

Community Players of Salisbury

Monthly Meeting Minutes

June 5, 2024

Board Members Present: Tom Robinson, Presiding, Sharon Benchoff, Matt Bogdan, Lynne Bratten, Kyle Hayes, Ken Johnson, Charie Linton, Shelbie Thompson, Rusty Mumford

Other Attendees: Brenda Allen, David Allen, Tony Broadbent, Kim Cuesta, Pete Cuesta, Melissa Dasher, Lester Huss, Betsy Metzger, Matt Munday, Ann Northam, Susan Robinson, Christine Smith, Joshua Smith.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Approval of the Minutes:

Lynne Bratten noted a discrepancy in the May meeting minutes regarding the approval for installation of a fire door in the rehearsal space:

1. The minutes for that issue stated that the motion was approved by a margin of 5-4. That however, could not have been the actual result as there were not 9 Board members present when the issue was discussed.
2. Darrell Mullins responded that he counted the raised hands and thought there were 5 raised hands to approve the motion.
3. Further discussion on the issue resulted in the following:
 - a. Concern about committing to a single vendor, Gillis Gilkerson, before we have the plan for the entire space.
 - b. Concern that only one vendor's quote was being considered.
 - c. The question of whether or not the President should vote as By-Laws state the President votes only to break a tie.
 - d. Rusty Mumford/Matt Bogdan moved to have a re-vote on the issue. Motion passed.
NOTE: The result of that will be detailed under "Other Old Business."

The minutes were approved as amended.

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was approved as distributed.

President's Report:

Tom Robinson stated that it has been a good year and thanked all involved in our productions.

Committee Reports

Concessions: Brenda Allen reported as follows:

1. Concessions sales are planned for *The Harlem Renaissance*, The Upcoming Movie Night and *Kiss Me Kate*
2. Please help with *Kiss Me Kate* if you can.

Facilities Management:

Ken Johnson reported as follows:

1. Despite recent rains there has not been any flooding.
2. The exterior sign has been repaired.
3. There will be a “Warehouse Clean-up” after *Kiss Me Kate* has closed.
4. We should reach out to high school students who need volunteer hours to help with the clean-up.
5. The rehearsal room floor will be treated this summer.

On the floor-treatment issue, others commented that we will need to work around the date for that due to:

1. July Children’s Theatre Workshop
2. August Performance of “Showstoppers.”
3. September World War II Fundraiser Performance
4. Trivia Nights

Other Facility-Related Comments:

1. Lynne Bratten announced that “Wardrobe Wednesdays” will start again after *Kiss Me Kate* closes.
2. Ken Johnson commented that the drain pipe needs to be rearranged.

Fundraising: Matt Bogdan reported as follows:

1. A 50/50 raffle was held at the *Vanya, etc.* shows. We raised \$592. Thanks go to those who helped with this fundraiser.
2. *The Harlem Renaissance: A Celebration of the Arts* was held April 26-28. It was well received and featured a diverse cast, which led to a diverse audience. Ticket sales were \$1290, with 38 in attendance on Friday, 44 in attendance on Saturday, and 47 in attendance on Sunday, with an overall attendance of 129. Concession sales were \$146, and bookmark sales (bookmarks donated by Judy Hearn...thanks, Judy!) were \$220. Ernie Matthews, who in memory of his wife Elizabeth, sponsored the show at \$200, and two programs ads totaled \$100. Gross income for the show was \$1956. Expenses, which included cast gifts, cast party, and set pieces, totaled \$350. Net profit for the show was \$1606. Thanks go to the band, the cast, and the crew for their time and effort.
3. Matt Bogdan will be seeking funds at Sobos on Thursday, May 16, at 5:30 p.m. from the organization Wicomico Women Who Care. Lynne Bratten made Matt aware of this potential fundraiser.

