



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, February 12, 2018 at 11:00am Eastern

**PRESENT:**

Mark Brokaw  
Anne Kauffman  
Ethan McSweeney  
Laura Penn

**ABSENT:**

Mark Lamos

**STAFF PRESENT:**

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

**PRESENT BY PHONE:**

Sheldon Epps  
Linda Hartzell

**GUEST:**

Michael Wilson

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Sheldon Epps called the meeting to order at 11:07, thanking Michael Wilson for joining the meeting to give a report on the "Mr. Abbott".

**II. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**a. "Mr. Abbott" update** (guest, Gala Co-Chair Michael Wilson)

Michael Wilson thanked the Board of Trustees for welcoming him as a guest on the agenda. He provided the trustees with mock-ups of the invite, indicating the theme of the evening being minimal and post-modern. The event will take place at the Bohemian National Hall; it is a newly renovated space with a proscenium stage in the main hall, opportunity for balcony/gallery seating, and separate areas for a cocktail hour. The venue has a maximum capacity of 300 people. At the very least we want to have 250 people in attendance (the minimum guarantee), so we're looking to fill 25 tables to 30 tables.

The evening is planned to begin with Balinese music accompanying the cocktail hour as a nod to Julie's career beginnings, allowing for her film, theater, and opera to be the focus for the rest of the evening. SDCF will be sending the invite to the printer by the end of day on Tuesday 2/13. Ashley Judd has been approached to MC the evening and Elliot Goldenthal is composing a surprise song that Anne Hathaway has been approached to sing.

Mr. Wilson informed the Board of Trustees of the meeting that he and Laura Penn had with the Disney representatives Andrew Flatt and Michael DeCais. Disney will be a Platinum Sponsor at \$35,000, as well as providing some production support. Alongside Disney's Platinum sponsorship, the Shubert Organization has come in as a Silver Sponsor at \$10,000, and Temple University, Rochester University, and Joy Abbott, will all be joining as Bronze Sponsors at \$5,000 (with Mrs. Abbott grandfathered in at \$3,500). Mr. Wilson thanked the Board of Trustees for doing double duty on both SDC and SDCF Boards, and for committing to the deadline of Friday 2/16 for additional host committee asks.

Anne Kauffman presented an update on her follow up calls with Todd Haimes pledging a Bronze sponsor table; Doug Hughes is unable to attend but is making a donation of \$2,500; and Jack Viertel has expressed interest.

Ms. Kauffman will coordinate with Gala Co-Chair Rachel Chavkin in an approach to Jack Viertel and Thomas Viertel. She noted that the success of her follow up calls was based in her passionate pitch for the Foundation, not their connection to Julie Taymor. Mr. Epps will follow up a soft commitment from Stuart and Bonnie Lane. Ms. Penn asked Mr. Wilson if he would take on the Dodger Theatrical follow up. Mr. Brokaw has been pursuing William Morris Entertainment and will continue to do so.

David Roberts reminded the Trustees that Julie Taymor will be provided a complimentary table, which will effect income and attendance projections.

It was noted that the “Mr. Abbott” Gala is the public launch of the new structure for SDCF, and the Foundation’s programming will feature heavily at the event. This will provide a significant opportunity to cultivate new donors and prospective SDCF Trustees. Mr. Wilson encouraged the Trustees to join forces and co-host a table to fill with Board prospects; he will also be asking for full participation from the SDC Executive Board. Neither Mr. Epps nor SDCF VP/Secretary Mark Brokaw will be in attendance at the gala, therefore SDCF Treasurer Ethan McSweeney, will be representing Foundation officers at the event. However, it was noted that Ms. Chavkin is considering Trustee representation via video. Mr. Epps noted that he will be in NYC on Monday, 26 February for the week and could make himself available if needed for a video.

Linda Hartzell asked if Warner Shook had been approached for a host committee table and Ms. Penn suggested that, due to this event being the first solicitation of Mr. Shook, he be approached as a ‘raise the paddle’ guest, but should certainly be cultivated for future involvement with the Foundation. Ms. Hartzell suggested that Jack Viertel is also a prospect as a Trustee as he had enjoyed his time on the board of Theatre Communications Group (TCG).

