

Manbites Dog Theater Company Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 21, 2009, 6:00PM
 Manbites Dog Theater, 703 Foster St., Durham

Current Board: Michael Hayes (Pres.), Jeff Storer (Vice Pres.), Ed Hunt (Sec/Treasurer), John Martin, Edith McMillan, Alice Sharpe, Gregor McElvogue

Board Members Present: Michael, Ed, Edie, John
Guests Present: Katja

Resolutions/Decisions/Agreements/Suggestions

Type	Description
Agreement	We agreed that we should try the \$10 for \$10K campaign again for the holidays, or something like it with a small amount of asking.
Agreement	We agreed to ask Gregor to look over our new financial system once we have it in place and before going forward with our refinancing.
Agreement	We agreed to move forward with some kind of advertising partnership with Revolution restaurant.
Agreement	We agreed to have Gregor go ahead and incorporate the Bylaws changes that we've all already agreed on.
Agreement	We agreed to invite Lori Jones in Arts Outreach for NCSU Center Stage to our November meeting to talk about grants and fundraising.
Suggestion	Michael suggested that we talk to TJ at Kings about potential joint advertising.

Action Items

Responsible	Target Date	Description
John	11/09/09	Check in with Lori Jones to make sure she can make our 11/16 meeting.
John	Mid-November	Sent out a new doodle.com poll for a board meeting schedule change in the new year.
Gregor	As soon as possible	Update the Bylaws with the items that the board has already agreed on.
Carried over items		
John	ASAP	Create an agenda item to cover outstanding questions from the bylaws review for the next meeting at which the entire board is present.
Ed	As can be scheduled	Talk to our new insurance agent for clarification of our liability insurance. We need to know what our areas of exposure are, and we'd like him to evaluate the kind of coverage our board needs.
Michael	As soon as possible	Ask Jay, Ed, and Katja for "long resumes," since their background is in the theater. We wanted this for the purpose of applying for grants. Sometimes it's helpful to highlight theater experience in certain situations. This might also be a good question to ask Lori about. Consider providing them Jeff's as an example.

Michael	As soon as possible	Ask Aden to come to a board meeting as soon as we're ready to talk about our new financial system.
Michael/Ed	As soon as possible	If our new accounting system is not going to be able to reflect it legally, then write up documents for the board to sign regarding how we're going to handle back salaries.

I. Welcome

II. Updates:

1. Financial Report (Ed)

- We were awarded \$25,000 from the NC Arts Council.
- We received \$18,500 toward the end of September and used approximately \$15,000 of it to pay bills, which should get us through the month of October and into November. We're supposed to receive the remaining \$6,500 by December, but it may be a little late if state funding doesn't come through.
- From the Durham Arts Council (DAC), we were awarded \$12,000, but the payment schedule "has a lot of wiggle room." It's to come in "9 payments starting no earlier than October."
- At the end of October, we have quarterly taxes due of a little over \$2,000.
- Because of the DAC fund distribution schedule change, we're down about \$6,500 from where we normally are.
- We want to try and get the end of the year fundraising in the mail by mid-November.
- Last year, at the end of the 1st half of the fiscal year, we were at around \$20K in donations. This year we're at about \$12,500 with two months to go, with those two months traditionally being "good" months.

2. Grants (Ed/Katja)

- Covered in the financial report above; no additional items.
- We're looking forward to hearing what Lori has to say about grants and fundraising at November's meeting.

3. \$10 for \$10K Campaign & Season Vouchers (Ed)

- We had 91 first-time donors, with a total sum of about \$2060, which is an average gift of \$22.63 per donor. This also brought back donors who hadn't given in a while.
- We think we sold 76 season voucher packs, and they sold out earlier this season than last.
- Michael suggested that we talk to TJ at Kings about potential joint advertising.
- Everyone agreed that we should try the \$10 for \$10K campaign again for the holidays, or something like it with a small amount of asking.

4. Progress with Aden Field and discuss re-fi (Michael)

- We've had three or four meetings with Aden. He has gone through a process of realigning our books to make them look more like what a real business has. We are planning to move toward a new accounting system, QuickPremier (we're

pretty sure that's the name of it). As a part of that, we're going to need to upgrade to new computers. We want to account for the computer purchase in the refinancing.

