

Community Players Monthly Meeting Minutes

August 7, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Call to Order @ 7:00 pm

Board Members Present: Matt Bogdan, Darrell Mullins, Melissa Dasher, Rusty Mumford, Charlie Linton, David Allen, Sharon Benchoff, Lynn Bratten, Cass Dasher, Kyle Hayes, Ken Johnson, Charlie Szentesi-Thomas, Shelbie Thompson

Board Members Absent: Tom Robinson, Kim Cuesta

Members Present: Kate Adkins, Brenda Allen, Bonnie Bosies, Tony Broadbent, Pat Oberholtzer, Joshua Smith

Guests Present: None

Approval of the Minutes from June 2024

Noted that the fundraiser updates in the initial minutes were from May. Correct updates were sent to the board. **Motion to approve by Lynne, seconded by Sharon. All responded yea. Motion Passed.**

Treasurer's Report

Sent to the Board. Summary given by Charlie. Matt thanked Charlie for 29 years as treasure, and counting.

President's Report

1. Welcome, new board members.
2. Thanks, those board members who served.
3. Thanks, Children's Theater production staff- Cass, Rusty & Kyle.
4. Thanks, Rusty Mumford and *Show Stoppers* ensemble.
5. Joanne Little Memorial was held at the Players' building. Thanks, those who were involved.
6. Auditions for *Para-Cles* and *Guys and Dolls* are this month.
7. Risers were borrowed from Salisbury School. Thanks, David Allen and others involved.
8. Wardrobe Wednesdays were held. Thanks, Lynne and others involved.
9. Debby Nagel resigned as Publicity Chairperson. Thanks, Debby, for your time and effort in serving as chairperson for this committee.
10. Barbara Seabrook is making Players a beneficiary.
11. Thom Harris withdrew his donation of \$2000
12. Thank you to Sharon, Jim King & Jean King for rehangng all the show posters in the hallways.

Committee Reports

Concessions - Brenda Allen

Not much to report from concessions. Concessions will be available for the Show Stoppers fundraiser this weekend. After that the monthly fundraisers will be the only activity until the new season.

Facilities Management - Ken Johnson

Workday on Saturday, August 10, starting at 10:00 am. Dumpster is already here. Need people to help move furniture. Plenty of work for others as well.

Fundraising - Matt Bogdan

The fundraising committee met in July and discussed the following:

1. **Previous fundraisers.** These included Movie Night, Trivia Night, 50/50 raffles, manning the gate at Bordeleau Winery, the Guest Bartending event at Brew River, and The Harlem Renaissance: A Celebration of the Arts. We felt that Movie Night was not financially successful, so we will not be holding any more of those. We want to continue having Trivia Nights, 50/50 raffles, manning the gate, Guest Bartending, and special productions.

2. **Current fundraisers.** Those planned for the remaining of 2024 include Show Stoppers (Rusty Mumford, coordinator) in August, Para-Cles (Sharon Benchoff, coordinator) in September and November, Trivia Night (Sharon Benchoff, coordinator) in August and September, Edgar Allan Poe: His Tales of Terror (Matt Bogdan, coordinator) in October and November, the 50/50 raffle (Matt Bogdan, coordinator) at performances of Guys and Dolls in November, Giving Tuesday (in need of coordinator) on December 3, and It's a Wonderful Life radio show (Matt Bogdan, coordinator) in December. By the time you receive this report, Show Stoppers will have happened. Rusty Mumford can give us a report of that special production at the meeting.

Fundraising Dates and Times of Fundraisers for the Remainder of 2024

August 23: Trivia Night at Players at 7 p.m.

September 14: Para-Cles, a hilarious parody of a lesser-known Shakespeare play. Radcliffe House in Berlin, MD. Show time is 4 p.m.

September 27: Trivia Night at Players at 7 p.m.

October 18: Edgar Allan Poe: His Tales of Terror. Live, memorized tellings of Poe's darker works. Possum Point Players in Georgetown, DE. Show time is 7 p.m.