### **III. SECRETARY’S REPORT**

#### **a. Approval of minutes**

**ETHAN MCSWEENEY MADE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 22 BOARD MEETING, ANNE KAUFFMAN SECONDED. MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

### **IV. TREASURER’S REPORT**

#### **a. Auditor Update**

The FY17 auditor’s report was provided for the SDCF Board of Trustees. Unlike SDC, SDCF is in the middle of its FY18 fiscal year (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018) and Mr. McSweeney requested that when SDCF staff file the auditor’s report it should reflect the FY17 organization, rather than the current Board. It was also requested that staff to provide a breakdown of restricted assets. Mr. McSweeney highlighted that the auditor’s report reflects that SDCF is mostly dependent on two sources of income: the SDC annual gift and the success of the “Mr. Abbott” gala. Mr. McSweeney requested that the Trustees take a close look at the fiscal report and gain a working understanding of its contents. It was agreed that the SDCF staff would invite SDC Director of Finance and Administration Cole Jordan to a future Trustees meeting to provide an audit reading orientation.

#### **b. “Mr. Abbott” Projections**

Mr. Roberts reported that with the currently purchased tables, advertisements, and donations, “Mr. Abbott” income to-date is at \$83,500. With Disney’s commitment to providing a certain amount of production support there will be a reduction in the “Mr. Abbott” production costs. The impact on the bottom line is unclear but their resources will support the production quality significantly. SDCF has allocated \$10,000 to support production costs, based on the board approved budget numbers.

The “Mr. Abbott” is a highly visible event and its success is important to the future of the Foundation, with that in mind Trustees discussed the possibility of bringing in paid Production Management as they expressed concern with volunteers not having the same level of accountability as someone who is contracted. Mr. Roberts noted that SDCF has brought on administrative assistance for the “Mr. Abbott” and assured the Trustees that the four Co-Chairs, including Foxboro/Nelle Nugent and Disney, are invested and have already been very responsive. He acknowledged the importance of keeping his focus on the fundraising and overall organization, while allowing producing matters to be more fully driven by gala Executive Producer Kenneth Teaton. Mr. Roberts shared with the Trustees that the production meeting scheduled for Wednesday 2/14 would indicate whether Mr. Teaton is prepared to take on this role more fully.

The Trustees suggested that the current weekly timeline should be made into a daily timeline to give more clarity in the 8 week lead up to the event.

**c. Cash Flow Snap Shot**

Mr. Roberts shared that the Foundation’s cash flow is in a good position, although the “Mr. Abbott” income is still largely made up of projections, as sales continue. Mr. McSweeney pointed out that it is important to think of cash flow in 2 week cycles, alongside payroll, so we need to pay attention to 30 days from now, we have to get the cash in or this could be a difficult moment to navigate financially. The Trustees discussed the possibility of SDCF procuring a line of credit, however this was cautioned against by Ms. Penn; Mr. Roberts voiced his agreement on this matter. In light of the opinions shared on lines of credit, Mr. Epps highlighted the importance of constant and diligent fundraising efforts needed from the Trustees throughout the year, and not just during the “Mr. Abbott”.

**V. Executive Directors Report**

**a. Personnel Update**

In addition to Christine O’Conner, the SDCF Fundraising consultant, Trustee Linda Hartzell has agreed to be the Fundraising Committee chair; this will help bolster our fundraising planning and strategy. Ms. O’Connor will be attending the “Mr. Abbott” and will have the donor/funder preliminary report by May. Danny Gorman will be focused on “Mr. Abbott” administrative support, and we are also seeking someone for a part-time temporary position to focus on “Mr. Abbott” advertisement sales.

**b. Programming Update**

Elishia Merricks reported that to-date, 18 Observers have been placed, with 337 applications submitted, 159 applications sent to the mentoring artists, and 72 interviews. This year SDCF has worked to provide deeper inclusion for the members of the Observership class by providing; continued discounted access to the One-on-One conversations, invitations to networking events, open information sessions (i.e., a dedicated session with SDC Member Services staff), and office hours in which SDCF staff review applications, resumes, and other proposals. This deeper inclusion has resulted in an extra 141 points of impact.

The Trustees were pleased with the high caliber of mentors for the Observership class and quantity of programming being provided by SDCF.

**MR. EPPS ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 12:45 PM**

**The next Meeting for the Board of Trustees will be on March 19, 2018, 11 AM EST.**