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**OCAF Board of Directors**

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**September 12, 2024 |4 p.m. | School Street Studios**

**Attendance**: Brock Toole, Rob Farley, Paula Williams, Judy Marable, John Quackenbush, Jim Norton, Lawrence Stueck, Sherry Woodruff, Vicky Moody, Paul Clark (Executive Director)

**Absent:** Abbey Duhe, Kathie Anderson, Betty Walton, Eadaoin Walsh

**Call to Order & Confirmation of Quorum**

* Chairman Brock Toole called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM and determined a quorum was present.

**Comments to the Board (3 to 5 minutes per speaker)—**There were no participants signed up to speak.

**Approval or Amendment of Past Minutes**

* Jim Norton moved to accept the August 15, 2024, Regular BOD Meeting Minutes as presented and seconded by Paula Williams. The minutes were approved unanimously. It was suggested not to print the minutes since they are emailed out to the board members.

**Approval or Amendment of Meeting Agenda for September 12, 2024**

* Lawrence Stueck moved to accept the September 12, 2024, Meeting Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Vicky Moody. The agenda was accepted unanimously.

**Reports of Officers & Standing Committees**

* Chairperson Brock Toole
  + Chairman Toole presented the OCAF Capital Project Proposal handout. He communicated that this document would be filled out (first) by the Executive Director before any presentation of a proposal. This form would be used for any modification to a previously approved plan. He communicated that this process is for any projects, regardless of their size, to ensure they are properly evaluated and measured for success. This documentation will have a team review and potential approval or rejection. Paul suggested a range of $2,000 to $5,000 for such projects, with the final amount dependent on available funds. The Board was asked to take and review the form and offer suggestions. Rob moved to cap the OCAF Capital Proposal at $2,500. Jim seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
* Vice Chair Abbey Duhe´
  + No report due to the absence of Abbey.
* Secretary Judy Marable
  + Judy communicated that due to the acoustics in the room it can be challenging to hear who makes a motion and seconds the motion. Also, later in the agenda Lawrence would like to discuss modifications to the speaker’s sign in sheet.
* Treasurer John Quackenbush
  + Paul Clark presented the Monthly Financial Report for John. He communicated that we were falling short of the hoped revenue, but only by a small margin. He reviewed the statement of activity of expenditures that were provided to each board member. Perspectives expenditures/profits are not included in this month’s report. Insurance premiums had increased significantly due to the addition of Rocket Hall’s coverage and the lawsuit by the concerned members against the Board of Directors. Also, an inclusion of coverage for Perspectives is included in the insurance premiums. He gave commendations to John Quackenbush for his leadership on the board and leading by example. Paul also communicated that John made a significant donation to OCAF for the general account designating the money to be used where it is needed. John was offered a round of applause as gratitude.
* Executive Director Report Paul Clark
  + Paul reported that the membership remains in the 450 range. He encouraged us to review the handout of the current membership structure. He is making changes to Little Greenlight technology program to improve some notifications.
  + He reported that he had two verbal acceptances for the two positions. Discussion included the two individuals’ previous experiences. Mention was made to consider insurance options with the Chamber Association rather than a stipend.
  + Paul reported the Perspectives Reception was a fantastic event and 200-300 people were in attendance for the reception, opening night and weekend. It was noted that Brock donated the beer, and the potters (and one guest) were comped as well as 1902 Society Members. Shout out to Rosemary Stancil and her wonderful volunteers prepping all the food. Paul offered a list of many volunteers who spent many hours helping.
  + The Holiday Market Committee (led by Judith Gault) met today and extended the deadline for submission to be included in the Artist Shop/Holiday Market. It was mentioned to increase the literature for the event and the potential for boosting the event by spotlighting successful artists.
  + Paul mentioned he/they were compiling a running list of ways to improve the events next year.

**Reports of Special Committees**

* Governance Committee Lawrence Stueck
  + Lawrence Stueck offered updates from the Governance Committee due to the absence of Eadaoin. He reported that the committee will meet on the following day to finalize the bylaws and send them to board members. Paul, Abbey, and Eadoain are reviewing the handbook Paul compiled. Paul will send an electronic copy to all board members.
* Finance Committee Paul Clark
  + Reporting structures are in place and the budget can be reviewed again in three months to compare and review financials.
  + Paul reported that he had found several versions of the Executive Director job description. The final version should be completed within a couple of weeks (October) with a January 1 timeline for hiring. Discussion included posting regionally and not just locally. Paula also mentioned having a formal cocktail party/reception for the top 3 candidates to meet people in the organization would be beneficial.