October 19: Edgar Allan Poe: His Tales of Terror. Live, memorized tellings of Poe's darker works. Old Firehouse in Snow Hill, MD. Show time is 7 p.m.

October 26: Edgar Allan Poe: His Tales of Terror. Live, memorized tellings of Poe's darker works. Poplar Hill Mansion in Salisbury, MD. Show time is 7 p.m.

November 1-3: 50/50 raffle at Guys and Dolls

November 8-10: Edgar Allan Poe: His Tales of Terror. Live, memorized tellings of Poe's darker works. Players Playhouse on Nutters Cross Road, Salisbury, MD. Show times are 7 p.m. on November 8 and 9, and 2 p.m. on November 10.

November 16: Para-Cles, a hilarious parody of a lesser-known Shakespeare play. Players Playhouse on Nutters Cross Road, Salisbury, MD. Show times are 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

December 3: Giving Tuesday (need coordinator)

December 20-22: It's a Wonderful Life, a radio play of the heart-warming classic Christmas story. Players Playhouse on Nutters Cross Road, Salisbury, MD. Show times are 7 p.m. on December 20 and 21, and 2 p.m. on December 22.

3. **2025 potential fundraisers.** Besides the previous fundraisers that we want to continue having, new ideas included Dessert Theater, Family Feud, World War II: Honoring the Men and Women of the Eastern Shore directed by Matt Bogdan, tribute bands, a Night of Play Readings, a Children's Show, a Murder Mystery, a yard sale, the fifth annual Poe show, A Gift to Remember Christmas show directed by Pete Cuesta, a musical revue directed by Rusty Mumford, technology workshops coordinated by Tony Broadbent, a series of vignettes (such as eight ten-minute plays), a one-act play festival in which other community theaters participate, a new directors' showcase, and cold readings of plays.

4. It was recommended that a list of potential fundraisers is publicized so that potential coordinators can take on the project(s). We are in need of coordinators. Please get involved.

5. It was recommended that Players have a full calendar of 2025 fundraisers finalized by the board by December 2024 so that those fundraisers can be publicized for the upcoming year.

6. We also need a Capital Campaign. We need someone to coordinate this.

7. If you would like to coordinate and/or participate in any of these fundraisers, contact Matt Bogdan at 443-235-3272 or oceancityhappyme@aol.com.

Suggestion for Zoom Car Washes given at the meeting.

Grants - Matt Bogdan

1. The Coastal Association of Realtors (CAR) recently granted Players \$500 to be used for the World War II production. Earlier in the year CAR granted Players \$500, which was used for our Children's Theater Workshop held in July.

2. Beach to Bay Heritage Area (BBHA) recently granted Players \$5000 to be used for the World War II production. Last year BBHA granted Players \$3000 for the production of Paths to Freedom: The Underground Railroad on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

3. The Salisbury Wicomico Arts Council (SWAC) recently granted Players \$2167 to be used for general operating expenses for 2025 and \$2167 for 2026. SWAC has been a consistent grant provider over the years. Kel Nagel, Debbie Nagel, and Matt Bogdan attended the SWAC luncheon in June in which grantees of SWAC throughout the committee were recognized.

4. The Worcester County Arts Council (WCAC) recently granted Players \$500 to be used for the Para-Cles production.

5. The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) earlier this year granted Players \$5366 to be used for general operating expenses. MSAC has been a consistent grant provider over the years.

6. The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore (CFES) earlier this year granted Players \$6435 to be used to purchase and install a fire exit door as part of the renovation of the Players' building on Nutters Cross Road. CFES also provided a grant of \$2375 last year for the production of Paths to Freedom.