4. A Movie Night will be held on May 18 with the showing of Buster Keaton's "The General," a remarkable 1926 silent film classic considered by some to be the greatest comedy of all-time. The plot involves Johnnie, played by Buster Keaton, who loves his train ("The General") and Annabelle. When the Civil War begins, he is turned down for service because he's more valuable as an engineer. Annabelle thinks it's because he's a coward. Union spies capture The General with Annabelle on board. Johnnie must rescue both his loves. Tickets are \$5, cash or check, and available at the door. Social hour begins at 7. Movie begins at 8. Matt Bogdan is the coordinator.
5. The *Guest Bartender* fundraiser will be held June 6 from 5-9 p.m. at Brew River with Shelbie Thompson as the coordinator.
6. A 50/50 raffle will be held at the *Kiss Me, Kate!* shows in June.
7. *Trivia Night* will be held on June 28 at 7 p.m. with Sharon Benchhoff as the coordinator.
8. A Musical Revue entitled *Show Stoppers* will be held July 26 and 27 at 7 p.m. and July 28 at 2 p.m. at Players. Many of the songs will very upbeat. Tickets will be \$10. Auditions for the show will be held June 25 and June 26 at 7 p.m. at Players. Rusty Mumford is the coordinator.
9. *Trivia Night* will be held on July 19 at 7 p.m. with Sharon Benchhoff as the coordinator.
10. *Trivia Night* will be held on August 30 at 7 p.m. with Sharon Benchhoff as the coordinator.
11. *World War II: A Tribute* will be held September 13 and September 14 at 7 p.m. and September 15 at 2 p.m. with a live band playing Glenn Miller music and other WWII music, as well as slides and dramatic readings. The format will be similar to the Harlem Renaissance show. Tickets will be \$10, with partial proceeds to support WW II veterans. Matt Bogdan is the coordinator.
12. *Trivia Night* will be held September 27 at 7 p.m. with Sharon Benchhoff as the coordinator.
13. The October fundraiser will be the Poe show. Performances will be October 18 from 7-9 p.m. at Possum Point Players in Georgetown, Delaware, October 19 from 7-9 at the Snow Hill Firehouse in Snow Hill, October 20 from 2-4 p.m. at Players Playhouse in Salisbury, October 25 from 7-9 p.m. at Players Playhouse in Salisbury, October 26 from 7-9 p.m. at Poplar Hill Mansion in Salisbury, and October 27 from 2-4 p.m. at Players Playhouse in Salisbury. Tickets are \$10. Matt Bogdan is the coordinator. This will be the fourth year of the production.
14. The November fundraiser is Giving Tuesday with Sharon Benchhoff as the coordinator.
15. Another November fundraiser will be the 50/50 raffle at *Guys and Dolls* shows.
16. The December fundraiser will be the radio play *It's a Wonderful Life* with Matt Bogdan as the coordinator.
17. If anyone has ideas for fundraisers or would like to coordinate or help coordinate a fundraiser, please let Matt know.

Other Fundraising Comments:

Shelbie Thompson elaborated on the Guest Bartending event as follows:

1. Players will receive 20% of all orders.
2. Devin and Drew will provide entertainment.
3. Suggested we should have a raffle. Matt Bogdan/Rusty Mumford moved that we raffle 2 tickets to *Kiss Me Kate* as well as 2 season tickets for our upcoming season. Motion passed.

4. Asked for a volunteer to coordinate the raffle, Robin Finley volunteered.
5. Asked if we have physical raffle tickets. We do and it was decided that the cost would be \$5 per ticket.

Matt Bogdan commented that he will need someone to coordinate the 50-50 raffle for the run of *Kiss Me Kate*. Kim Cuesta volunteered to do one of the performances. Lester Huss volunteered for the other two.

Rusty Mumford commented that the performance dates for the *Showstoppers Revue* will be the first weekend in August, not in July as originally planned. The songs will be upbeat and recognizable. He is looking for approximately 12 singers to present a performance of 1-1/2 hours.

Sharon Benchoff updated the dates for trivia nights as follows:

1. June 28
2. July 26
3. August 30
4. September 27

Matt Bogdan commented that the World War II performance will have an 8-piece band.

Sharon Benchoff commented that she would like to stage *Pera-Cles* at Rakcliffe House.

Grants: Matt Bogdan reported as follows:

1. I submitted an application for an Operating Grant of \$2,500 from the Salisbury Wicomico Arts Council (SWAC).
2. I am working on the final report for our current SWAC grant, which is due June 30.
3. I will be attending the SWAC luncheon in June. Attending the luncheon is one of the requirements of the grant.
4. We did not receive a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council for Arts Capital funding. Although MSAC does not say why we did not receive the grant at this time, they will provide an explanation later on if asked, so I asked for an explanation. I will let the board know once I receive the explanation. Also, I will re-apply when the next grant cycle opens this summer. MSAC anticipates opening the FY25 grant cycle in mid-June, with a deadline in mid-August. I will also take part in an online grant information session scheduled for June 14, which will cover changes and updates to the program guidelines in FY25.
5. I am still waiting to hear back from the Beach to Bay Heritage Area (BBHA), in which I requested a grant of \$96,753 for renovations to our building. Supposedly I am to be notified this month.
6. I submitted a new grant application to BBHA, asking for support of the WW II production to be presented in September.
7. I submitted a new application to Coastal Association of Realtors, asking for support of the WW II production to be presented in September.

