

Minutes of the Friends of Plainfield Town Hall Opera House Board (FPTHOH) meeting for December 21, 2020

In attendance were board members Dave Strong, Jesse Clayton, Tom Blachly, Lori Stratton, Kathy Light, Keith Swann, Sarah Harding, non board member, Steven Light-Events Coordinator

President Swann called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm

Approved the following agenda:

1. Approve minutes of the October 19th and November 16th meetings
2. Discussion of amending our bylaws to change our fiscal year from a calendar year (January 1st through December 31st) to one that runs July 1st through June 30th - Tom
3. Treasurer's Report - Jesse
 - Status of 2020 operating budget
 - 2020 revenue & expenses for 25 High St./the Full House Fund
 - Discussion of operating budget for first six months of 2021
4. Report on Select Board matters - Keith
 - Status of 6-month retroactive Contract
 - The Select Board's reaction to our proposal they budget \$4,000 for management services for the Town Hall Opera House in FY21/22
5. Report of the Planning for the Future Committee - Sarah
 - A report on the Dec. 14th meeting
 - Consideration of our response to the Town for approving the 6-month retroactive contract
 - A discussion of what we want to do over the next six months (both in our dealings with the Town and with respect to our own organization's activities)
6. A Winter Newsletter - Steven
 - What should it include?
 - When can it be ready?

Other business

Next meeting, Adjournment

-Treasurer's Report-

Net income for concert series 1/1/20-12/21/20 was \$1981. Website work was not charged by Delia. The last concert was in March and had about \$2000 pre ticket sales. Many people did not take refunds. Jesse accounted for concert series. Discussion about Quickbooks not showing mortgage payments; it goes on equity lines.

-Report on Select Board Matters-

The select board approved 6 month retroactive contract for \$1500. Talked about proposed operating budget. The amount approved by the board (\$4,000) should be able to cover first 6 months of management expenses. Steve talked about a possibility of not being compensated as events coordinator. Dave suggested putting \$500 towards an events coordinator and reduce website payments to \$500. Steve said Delia put her commitment go do website work for free in an email. Sarah suggested finding out how much it would cost to hire someone to do website work. Jesse would like to balance the budget with a payment of \$400 for events coordinator.

-Amending our Bylaws to Change our Fiscal Year-

Talked about switching our fiscal year from a calendar year (January 1st through December 31st) to one that runs from July 1st through June 30th. It would make the concert series run more smoothly, and it would parallel the town's time frame. Tom proposed that we should amend the calendar year as discussed. Keith seconded it and the bylaw was passed.

-Report of the Planning for the Future Committee-

Consideration of our response to the Town for approving the 6-month retroactive contract:

Tammy felt that we should keep the organization alive for the time when COVID ends. They approved contract for \$15,00 despite the fact they feel our services are less than they expect.

December 14th meeting of the subcommittee/ Over the next 6 months:

Dave, Keith, Jesse, Sarah discussed reconfiguration of ideas about the operation of the FTHOH in relation to the present budget and relationship to the Town Select Board. Three basic options were 1) be more aggressive about renewing the contract, 2) become completely separate from the town select board, 3) continue with select board, but with much more freedom by negotiating a permanent lease with them, pay nominal fee, assume some of the costs that the Town covers now. The subcommittee did not come to a conclusion. It was suggested to tell the town in a thank you note (about renewing contract) that we are reimagining our relationship with the Town. How does it leave us to do projects that the Town is not willing to do, eg., build green room? Dave talked about buying the building- shy of fundraising. Jesse likes long term lease and making improvements to increase value of the PTHOH. Green room will cost about \$80,000 (\$3,000 construction, \$50,000 materials). Sarah posed question- Would a 10 year lease be better than a free standing non profit that manages the facility? If we are a completely independent organization, PTHOH would be the main building to use, but not responsible for, or in control of, the building. Jesse suggested that we need to take a close look at our mission. Dave said it would be great to be in control and show that we are the best thing for the town- if everything financially mutual, ask them to take bids and see if we can lease the building long term and build a green room. Dave suggested we ask the SB to meet with us and discuss options. Steve pointed out that the town relies on income from the opera house to pay for expenses like utilities. Jesse suggested that the Town would be like a Landlord and pay for major stuff (not utilities) and have liability. We would pay for utilities if we had long term lease. Dave calculated that our services are worth \$4,000 and the Town wants to fall back to \$3,000. We provide valuable service for the Town. Sarah suggested that we pull together a budget and see what it would look like if we were to be independent... Jesse volunteered to put that together and Dave and Sarah will write a letter to the town for the next SB meeting. Sarah left meeting around 7:30.

-Winter Newsletter-

It is coming out next week. Ideas for newsletter content-An individual can get up to \$300 off tax deduction if one contributes. Since FPTHOH has non profit status, bigger tax breaks are available. New board member, Sarah, can be featured in the newsletter. Dave suggested...?

-Other Business-

Dave will talk about High Street budget with Jesse this month.

Next meeting: January 18, 2021

-Adjourned 7:45 pm-

Respectfully submitted by Lori Stratton, March 22, 2021