7. MSAC recently granted Players \$9324 for Grants for Organization—Off Year for Fiscal Year 2025.

8. Final reports are being submitted to MSAC for Grants for Organization—Fiscal Year 2024 and Arts Relief Funding General Operating Support for Fiscal Year 2023 (due date of August 15, 2024)

9. So far this year we have received approximately \$32,000 in grants.

10. I am re-applying for the MSAC Arts Capital Grant. Deadline is August 23. MSAC denied our first application.

Historical - Bonnie Bosies

Nothing new to report.

Hospitality - Rusty Mumford

Rusty thanked the Board for the use of the building for Joanne Little's memorial. Rusty offered to pay the \$63 spent over the \$300 approved amount. **Board agreed that was not necessary.**

House - Betsy Metzger

Nothing from the House Committee at this time.

Lifetime Achievement Awards - Pete Cuesta

Only one nomination and, at this structure and considering postponing it for a year.

Discussed. Nominations are open through September. Board agreed not to postpone.

Marketing - Rusty Mumford

We now have a 2-year contract with WIX for a new website. Rusty will step down as chair of the marketing committee once the new website is up and running. It does not look like it will be ready for the start of the new season. Tom Welch will continue maintaining the current website until we are ready to make the switch.

Membership - Melissa Dasher

Our 2024-25 Membership Drive is underway! According to our organizational Constitution our "dues shall be due September 1 and shall be considered delinquent if not paid by October 31." Since all officers and members of the Board of Directors, committee chairpersons, and committee members are to be members-in-good-standing I would like to challenge all those on the Board or chairing a committee to be 100% up to date with membership application and dues payment by the October 2nd meeting. Membership info and applications are currently available on paper at the Players building or to print off the website or recent e-mail blast.

Nominating - Sharon Benchoff

No report from Nomination Committee.

Patrons - Kel Nagel

Charlie Linton recently spoke with Kel. Kel intends to continue handling patron correspondence this season. Charlie will step in for this year, if needed.

Performance Space - Kel Nagel

Matt reported. Have not received anything from the architects yet, but they have stated that they will meet with us later in August and will have 2 options to present.

Production - Darrell Mullins

Specifics on serving on the Production Committee will be detailed at the September meeting. Will ask for previous survey results to be reviewed by the committee.

Program - Tom Robinson

No report this month.

Program Advertising - Tom Robinson

No report this month.

Publicity - Debby Nagel

Billboards, yard signs and a banner were placed for Kiss Me Kate. Advertisements and promotional material were printed in The Salisbury Independent and The Daily Times.

Matt Bogdan and Kel Nagel appeared on Delmarva Life.

Glad to report that contact has once again been established with Brian Harlin, who has provided us with discounted yard signs for several past performances.

Contact information is as follows:

Cell # (410) 804-8311 brian@neighborhoodsigns.com

I'm providing this information as I am resigning as chair of the publicity committee. This is necessary because of my husband's recent health problems and the difficulty of overseeing his care while carrying out the responsibilities associated with this position. It has been my pleasure to fill this role, and I will continue to support Community Players'. I will write a summary of responsibilities to leave for whoever may take over this position. And I will be available to assist this person or persons with any advice and help as this transition takes place.

Respectfully submitted,
Debby Nagel

Scholarship - Lynne Bratten

No report for scholarship.

Season Tickets & Box Office - Darrell Mullins & Rusty Mumford

Darrell agreed to co-chair this committee while selecting a new ticketing platform. Since that has been successfully implemented, Darrell is now stepping down as co-chair. Rusty will continue as chair.

Social Media - Kate Adkins

Please continue to “like, comment and share” CPOS social media posts. Please make sure the cast of all productions are aware of our socials and ask them to engage and share. It greatly increases our visibility online.

Our highest interaction in July on Facebook: 2,715 on the 19th, about the Musical Review.

Our highest interaction in July on Instagram: 251 on the 15th, a thank you to the campers.

If you have photos to be shared on social media, please email Kate at mariefox18@gmail.com

I do not always see if someone shares stuff due to schedule. If you have info for posting please include an image if you intend to use one, I will have to create one (Instagram requires an image to post) not an issue, it just delays the post being shared.