8. I submitted new applications to the Walmart Foundation, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Coca-Cola Foundation, and the Home Depot Foundation.
9. Thom Harris donated \$2,000 to Community Players.

Joshua Smith commented that the deadline for a SWAC Grant has been extended.

Historical: Nothing to report

Hospitality: Rusty Mumford reported as follows:

1. We continue to be hospitable.
2. Considering a BBQ to coincide with the July trivia night.

House: Betsy Metzger reported as follows:

Betsy Metzger reported as follows:

1. The call for ushers will go out this week.
2. I expect to need more on Sunday than the other two days, so if any cast members have family coming to every show and they want to help, I will not turn them down!
3. Ushers are getting very comfortable with reserved seating.

Lifetime Achievement Award:

Pete Cuesta reported as follows:

1. The Nomination Form will be in the newsletter
2. Deadline to nominate is September
3. On Posthumous Nominees, the policy is at least 3 years since passing.

Shelbie Thompson asked if there was a list of previous winners. There is a plaque in the office with all previous winners.

Marketing: Nothing to Report (see Old Business)

Membership:

Melissa Dasher distributed the membership application for the 2024/2025 season. Melissa Dasher/Rusty Mumford moved that as there were no changes to the form, we should approve. Motion passed.

Nominating: Sharon Benchoff asked if there were any remaining ballots. There were none.

Patrons: Kel Nagel commented that he had reached out to Patrons coming to *Kiss Me Kate*.

Performance Space: Kel Nagel reported that we should have specifics from Becker/Morgan, based on measurements they took, in approximately one week.

Program Advertising: Tom Robinson reported that the program for *Kiss Me Kate* is in process. Deadline for all content is June 14.

Publicity: Kel Nagel, reporting for Debby Nagel, reported as follows regarding *Kiss Me Kate*:

1. Yard signs have been placed
2. There will be an article in the *Salisbury Independent*
3. A banner is in production.
4. Shelbie Thompson and Kate Adkins have updated the graphics.
5. Posters are available, please post some.

Scholarship: Lynne Bratten reported as follows:

1. The players scholarships were presented at Pocomoke High School's awards ceremony to Treston Melvin by Pete Cuesta. Thank you to Pete for representing players at this event.
2. A graduation ceremony was held for home school students at Oak Ridge Church where Lynne Bratten represented Players and presented the Players scholarship to Elijah Cockey.
3. Both students and their family members were extremely appreciative of the award and recognition.
4. A report with photos will be sent to the newsletter for publication and to the website master.

Season Tickets/Box Office: Rusty Mumford reported as follows:

1. *Kiss Me Kate* tickets are going slowly. Please talk it up.
2. Received an email about Players Night that was not entirely clear. He is checking on it.

Social Media: Kate Adkins reported as follows:

1. Continuing to post daily on Facebook and Instagram.
2. If you have photos of an event or have an update for an event please send me an email (mariefox18@gmail.com)
3. Posts for KMK cast are starting.
4. Remember to "like, comment and share"

Old Business

Kiss Me, Kate Update: Kel Nagel reported as follows"

1. The Semi-Huge set is under construction.
2. Please come help with set on Saturdays.
3. Kudos to Bill and Kenny on set design/construction.

4. Debby Nagel is working hard on costumes.
5. There is a cast of 21, working hard.
6. Shelbie Thompson and David Ospital will perform during the SWAC luncheon. They will be accompanied by Bill Folger, SWAC President and *Kiss Me Kate* Musical Director.

Children's Summer Theatre Camp Update:

Kyle Hayes reported as follows:

1. Camp Counselors have been hired.
2. The committee will meet again on June 10, 2024

Rusty Mumford reported that 22 kids have signed up.

Ridgeway Costumes Update: Lynne Bratten reported as follows:

1. Sally Ridgeway has gone to settlement on the sale of her home.
2. For the time being, the shed with costumes, can wait. However, the wait should not be indefinitely.
3. The challenge on where to store the costume remains.

