000.00

Intercomm wireless with a base and minimum of 4 belt packs/headsets

  Clear-Com wireless system $18,000.00

Permanently flown speaker/sub array.

  Flown complete system with installation $50,000.00

Monitor system. A system for portable on stage/off stage and dressing/green room monitors.

  All inclusive monitor system for on stage and green room/dressing rooms $60,000.00 installed

**Lighting** – By the look of the sight survey that I took they have recently done a small dimming upgrade. The current system is an ETC Sensor 45+ rack with 25 D20 modules and 20 Air Flow modules.

Control. To upgrade the control from the Express 48/96 to something that will allow control of the new LED PARs as well as moving into more technology. At a minimum I would suggest an upgrade to an ETC Ion 20xe console and replacing the “Air Flow” modules in the dimming rack with “relay” modules to accommodate the new technology while maintaining some dimming capabilities.

  ETC Ion console $20,000.00

Replacing the air flow mods with relay mods $550.00/module $11,000.00 complete

FOH position. Currently there is no front of house lighting position other than two “cove” positions back above the mezzanine. We would recommend this to be a motorized position to raise and lower remotely along with fixture power and DMX.

  A moving pipe identical to what is proposed on stage with electrics $20,000.00 installed

Follow spots. They would like to have 2 follow spots at least or 2 moving heads with follow me.

  Lycian follow spots $13,000.00 each

  2 moving heads with Follow me software $30,000.00

Theatre Consultancy
It is our opinion that for a renovation of this size and magnitude that the town and village should retain the services of a theatrical consultant. We have, on past projects, worked with Don Hirsch of Don Hirsch Design Studio located in Montpelier. I have provided his contact information below.

Don Hirsch Design Studio, LLC
95 Upper Barnett Hill
Montpelier, VT 05602
info@donhirschstudio.com
802.233.9623
www.donhirschstudio.com

Funding and other resources

League of Historic American Theatres
http://www.lhat.org/home

Theatre Historical Society of America
https://historictheatres.org/