Note: I would like to make a social media post series “An Introduction to the Board”. At the meeting or a date to be set in August, I would like to ask to take the board members’ headshots and group photo of the board. Get a mini bio, how members got involved with players and what they are excited about for the next season and term.

*I believe that the day of the board meeting is optimal since most would be in attendance

Old Business

1. *Kiss Me, Kate* wrap up

Kel & Debby were not able to be present. Lynne reported that Debby returned all the costumes laundered and ready to be put away. Ken reported that he is still taking apart the set.

2. Children’s Summer Theatre Camp wrap up

Cass reported that the staff held a Zoom debrief yesterday. Camp went very well. All positive feedback. 27 students attended the workshop. 5 (paid) staff did a great job! Grants completely covered all expenses and participation fee was completely profit. Will need to clarify some staff roles for the future. Definitely wish to continue next year. There were many returning campers from the previous year. This workshop is for grades 3-8. Wish to explore adding a send week or an over-the-summer production for grades 9-12.

Motion to offer a workshop again next summer for grade 3-8 by Cass. Seconded by Rusty. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

Board agreed a committee should explore an option (workshop or show) for grades 9-12. See or e-mail Rusty if interested in being on the exploratory committee.

3. *Show Stoppers* wrap up

Rusty reported that 185 people attended. Profits (including \$199 donated at the concessions) totaled \$1547.50. Thanks to everyone involved. Especially the singers and Tony Broadbent for his expertise and equipment (set, lights & sound).

4. Sally Ridgeway costumes update

Lynne reported that a warehouse has been located that would cost \$500 a month. We have already received a lot from her over many years. Sadly, she does not believe it is in Players best interest to accept Sally’s donation. Suggested that we offer her 2 more years of patron membership as a thank you.

Motion by Matt that we do not accept the huge costume donation from Sally Ridgeway. Seconded by Charlie L. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

Motion by Matt that we gift Sally 2 more years of patron membership. Seconded by Charlie L. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

5. Other old business?

None

New Business

1. Para-Cles update

Sharon reported that Radcliff House requested an hour show. Para-Cles is 30 minutes, so we will also present Shakespear Shorts. Auditions are Sunday & Monday, August 11 & 12, at 6:00 pm.

2. Guys and Dolls update

Rusty reported that the contract has been submitted and the fee paid. Auditions have been announced.

3. Need for board members to be present at auditions

Discussed. This is stated in our by-laws. Usually, the director arranges for a non-auditioning board member to be present.

4. Board approval needed for request for rental of Players' building on Thursdays by Theater Academy of Delmarva

Theater Academy of Delmarva is interested in using/renting the rehearsal hall on Thursdays for September and much of October. This would be for the Rising Stars production of *Alice in Wonderland*, directed by Britni Ilczuk. Dates would be as follows: Sept 5, 12, 19, 26 and Oct. 3, 10, 17. Rehearsals would be 6-8 pm. Sherri Trader Hynes, director of *Guys and Dolls*, has approved this. Sherri does not plan to use the space on Thursdays. If a rental fee is requested, Mary Mahler (owner and artistic director of Theater Academy of Delmarva) has suggested \$300 total, as that is what they had given to use a church space in the past.

Discussed. When this group used the building in the past, multiple times kids were found in places they did not belong, touching and playing with Players' wigs, computers and other items, without permission. Some felt \$300 was too low. Noted that this rehearsal would be run by Britni (a Players member) and not Mary. Questioned whether a board member should be present and if TAoD had the proper insurance.

Matt asked how many board members would agree to renting our space to TAoD. All responded nay. Request denied.

5. Board approval needed for purchasing curtains from Tony Broadbent (\$400).

Curtains are currently hanging in the room. They are fireproof and valued at \$1500. They will be damaged if left hanging. Between productions the floor needs to be cleaned, the curtains taken down, folded and stored in hampers (that we already have).

