



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, March 19, 2018 at 11:00am Eastern

PRESENT:

Ethan McSweeney
Laura Penn

ABSENT:

Anne Kauffman
Mark Lamos

STAFF PRESENT:

David Roberts
Executive Director
Elishia Merricks
Program Associate

PRESENT BY PHONE:

Mark Brokaw
Sheldon Epps
Linda Hartzell

I. **CALL TO ORDER** - President Sheldon Epps called the meeting to order at 11:05.

II. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

11:05AM – 11:25AM

a. **Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) update**

- i. SDC Foundation filed the DCA grant application late and Ethan McSweeney, Mr. Epps, Linda Hartzell, and David Roberts have been discussion with regards to what specific steps need to be taken to ensure that deadlines are not missed in the future.
- ii. Mr. Roberts informed the Trustees that SDCF staff will be drafting a letter acknowledging the mistake and reiterating the information given to him from the DCA via email. Mr. Roberts has previously served on DCA panels and was asked to be on the panel again. He believes that there is still a good relationship between DCA and SDCF.
- iii. The Trustees discussed the competitive nature of DCA grants with 60% of applicants receiving funding. The staff at DCA can be influential with the process and it is important that SDCF maintains and builds upon the current relationship. SDCF Staff and Trustees should take and create opportunities to meet with DCA representatives and integrate this cultivation into the fundraising workflow. The Trustees discussed the following ways to connect with funders;
 1. Call with a question during the application process.
 2. Lunches with the SDCF Trustees.
 3. Attend the information sessions about grant opportunities – annual and semi-annual. Mr. Roberts has created a provisional calendar and sent them to Christine O'Connor, the Fundraising Consultant. Laura Penn and Mr. Roberts were invited to a similar session by NYSCA and were invited to apply for a research grant. It was useful in that they spoke to funders such as the Tow Foundation.
 4. SDCF and SDC to coordinate fundraising opportunities.

- iv. Ms. Penn informed the Trustees that SDC is proposing a three-piece grant application for NYSCA (in addition to the annual grant application due on 04.28.18) that focuses on mid-career directors, under the auspices of the Foundation. The elements include;
 - 1. Hire a consultant to analyze how directors are funded.
 - 2. Discover what funding is available to directors.
 - 3. SDC/SDCF to pitch three ideas on how to solve the problems that we believe we'll come across.

The grant request is \$20,000 but \$30,000 is a more accurate account of what will be needed. Anne Kauffman will help to put together a committee. The Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment is willing to talk about supporting directors in the same way that they support film directors. There is also a possibility for an additional grant to support female directors in a commercial setting; this would be funding for the Union.

b. Christine O'Connor/ Albert Hall & Assoc. update

- i. The Trustees discussed a need for a fundraising strategy going forward and that Ms. O'Connor will be taking into account the current SDCF workflow in order to provide recommendations. Ms. O'Connor will attend the "Mr. Abbott" Award as an outside eye and will be able to give us a clear idea on how "Mr. Abbott" serves SDCF as the main fundraiser. Ms. O'Connor will also be at the May Board of Trustees meeting. Mr. Epps proposed a long-term strategy meeting on Tuesday, May 22nd. Mr. Roberts requested that the Trustees make space in their calendar for the vital fundraising meeting.

II. SECRETARY'S REPORT

11:25AM – 11:30AM

a. Approval of Minutes, February 12, 2018

- i. Secretary Mark Brokaw asked the Trustees to recommend any changes or additions to the minutes from February 12, 2018.

ETHAN MCSWEENY MADE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 12 BOARD MEETING, LINDA HARTZELL SECONDED. MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT

11:30AM – 11:55AM

a. "Mr. Abbott" Financial update

- i. Mr. McSweeney informed the Trustees that he is most concerned with the 'Board Approved' column and the year to date. Mr. Roberts reminded the Trustees that the document was current as of Thursday, 15 March. He noted further it did not account for the latter half of March sales, nor 'in-the-room donations' on April 2.
- ii. Mr. McSweeney indicated that SDCF had sold \$127,000 in tickets, \$6,600 more than budgeted. Income from Adverts for the journal totaled \$24,000, \$3,000 more than budgeted. Donations totaled \$189,000, currently \$26,000 below budget. He assured the Trustees that the donations were expected to significantly increase on the night of the "Mr. Abbott" Award.

b. Cash Flow Snap Shot

- i. Mr. McSweeney drew the Trustees' attention to the end of March month where all of the "Mr. Abbott" expenses go out, indicating that some of the numbers were

estimated and stating that in the future the document will be color-coordinated so that projections are clear.

