Children’s Ballet Theatre

Executive Meeting Minutes

July 17, 2022 7:00 PM via Zoom

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| **Attendees: Quorum:** Yes |
| **Dancer Reps** | **Community Members** |
| Amy Zaagman (AZ) | Lisa Whiting Dobson (LWD) |
| David Weissling (DW) | Sue Powers (SP) |
| Casie Medina (CM) | Caryn Rhodes (CR) |
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|  | **Absent:** |
| **Artistic Contractor:** | Tracie Bolton (TB) |
| Jesse Powers (JP) | Matt Rosendale (MR) |

SP called meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

*LWD motioned to approve the meeting agenda, CR seconds, no one opposed.*

(Please note: June meeting minutes were approved via email vote on June 23.)

**New business/focus areas:**

**Discussion of the proposed fall 2022 Nutcracker calendar**

Agreement to continue holding dancer/parent meetings in hybrid format – allowing for Zoom but encouraging in person attendance. Adjustments were made to several calendar items to facilitate participation. The calendar will be shared out with members at or around return to company.

**Review/Discussion of revised policies and procedures**

Request for board to fully review the recently provided draft of the policies and procedures. Board members should review and offer edits to LWD and SP prior to the August meeting so that action may be taken.

**Report on current membership and discussion of recruitment**

Current status of fall 2022 membership is that we have a few outstanding possible returning members who have yet to commit – follow up continues. We also have at least two new members – one a Level 1 and one a Level 2.

Discussion on possible partnership with Premiere Dance Studio for fall with their dancers possibly invited -- as a group – to have a guest role in the Nutcracker. Agreement that discussions should be pursued about how to structure

**Technique Class**

A discussion was added to the agenda about the need to ensure technique classes return as a regular part of weekend rehearsals. JP to bring back a plan to the board about how best to incorporate rehearsals for each Level given the scope of the professional services contract, availability of staff. Discussion about use/role of company assistants with concerns expressed that they not be substitutes for instructors.

**Planning for Nutrcracker**

With Jeff Miller’s retirement from Holt Schools we need to reestablish our relationship with Holt as the preferred venue for fall; may need to also explore other venues including getting cost estimates.

**Executive Director’s report**

LWD presented the summary of accounts. Merchantile account is now closed and all CBT funds are represented in MSUFCU accounts. LWD proposed consolidating accounts at MSUFCU with closing of the “Fundraising” and “Scrip” accounts.

*LWD motions, CM seconds:*

*Move $5.13 from Spartan Saver to Checking*

*Close Fundraising (balance $303.98) to Checking*

*Close Scrip (balance $11.0) to checking*

*Motion passes unanimously*

LWD provided update on tax penalty for late filing of 990’s. IRS has sent letter asking for more time to review our request for abatement.

LWD provided EIDL loan update. Rich Patterson, former vice chair and treasurer and named contact on the EIDL application documents, emailed the Small Business Administration and requested the contact information for CBT be updated so that an account may be created and payoff amount obtained. SBA Birmingham Office has acknowledged receipt of the email.

Discussion initiated by LWD on unpaid spring tuition. One dancer has not paid outstanding tuition balance for spring and one other family has not paid what was agreed to.

Dancer evaluations need to be completed. LWD and JP discussed a plan to complete evaluations within next several weeks. Because CBT does not have a current professional services agreement with JP, LWD believes he should be compensated for the time to prepare and participate in dancer evaluations.

*LWD motions, DW seconds:*

*CBT will pay JP $300 in a flat fee for the preparation of and participation in dancer evaluations.*

*AZ offers a friendly amendment to ensure that future contracts for professional services include the dancer evaluations.*

*Motion passes unanimously.*

LWD wants to begin work on Fall 2022 professional services contract with JP. CR offers to assist.

*LWD motions, DW seconds that she and CR will meet with JP and negotiate a professional services agreement for the Fall 2022 Nutcracker season with a budget of $12,000 total.*

*Motions passes unanimously.*

LWD also wants to complete artistic director evaluation. LWD, MR and CR will be part of this committee.

*LWD motions, CR seconds that the evaluation will take place prior to return to company.*

*Discussion regarding forms to utilize and clarification provided that any staff included in the professional services contract will be evaluated by JP, not CBT ED or board.*

*Motion passes unanimously.*

LWD also interested in creating feedback form/venue so that parents may give anonymous feedback about CBT in general as well as the artistic director and staff. More to come.

An update was provided on the previous Dancer Management committee which will now be known as “Dancer Development” with less focus on “managing” and more focus on supporting dancers.

Committees will be shared with the company in August with request for volunteers.

Marketing update was offered with agreement that many people in the company have great ideas but that a small group needs to be focused on marketing the company and productions to ensure consistency and focus on message. One specific example was the return of the Turner Dodge tea during Nutcracker; LWD working on this and will reach out to past Marketing Chair Hillary Henderson.

LWD shared that the 2022 Nutcracker show budget is a work in progress and she will send more information as soon as she has it complete with plan for a review and approval at August board meeting.

**Artistic Director update:**

JP interested in reaching out to the MSU Children’s Choir about 2022 Nutcracker.

In response to changing of required committee hours to volunteers only, JP suggests dancers be asked to help with load out at the show venue.

In response to request for Spring 2023 show information, JP said he is exploring various ballets and will present to the board in August.

Other Business

CM asked about availability of dates for Texas Hold Em poker events as fundraising. SP shared that contact had been made with Event Spot that no dates are currently available for CBT.

Discussion about grant opportunities. DW shared recent WK Kellogg Foundation funding for dance group in Detroit.

Discussion about alumni fundraising. AZ to share alumni list with CR and TB.

Continued discussion about how to improve climate/culture within CBT, specifically concerns about bullying and disrespectful behavior between dancers but also between parents. SP continues to invite suggestions for speakers.

At 9:10 PM AZ motions to adjourn, LWD seconds.

**Subsequent board actions via email:**

*On July 23 at 12:25 am DW made the following motion via email:*

*I move to create the position of Appreciation (sic) to Level 1.*

*On July 23 at 9:58 am LWD seconded with the following friendly amendment*

*I move to create Level One Apprentice open to 7 year old dancers by audition. Level One Apprentices will be assigned two roles in each show, take class with Level Ones, and pay full price for membership.*

*Discussion ensued via email with several members concerned that the proposal would require a bylaws amendment as presented.*

*On July 23 at 5:57 pm LWD offered the following friendly amendment which was accepted by DW:*

*I move to create Level One Apprentice as part of the Little Guest Dancer opportunities open to 7 year old dancers by audition. Level One Apprentices will be assigned two roles in each show, take class with Level Ones, and pay full price for membership. If the Level One Apprenticeship is completed successfully, the dancer will transition into the company the first show after the dancer turns 8 years old without further audition.*

*The motion passes unanimously with each member signifying support via email vote.*