Motion by Charlie L that we purchase the curtain from Tony for \$400. Seconded by Rusty. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

6. Board approval needed for purchasing theater chairs (\$40 per chair for new chairs; \$18 per chair for used chairs); Fundraising update on chair purchase (\$50 donations; 65 "sold" as of 8/5/24)

Discussed. 4 were purchased to preview. These are black chairs with arms. Noted that one already has damage on an arm. Questions: Do they have to lock together to meet fire code? Can the stack (answer-only 3 high) We currently have 50 purple chairs; do we have an event coming up soon where we will

need more than that? (answer-no) David Allen is waiting to hear back from a seller of used chairs, similar to the 50 we current have, per previously approved motion.

Table purchase of the black chairs. Matt will continue looking for other options.

7. Discussion of purchasing or building our own risers

Discussed. We like the risers borrowed from The Salisbury School. They need them back by December. Pete would like to present his main season show here in February. We could build our own for approx. \$250 each. Do we have the manpower and the time? We have the funds to purchase. Matt stated "I'm tired of borrowing. It is time to make this place a theater!"

Motion by Rusty that we purchase risers for \$30,000 and build a stage. No second. Motion died.

Motion by Cass that we purchase from Werner 20 platforms (4 rows, 5 wide) with railings and carts for \$30,000. Seconded by Rusty. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

8. Discussion of purchasing or building a portable stage

Discussed. Agreed to table this discussion until we have architect's recommendations.

9. Discussion of purchasing wing curtains or building portable proscenium

Discussed. Agreed to table this discussion until we have architect's recommendations.

10. Discussion of the need for costume space

Lynne needs to know if we can put a movable storage unit with electricity out back? Matt to inquire about zoning restrictions.

Agreed to table this discussion until we have architect's recommendations and more information.

11. Discussion of the need for chairperson for publicity committee.

No one present willing to chair this committee at this time. Kate was asked to put something on social media.

12. Discussion of after-show surveys

Previous e-mail from Kyle to Board

- I have a couple of proposals around the process of surveys:
- Currently what we do is wait 3 weeks after the final show to send out the surveys to the cast (and now tech crew). I believe the reason is so the "high" of the show wears off and we can better evaluate our experiences through an unbiased lens.
- **I propose we change this to 2 weeks.** I believe 3 weeks starts to hit a point where people forget some potentially valuable feedback and I think 2 weeks is still long enough to let the effects of the show subside.
- Another thing we currently do is, upon the collection of all survey results, we send the results to just the director, before sending them to the board a week later.
- **I propose we change this to sending the results to the entire production team before sending it off to the board the following week.** My reasoning here is that there is often pertinent feedback for others on the production team. My thought is to send the results to the director, musical director, assistant director, choreographer, stage manager, and producer. I'm sure I'm missing someone, but you get the idea.

Discussed. The Board agreed with all of Kyle's proposed changes. Advised that the producer does not need to receive the survey but if results would be beneficial to any others in the production team, costumes, props, lights, etc., Kyle could use his judgement to include them on a show-by-show basis.

Other new business?

13. AACT-membership.

Charlie L reported that is time to renew at \$250. Questioned whether it is worth it.

Rusty stated he is on the mailing list and finds the e-mail beneficial.

Motioned by Rusty to continue our AACT membership. Seconded by Cass. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

14. Paint Room

David reported that the paint room sinks are both clogged, will not drain, and smell horrible.

Discussed. Agreed to table this discussion until we have architect's recommendations.

15. Costumes

Lynne reported a volunteer from AmeriCorps may be available to assist with creating a costume inventory. **Board agreed Lynne could pursue.**

16. Lights

When Tony took his lights down he discovered 2 of our dimmer packs not working. He estimated we could replace for approximately \$169 each and \$200 for power cords.

Motion by Rusty to spend approximately \$500 for dimmer packs and power cords. