Children’s Ballet Theatre

Executive Board Meeting Minutes

December 12, 2021 7:00 PM via Zoom

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| **Attendees: Quorum:** Yes |
| Hillary Henderson (HH) | **Community Members:**  |
| Kelly Joldersma (KJ) | Lisa Whiting Dobson (LWD) |
| Casie Medina (CM)  | Kate Powers (KP) |
| Mindy Morgan (MM) | Rich Patterson (RP) |
| Matt Rosendale (MR) | Cecilia Stajos (CS) |
| David Weissling (DW) | Sue Powers (SP) |
| Amy Zaagman (AZ) | **Artistic Staff:** |
|  | Jesse Powers (JP) |
| **Others Present:**  |  |
| Erin Housefield |  |
| Angela Oliver |  |

AZ called meeting to order at 7:03.

HH moved to accept minutes from the November meeting as presented. DW seconds.

Treasurer’s Report

Nutcracker was successful. Did well with costs. Exceeded budgeted amount for male guest dancers. Cut costs for show quite a bit, but mainly due to generosity of CBT families who made many donations to their committees. 42,000 expenses, 58,000 revenue, so we made around $16,000.

We made up some ground, but still have a $26,000 deficit for spring.

We have received a Sunrise grant ($10,000) two Walmart grants ($2000) and an MSUFCU desk drawer grant ($250) this fall..

RP asks how much money we will have as we go into spring, after all expenses are paid? Roughly $10,000.

MR asked where the amount budgeted for drops for the year ($3000) came from? This year’s budget was created off of last year’s expenses. MR states $3000 is not enough (cost is roughly $800/drop).

Due to phenomenal efforts on various committees and donations we can now look at what we can do for spring show to cover areas where we have little budget left (drops/male guests), but bottom line we are still looking at a deficit at the end of the year.

MR feels we can possibly alleviate some lighting costs. DW thinks we can move some prop money to drops. JP ideally would want 4 drops, but realizes that isn’t possible, would like to try to take a little from other areas so we could have two.

Our only guaranteed revenue is $13,500 (tuition for 27 dancers), which does not cover our $27,000 fixed costs.

HH much bigger conversation that needs to happen. The deficit is real and doesn’t go away at the end of spring show. We have to address that before we can talk about moving money from one place to another for the show. AZ regardless of what the numbers are for spring show, we have to solve the problem of not enough revenue.

Letter from IRS for over due taxes from August 2012. $1745. RP thinks this was handled years ago. SP agrees. AZ will send to RP and he will talk with the tax preparer.

Nutty Wrap Up

AZ-many people mentioned they loved the show and learned about it through social media. SP received quite a few phone calls from people who called CBT asking about if we were doing Nutty. MR reported GL put it on their website. CS it was a lovely show and everyone should be very happy. AZ we had a very nice cast party last week as well.

CM definitely had some people who could not come due to covid, so potentially could have had more.

We had virtual sales of $1500.

Artistic Director’s Report

Thought it was a great show. GL was nice overall, parking an obstacle. Spring show will be Sleeping Beauty. Decided by what music is available and talking with dancers and also bc the show has been done before (9 years ago) so should be easier on props and wardrobe.

Focus discussion: The Future of CBT

Started a convo at November meeting about sustainability and a couple proposals have been via email to the board.

DW summarizes his proposal thinks we need to set goals and vision before moving forward on planning. What do we want to be? Suggests we aim to be the premiere pre-professional company in Lansing area.

DW concerned about communication-suggests posting board minutes to Facebook page. SP says minutes were supposed to be posted to website. AZ says they are posted. DW also mentioned bullying in his proposal, LWD wants to know who is being bullied. DW says info/suggestion comes from conversations he has had with parents in the past, some no longer with the company. Thinks bullying should be taken out of the hands of parents in the company because people feel they don’t have anyone to go to. LWD again asks are children in this company being bullied at this time? DW says he doesn’t know. MR says it is dancers who are no longer here.

AZ summarizes proposal she sent. KJ proposes $1050 for total buy out. MR asks what if everyone buys out? AZ says we look at hiring something. MR doesn’t think committee chairs have been given the authority to make people do hours or buyout. This addresses the issues of families feeling CBT is too much time commitment.

Erin Housefield suggest surveying parents saying if you were given these choices what would people choose. If 90% say pay rather than hours, then maybe we can’t do it because we need people to do the work. We need to make new families understand expectations and requirements and standards in order to make this work so some don’t feel they are being taken advantage of.

CS feels if we are going to charge for not doing work, it needs to be more than $10/hour.

DW talks about his proposal to have kids do work. LWD is concerned about who will teach kids to do work.

Erin Housefield addresses the $150 little guest dancer fee. Thinks the fee is going to turn people away. DW agrees it should be less, maybe $50. CM agrees it was too much, but thinks we should still have a fee bc there are associated costs. AZ suggests we could do more with their parts. CM points out that little guests need more chaperoning. CS not sure more stage time is the right choice.

Professional services: $2650/month, $31,800/year. AZ suggests restructuring to pay by season and have summer company only if summer company can cover the professional services for the summer. $12,000 for spring and $10,000 for Nutcracker. Proposed numbers are more what we can afford to pay, not what the services are worth. The proposal also proposes less hours of rehearsal. Above fee was paid when we had 70 dancer or 50 dancers and now we have many less dancers.

LWD/MR/RP number of dancers doesn’t necessarily impact the amount of work. CS would like to be cautious in reducing the amount because the amount has been the same for a long time. AZ if we want to pay more, we have to make more.

DW also suggests adding in a percentage of show revenue. RP says this was done for the previous artistic director. CM suggest that in the end we have to negotiate with Jesse.

MR feels we need more fundraising.

Conversation around set times/weekends off, etc.

HH motions to accept AZ proposal. CS seconds. KJ proposes adding tiers for people who would like to do some, but not all, hours. $600, $750, $900, $1050. CM seconds.

(voice vote passes 10-1; CS no, all others yes). CS feels buy-out should be more. CM proposes $50 for LGD fee. MR seconds (voice vote passes 11-0).

SP not called in roll call. AZ states she is ex-officio and so non-voting per bylaws. LWD wants clarification, she thought SP was a community member. HH states when SP was chair there was a question regarding conflict of interest and so she was moved to ex-officio which by by-laws is non-voting.

AZ amending proposal to read that proposal is a framework to work with subject to negotiations with JP. DW seconds. LWD requests further clarification and that items around tuition, fees, rent and insurance and the sections around professional services and show modification are subject to negotiations with Jesse. Voice vote passes 11-0.

Board votes on AZ proposal with above amendments. Voice vote passes 11-0.

Per direction and after convo with Jesse AZ will send out communication to send to families. Return to company January 23.

DZ asks that we draft a letter to send out to other studios. HH we currently don’t have an outreach person. CS will help/mentor.

Next board meeting will be January 9, 2022 at 7:00.

DW motions to adjourn at 9:33. LWD seconds.