On the issue of costume storage, the discussion was as follows:

1. Tom Robinson reminded us that we are not allowed to put another building on the property.
2. Can we put a structure on skids, like an Amish Shed?
3. Is the restriction a county issue?
4. Can we build elsewhere?
5. Whatever the type of structure, it must have heat and air conditioning.
6. Tom Robinson offered to research the issue and will report back.

Architect Update: See Performance Space Committee Report

Scholarships Update: See Scholarship Committee Report

Restroom Signs Update: Revised signs have been posted.

Other Old Business:

A Word of Thanks: Lynne Bratten thanked CPOS for the flowers sent during her recent illness.

Fire Door Installation: As indicated in the Facilities Management Committee report, there were concerns about the accuracy of the vote taken at the May meeting to contract Gillis/Gilkerson at a cost of no more than \$7,000 for the installation of the fire door. Comments/Concerns/Questions were as follows:

1. Do we have a grant to cover the cost of the fire door? Yes we do.
2. Can we be sure that the installation will fit the overall design, which we have not yet seen seen?
3. Since bids were not part of the process, how do we know that another contractor might have a more cost-efficient quote?
4. As we have a grant for this project, we have to spend a minimum of the grant total, \$7,000 in this case.
5. Can we use different contractors for different aspects of the overall design of the facility?
6. It might be advantageous to have one company do everything.
7. Isn't in our best interests to have multiple quotes?
8. It was understood, even if not specially stated, that the motion was to commit to Gillis/Gilkerson for the fire door installation.
9. After a lengthy discussion, Kel Nagel/Rusty Mumford moved that the President be authorized to facilitate the installation, pending the details of the forthcoming architectural plans from Becker/Morgan, at a cost of no more than \$7,000. Motion passed.

QR Code on Business Cards:

Rusty Mumford apologized about the QR code on our business cards as that code was for a free trial and not a paid subscription. He will correct and have new business cards printed at his expense.

Marketing Update:

1. Rusty Mumford reported that the SU Graduate Students recommended that we offer a "Youth Night." He, Sharon Benchoff and Bobbie Calloway will meet to develop and present a plan.
2. Shelbie Thompson offered to work on re-building our website, pending Board approval.

3. Website Domain Pricing: Rusty Mumford provided a number of options on who to contract with for our web domain, He recommended that we go with either the Wix Core, or Wix Elite.
4. Tom Robinson asked if we could table this so as to have time to study the options.
5. Rusty Mumford suggested an electronic vote so that we can start building the site for the upcoming season, rather than wait until a meeting in July. He will send a more detailed report on each option.
6. Rusty Mumford commented that Tom Welsh, who has been handling our current website, has been informed of our desire to update. Tom stated that he will be happy to help until we transition to the new website.

New Business

Performance at Rackliffe House

Sharon Benchhoff requested approval to direct a fundraiser performance of *Pera-Cles* at Rackliffe House. As Sharon was counting ballots when this agenda item was discussed, she was not present to make a formal motion. She sent an email to the Board with a motion to approve. Motion passed.

Vote for Officers and Board: Sharon Benchhoff shared to election results as follows:

1. Officers:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| a. Vice President: | Darrell Mullins |
| b. Recording Secretary: | Melissa Dasher |
| c. Corresponding Secretary: | Rusty Mumford |
| d. Nominee for Treasurer: | Charlie Linton |

Board Members:

David Allen, Kim Cuesta, Charlie Szentesi-Thomas

Other New Business

Chairs

David Allen stated that he had access to chairs, similar to ours with padded seats, at a cost of \$5.00 per chair. He moved that the Board approve purchasing 100 chairs. Discussion was as follows:

1. How often have we had an audience over 50 in productions staged in our facility?
2. Some of our special productions have exceed 50 audience members.

Rusty Mumford/Matt Bogdan moved to purchase up to 50 chairs at \$5.00 per chair. Motion passed.

Production Venues

1. It was suggested that we get the platforms used by The Salisbury School to see if they will work well in our space.
2. Pete Cuesta asked the Board to consider staging *A Few Good Men* in our space rather than in Wor-Wic as he was confident that the technical needs could be met.
3. Rusty Mumford expressed concern that we might infringe on upcoming events in our facility, such as the Children's Theatre Workshop.
4. Joshua Smith commented that the platforms store easily, taking up little space.

Downtown Performing Arts Facility

Joshua Smith reported that there are plans to build a new Salisbury University performing arts center on the footprint of the current public library. The plan allows for community arts-related groups to use that facility.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:53 pm.