

**Draft Minutes of the August 17, 2020 Meeting
of the Board of the Friends of the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House**

This meeting was our sixth monthly meeting held on-line courtesy of Zoom. In attendance were board members Tom Blachly, Jesse Clayton, Kathy Light, Lori Stratton, Dave Strong, and Keith Swann, and member Steven Light.

President Swann called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm.

The following agenda was approved:

- 6:30 Call to order and welcome
- 6:35 Approve minutes of July 20th meeting (Dave)
- 6:40 Mid-year financial report (Jesse)
- 6:50 **Old Business:**
- 6:50 Status of management contract (Keith)
- 6:55 Plans for re-opening (Keith)
- 7:00 Cancellation of liability insurance we have for our work for the Town? (Dave)
Status of Mary Wheeler damage claim (Tom)
- 7:05 Report on the Arts Council Grant application (Keith)
- 7:10 Discussion of draft carriage barn storage agreement (Tom)
- 7:20 Board member search (Kathy and Keith)
- 7:25 Letter to Full House Campaign donors (Dave)
Ideas for concerts during Covid-19
- 7:30 **New Business:**
- 7:30 Other business
- 7:40 General comments, questions
- 7:45 Next meeting date and adjourn

Call to order – Keith called the meeting to order and asked how everyone was doing.

Minutes of previous meetings – The draft minutes of the July 20th meeting were approved with the following addition under the “Arts Council Grant” agenda item: *Keith made a motion to approve an application for up to \$10,000, with the Friends of the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House raising up to \$2,500 towards the 50% match, seconded by Jesse. Jesse, Keith and Lori agree to work on raising funds necessary for our match.*

Mid-year financial report – Jesse reviewed a one-page “Profit and Loss” report he prepared and emailed just prior to the meeting. It shows we have received a little over \$6,500 in general operating fund income so far this year, and have expended approximately \$3,400 on operations. It was noted that some revenue from advance ticket sales will need to be refunded due to the cancellation of the March concert. 2020 Membership revenue is at \$825, which is about half of our original goal. Dave’s motion to approve the financial report was seconded by Tom and adopted.

Old Business:

Status of management contract - Keith reported that the select board’s position at the present time is that it is unwilling to renew our contract for the 20/21 fiscal year (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) when the facility is not in

use. They also want to remove the clause about allowing our lot at 25 High Street to be used for parking provided the Town plowed and sanded it when it did the adjacent Town Hall parking lot and deal with that in a separate agreement. In addition, they did not respond to the other task we added, namely, that we would assist the Town with planning and implementing the re-opening of the Town Hall Opera House. They plan to revisit the contract at their October meeting.

Plans for re-opening - Keith reported that, after a preliminary discussion and a plan to set up a committee to address the issues involved in re-opening the Opera House, the select board has not dealt with the issue. Dave suggested that we might want to be pro-active and develop a proposal to submit to them. He will gather info. about what other arts organizations are doing.

Contractor's liability insurance policy cancellation? – Dave reported that he spoke with Natalie Boivin at Noyle Johnson about cancellation of our annual liability insurance policy for the Town, which began on July 1, 2020 and cost \$797.50. She said that cancellation is possible prior to the end of the first quarter and that, if we did so, we would receive a refund of 75% or approximately \$600. She will email Dave a reminder. After discussion, it was agreed to hold off until our September meeting to decide whether to cancel or not.

Status of Mary Wheeler's damage claim – Tom reported that he hasn't replied to Mary yet in response to her invoice of \$2,925 for a reproduction of the scene depicted in the five theater flats that were painted over.

Arts Council grant update – Keith submitted the grant application on behalf of the Town. He received a great deal of assistance from Alice Merrill, the Town grant coordinator. Awards will be made on October 7th. If funded, \$8,220 would be spent to replace and augment stage lighting pipes and curtain supports. The Arts Council would pay \$4,110 and the Town – possibly with some help from the "Friends" – would pay \$4,110. Keith was thanked for his work on this.

Agreement re: use of space in carriage barn – A draft agreement Tom prepared, based on the boilerplate Kathy provided at the last meeting, was discussed. It was agreed that the language in the indemnification agreement paragraph should be simplified. Some other minor changes were suggested. Tom explained that each agreement can be negotiated and tailored to individual circumstances. We were developing what would be a "draft" agreement. He will revise it for consideration at the next meeting.

Board member search – Steven reported that no likely candidates came forward in response to the notice in the newsletter. Dave suggested that Meg Hammond would be a good addition to the board and volunteered to contact her. It was agreed that Keith would draft an announcement for Front Porch Forum. He will share any responses he gets with us. Tom volunteered to post it on FPF in Calais and Lori on Montpelier.

Letter to Full House Campaign donors – Dave is drafting a letter to donors and people who have pledged giving them a progress report on the status of the campaign which he will share with the board for comments prior to sending it out.

Ideas for concerts during Covid-19 – Lori and Keith volunteered to work on a live stream performance from the Opera House.

New Business:

Final clean-up at 25 High Street – Dave is planning to burn the remaining lumber and to finish cleaning up the site soon. He will notify everyone when that's going to happen.

General comments, questions – Lori asked the status of the final clean-up at 25 High Street. Dave reported that he hadn't been able to take care of that yet. He and Lori agreed to meet there to work on it and to discuss landscaping plans prior to the next meeting.

Next meeting – Our next regular monthly meeting will be Monday, September 21st at a venue TBD.

Adjourn - The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
David Strong, Your Dutiful Secretary