- ii. The next time the Trustees see a Cash Flow Snapshot they will start to look towards the end of the fiscal year, when there isn't an anomaly like the "Mr. Abbott".

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

11:55AM – 12:10PM

a. HR Policy and Materials update.

- i. SDCF is focused on updating and codifying the paperwork and processes of the Observership Program (to be adapted for the multiple SDCF Fellowships). The aims of this process are;
 - 1. To ensure that SDCF is protecting Observers.
 - 2. To best position SDCF in terms of its exposure and legal liability.
 - 3. To inform all parties on what to expect as part of the Observership Program, what they are responsible for, and what SDCF's expectations are.
- ii. Updates and formalization will include the following documents;
 - 1. SDCF Letter of Agreement with an Observer.
 - 2. SDCF Memo of Understanding with a Mentoring Artist, keeping in mind that it is not a contract because the Mentoring Artist is a volunteer.
 - 3. SDCF Memo of Understanding with a Producer. Up until now SDCF has had limited and informal contact with producers. This document will be sensitive to navigate because they may be acutely aware of their exposure.
- iii. SDCF is in the process of creating a new work place conduct policy for the Observerships and Fellowships. The next step is to meet and review the new documents from a legal standpoint with Hope Pordy. Ms. Penn has been integral to ensuring that SDC and SDCF are in step with the establishment of new policies. However, it is not as cut and dry with Observers because they are not, technically, employees. Ms. Penn stated that the difficulty is making the SDC Members feel safe in this new process but to let them know that they are responsible. She continued to highlight the Memo of Understanding with the Producer as being the most difficult aspect of the HR changes as they will likely not agree for an Observer to be on a production if they feel that they have a heightened responsibility.
- iv. SDCF needs a mechanism in place to manage where Observers and Fellows are being sent and who they are being mentored by. The question was raised as to how this can be coordinated with the work that the SDC Workplace conduct committee is capturing without running into issues of confidentiality and privacy.
- v. Mr. Roberts highlighted that when an SDC Member is approached to take an Observer, the decision is made with reputation and anecdotal evidence in mind. It was agreed that SDCF should look at previous Final Observership Reports and keep a record of which Mentoring artists are reported to have provided a safe and positive work environment and Observership experience. Additionally, SDCF staff will establish a mid-Observership check-in.

b. Programming update

- i. SDCF staff will continue to update and strengthen the current process to inform Trustees on upcoming Observerships, Fellowships, and other programs.

V. "MR. ABBOTT" UPDATE

12:08PM – 12:20PM

a. Guests, Gala Co-Chairs Rachel Chavkin & Michael Wilson joined the meeting at 12:08.

- i. Mr. Wilson thanked all of the Trustees who had already contributed informed them that there was nearly 100% involvement with both SDCF and SDC Boards. He also thanked the Trustees for all the soliciting they had done on behalf of the "Mr. Abbott" committee. He continued to encourage them to sell the remaining 60 tickets. He informed the Trustees that he and Ms. Chavkin would be setting up affinity groups and Susan Stroman would be engaging the past presidents. Ms. Chavkin stated that short, pithy, and personal emails would be most valued from the Trustees as the "Mr. Abbott" efforts continue.
- ii. The "Mr. Abbott" tribute video has been updated with footage from past winners. Tyne Rafaeli is working on the content of the tribute. There will be three main videos are being worked on by Greg Emetaz, with theatre, film, and opera being the three pillars of the evening. A proclamation from a government official is expected. David Henry Hwang is writing the program script for the tribute.
- iii. Mr. Roberts thanked Ms. Chavkin and Mr. Wilson for their time, affirming to the Trustees that their work, as Gala Co-Chairs has been tireless and instrumental building toward the "Mr. Abbott".

VI. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

12:20PM – 12:25PM

- a. The Trustees had discussed a possible trip to Seattle for Mr. Roberts. Linda Hartzell would like to arrange a meet and greet with Mr. Roberts and some potential donors based in Seattle.
- b. The Davidson Committee will be meeting to discuss and decide the inaugural honoree for the Gordon Davidson Award. TCG has confirmed that SDCF is able to announce the Davidson at the conference in June. There will be an additional event in L.A. and it will be important to consider the budget implications as these events will occur in the final month of the SDCF FY18 fiscal year.
- c. Mr. McSweeney plans to present a year end projection at the April Board meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

ETHAN MCSWEENEY MADE MOTION TO ADJOURN, LINDA HARTZELL SECONDED. MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.