



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, September 17, 2018 at 11:00 AM Eastern

**PRESENT:**

Anne Kauffman  
Ethan McSweeney  
Laura Penn

**ON THE PHONE:**

Sheldon Epps  
Linda Hartzell

**ABSENT:**

Mark Brokaw  
Mark Lamos

**STAFF PRESENT:**

David Roberts  
*Executive Director*  
Elishia Merricks  
*Program Associate*

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

- a. President Sheldon Epps called the meeting to order at 11:05. He expressed thanks to all the Trustees for their efforts and success in the fundraising goals. He noted that it was an exciting time for SDCF, and the enthusiasm and the dedication of the Board was apparent.

**II. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

- a. Gordon Davidson Award report: Mr. Epps, who was in attendance, shared that it was a humorous and an emotional evening. His remarks, and those from Tom Moore and Oskar Eustis were all well received. Mr. Epps noted that Oskar made a humble and moving acceptance speech about the importance of the award to him. The Davidson family were full of gratitude and it was such a celebratory evening with a lot of love and support for the craft, for Gordon, and for Oskar.
- b. Executive Director David Roberts added that it was apparent how important it was that the inaugural event was held in L.A., and was clearly a highlight for the community. He noted that Tom's remarks in particular went a long way in establishing the Davidson Award in relation to the Fichandler Award.

**III. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

- a. In the absence of Secretary Mark Brokaw, Mr. Epps asked the Trustees to recommend any changes or additions to the minutes from July 16, 2018.
- b. Laura Penn asked that a correction be made on page 3 regarding the Rachel Rockwell fund, changing the word 'guidelines' to 'solicitation letter'.

**ANNE KAUFFMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JULY 16, 2018 AS AMENDED. LINDA HARTZELL SECONDED. MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

**IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- a. Program Update
  - i. Mr. Roberts gave a summary of new Observership protocols, noting that SDCF has instituted the mid-point check in with Observers, which is handled by Elishia Merricks; a mid-point check in with mentors with Mr. Roberts and Ms. Merricks; and the addition of post-Observership surveys for both mentors and mentees. He noted that this all grew out of the work on workplace conduct and how it relates to the Foundation.

Mr. Roberts noted that our list of prospective mentors was strong, with some repeating mentors. The staff is looking to expand geographic diversity by looking at the south and southwest, really ensuring that we continue to reach nationally.

- ii. One-on-One – September 24: L.A. with Mandy Moore and Walter Painter. 70 RSVP'd, 50 to 55 attended. The team at the Geffen was extremely supportive and accommodating as hosts. The Speakers were very effusive, excited to be involved. There is a possibility to engage Walter further, possibly as a donor.
- iii. Nov 2 opportunity with Lonny Price and Hal Prince – there is some back and forth with PBS about what they can offer, in terms of public programming prior to their official premiere. There is the possibility of it being a SDC Members only event, if so, it can't be a One-on-One because of our public funding commitments. LP suggested with could distribute it as a Masters of the Stage program, which would satisfy our public programming component.
- iv. Other Programs and Events
  - Mr. Roberts noted that Camille A. Brown is unable to co-host the SDCF Awards – however she is still wanting to engaged with the Foundation. The staff will explore her interest in a future One-on-One or Observership mentorship.
  - Member Jason Tate was doing a fight workshop donated to SDC as part of the Flea Market, it didn't get any takers this year. Mr. Roberts worked with Marisa Levy at SDC, and Jason is happy to pass this workshop along to the SDCF – he has opened this up to 10-15 members. It will be aimed at mid-career Members and Associates, possibly Observers, for people who want to advance their fight skills, and learn to understand how to better work with a fight choreographer and gain a better fight vocabulary in a practical setting.
  - Mr. Roberts gave a summary update on recent Fellowship activity, including the selection of the 2018/19 Denham Fellow Michelle Bossy, and development with the Weill Foundation on an expanded fellowship process.
- v. MOS podcast has released five original episodes so far this season. We are scheduled to have a mini series of 12 with M. Graham Smith, Regional Originals focusing on new work. New this season will be choreographer and Member, Wendy Seyb, doing a 6 episode mini-series focused on choreographers MOS: In Motion. The Trustess expressed interest in also having higher profile hosts, with some possibilities of mini series with Ms. Kauffman and Mr. McSweeney discussed. The group also discussed ways of getting more out of the partnership with TDF.

## **V. FUNDRAISING UPDATE**

- a. Ms. Hartzell gave an update on the Leading Contributors, and expressed what an honor it was to work with the Trustees on this effort. She noted the importance of recognizing these supporters as the Foundation moves forward. Ms. Hartzell noted that there were seven major gifts committed, with an eighth possibility in the works.

- b. Mr. Roberts discussed the timeline of appeals. The Trustees further discussed the need for planning for Executive Board Appeal and A.D. Appeal, in time for the next Board meeting.
- c. Mr. Roberts gave a grants update on NYSCA funding, and the feedback from our program officer regarding the lower amount of funding in FY19: For the last three years SDCF's grant was \$10,000/yr for three years, and SDCF's contract period was up. As a grantee we do not apply for a multi-year or a single year, rather the agency tells grantees what category they will be in each contract period. We received a \$6,000 grant for a single year, we can adjust and improve on our proposal next year. Mr. Roberts noted from the feedback session: that each year the panel is composed of different participants, there were more applicants this year, and notably only one applicant received the full amount of their ask. Panelists base the funding on a point system, the specific criteria of which was not shared. Other feedback included: SDCF's good history of impact, but some panelists desired more examples (such as video testimonials) of impact. SDCF was encouraged to provide maximum detail in budget notes/ narrative. Panelists were really focused on access in terms of EDI, and wanted to see data reflected in the reporting. There were expressions of concern about access in terms of who could participate, with stipends at \$250 a week. (Note: for FY19, SDCF budgeted \$300/week for Observers). They indicated a zero-sum budget, and not to show any surpluses. The officer also noted that the provided budget numbers are really consistent and round, which was seen as a generalization; internally it is worth noting that we are not pro-rating weeks in FY19 for Observers, so the expenses do in fact remain round, just something to be aware of as we report and make budget notes.

#### **VI. TREASURER'S REPORT – Ethan McSweeney**

- a. With time running short, Mr. McSweeney gave an overview of the Cash Flow snapshot, noting that the cash flow crunch identified at the last meeting had in large part been alleviated thanks to fundraising efforts. Mr. Roberts affirmed that adjustments to FY18 Abbott receivables had been made, as well as adjustments to projections for FY19 Abbott income dates.
- b. Mr. McSweeney requested that staff provide a year-to-date for the next Finance Committee meeting, which would be presented at the next Trustees meeting.
- c. Mr. McSweeney made special note of the fact that SDCF received less than budgeted from NYSCA for the Observership program, and although we received more than budgeted for the research grant, these have to be treated as two separate line items, not fungible. They are separate program-restricted funds that cannot be co-mingled, and he noted the research grant will act much like a past through, in a similar fashion that Broadway Salutes does.
- d. Mr. Roberts noted that the annual audit was scheduled for the following week. He will be reviewing bank statements with SDC Director of Finance and Administration Cole Jordan later this week in preparation for the auditor's site visit.

#### **VII. OTHER BUSINESS**

- a. Callaway Committee: Affirmation of Kyle Donnelly

#### **MR. MCSWEENY MADE A MOTION TO AFFIRM MS. DONNELLY. MS. KAUFFMAN SECONDED. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.**

- b. Callaway Committee: Mr. Roberts reported that in conversation with Callaway Chair Pam Berlin, there have been a number of choreographers in the first quarter, but only five people have seen the show. Mr. Roberts and Ms. Berlin would like the Trustees to grant a short-term concession on the number of committee members needed for a choreographer/show to

remain eligible from the usual 6 members minimum to 5 members minimum. This concession would be for just the first and second quarters of the current season.

**MR. MCSWEENY MADE A MOTION TO GRANT TO TWO-QUARTER CONCESSION. MS. KAUFFMAN SECONDED. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**WITH NO OBJECTIONS, MR. EPPS ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 12:45PM**