**Unfinished Business**

* Updates for Grant-Georgia Council for the Arts Vicky Moody

For Facilities

* Vicky discussed the grant for facility improvements, stating it would not be submitted without the full Board’s approval. She mentioned the possibility of installing a ramp or a canopy School Street Studios, but the decision would be based on the best return on the investment. She also highlighted the need for a written response from Code Enforcement to address potential issues with the current electrical setup and the importance of considering the handicap ramp for the 1902 Building and School Street Studios. Jim asked the question “Do we have to have more bathrooms before we can use?” Paula asked about Historic Designation for the 1902 Building. Vicky offered that there have been many changes to the building throughout the years; therefore, the building may not be eligible for this distinction. Paula offered commendations to Vicky for her work on the Grant. It was mentioned that we would have to have a written response from the Code Enforcement before anything can be started if approved for submission next year. Vicky asked about Rotary Club’s response to building the ramps. It was shared that the ramps going into the studio from the foyer would be very difficult. A lift might be the better option. Using a ramp from the double doors with a canopy could be an option or to build another bathroom. Another concern is to repair/replace the doorbell at the ramp and consider a canopy at the 1902 building. Discussion included the UNG use of the building and future uses.
* Stancil Entrance-Paul will communicate with the previous architect (Stancil request) to get updated quotes for the modifications/updates. Then have quotes from 3 contractors. The goal is to have this completed by the end of the year.
* Suggestion to Change Sign In Sheet for Speaking at Board Meetings Lawrence Stueck
* Lawrence expressed a concern that people could not speak regarding any of the topics discussed during the meeting. It was determined to revise the agenda to denote a time at the end of the meeting to speak to any agenda items. The time limit was adjusted to a maximum of 4 minutes.

**New Business**

* Proposal for Restructuring Membership Levels Paula Williams
* Paula offered a presentation with handouts comparing demographics of Oconee and Albany. Additionally, she provided a handout of the membership structure with prices. She mentioned the membership levels are relatively inexpensive. She offered statistics that Oconee is a wealthy county, and a $25.00 dollar membership is minimal. Paula suggested a restructuring of the membership levels to increase their value. She suggested raising extra membership money and possibly introducing a new membership level (Level 5). The Board discussed the structure of the membership fees, potential discounts for members, and the idea of offering discounts on classes and other benefits to incentivize membership. She also proposed a new approach to increase engagement and volunteerism among class attendees, suggesting discounts for volunteers and linking volunteer hours with class sign-ups. She emphasized the need for a committee to explore ways to incentivize volunteers and improve the overall experience for class attendees. Vicky moved that a committee be formed to revisit OCAF’s membership structure/fees. Rob seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
* Presentation to Add Music Program Lawrence Stueck
* Lawrence discussed the potential for a music program at OCAF. A concern was expressed about the current space’s acoustics but suggested proper amplification could improve the sound. He proposed meeting with sound engineers to evaluate and determine the best locations for different musical acts. Vicky added that in the past musical performances from the Marine Jazz Band and Sunday picking sessions were well received. The suggestion of holding a 1st Monday or 1st Sunday Performance Series. The use of the stage in the 1902 could open a new opportunity for OCAF. Also, the UNG music program was mentioned, but was not sure if Oconee UNG had a music program.

**Comments & Questions**

* Low Volunteerism at OCAF Lawrence Stueck
* Lawrence offered his concerns regarding the need for more people to sign up to volunteer. Discussion included reaching out to Youth Organizations and UNG to volunteer. The idea of tracking volunteer hours to better appreciate and reward volunteers, suggesting the use of a sign-in sheet or QR code for this purpose. Also working to appreciate and thank the individuals who do the volunteering. The Board agreed to continue discussing these ideas.
* A question was posed about the timing of the Board Orientation. It was communicated that the bylaws were needed before proceeding with the board orientation.

**Adjourn**

* Vicky moved to adjourn the meeting and Paula seconded. Unanimously the meeting was adjourned at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Marable

September 13, 2024

Attachments:

August Minutes

Financials

Membership Stats and Proposals