- Mike and Ed are working through terminology issues with Aden and the new system; for example, what "Production Income" means to our business. The stickler right now is that we don't have any kind of balance sheet—liabilities vs. assets. Aden has also looked at our tax returns over the last few years, which apparently were not given the scrutiny that would be helpful to him.
- We're also creating a budget in this exercise that is based more on actual numbers rather than gut feel. Our goal is to wrap this up by the end of the year.
- Although we're moving along at a slower pace than we'd like to, we're moving. We nominated Gregor to review this work before we take it to the refinancing.

5. Current production: Caleb Calypso opening this week (Ed)

- We have a cast of ten; it opens next week, and preview night is Thursday night.
- On Friday (10/30), opening night will cost \$20 and will include a reception. We've offered each of the cast two "Use or Lose" comps for that evening.
- It would be nice if the board would come Friday or the first weekend and then help spread the word about it.
- It's stressful having such a big cast, but it seems to be going well. Frank Stacio may interview us next week. There's going to be [an interview in the Herald Sun](#) about the play. We're going to try to do a short video for the website. Advertising cards went out last week, and ticket requests are starting to trickle in.
- This is a major show in terms of production, and for Howard Craft.
- While he's here for the show, New York actor Reza Salazar, is offering a class for late high school, early college students for \$120 with classes from 11:00-1:30 on Saturday & Sunday, October 31 and November 1; Saturday, Nov 7; and Saturday, November 14.

6. Revolution restaurant partnership initiative (Katja)

- Theresa, the chef's wife at Revolution, is in charge of marketing, and she's interested in partnerships with their neighbors.
- They have experience with pre-theater dining with DPAC, and they have a [website](#) and a [blog](#).
- They would like to highlight MBD early tables for dining—sort of like a "Manbites Dog Exclusive" for members on our mailing list. Their offer is to set aside a few tables for early seating, say around 5:30, exclusively for ticket holders of an 8:15 performance at Manbites Dog. Reservations are hard to come by there on Friday and Saturday evenings. There is no dinner discount involved, however.
- They also have late-night dining until 2AM, Monday-Saturday, which includes appetizers and a raw bar, which they'd be interested in advertising in our programs.
- Everyone agreed that it would be a good idea to move forward with this idea.

7. Bylaws update (John)

- We agreed to have Gregor update the things we agreed on during the last meeting.
- John will add items for discussion to the agenda of the next meeting at which the

full board is present.

III. Things to discuss:

1. Action Item Review (John)

- John led a review of the action items, which we actually did at the beginning of the meeting. *Everyone was so excited about getting to them, they couldn't wait.* ☺

IV. Next board meeting

1. Next meeting is Monday, November 16, 2009

- We agreed to invite Lori Jones in Arts Outreach for NCSU Center Stage to the meeting to talk about grants and fundraising.

V. Any Other Business (AOB) agenda items added:

1. We talked about doing a raffle for a gift certificate from Revolution as a fundraiser. They've offered us a 50% break, so \$50 for a \$100 gift certificate. This would be for our end-of-year donations campaign. Perhaps everyone who donates through the end of the year gets entered into a drawing for the certificate, and then we could comp them two tickets for the next show so they can have a complete "free night out for dinner and the theater."
2. Ed reminded everyone that we're also doing the "Sponsor This Show" campaign, and we've gotten 3 or 4 of those (at \$25 each) already. He also noted that one of those donors wants their attribution to be: "Anonymous."
3. Ed walked around this past "Third Friday" event to see how it's going these days, and he thinks there is a way that we can leverage that.
4. Congratulations to Katja who won [The Monti StorySlam on October 10th at Alivias!](#) She is in touch with them about Manbites Dog potentially hosting the "Playoffs."
5. Edie noted that she is going to have a schedule change after the first of the year, so we will have to revisit our monthly board meeting schedule. John will set up a new doodle.com poll as soon as her schedule is more definite.
6. When we decide about when we're going to extend the board, Edie would like to talk about diversity. She has an Hispanic friend who might be a good choice.
7. Edie noted that she can put Manbites Dog tickets on a GSK Trading Post, but we'd have to offer some kind of discount if she does, as that's the purpose of the system. We agreed to wait until we get the new ticketing system worked out before we do that.

VI. Adjournment

1. We adjourned at 7:20.

Respectfully submitted,
John Martin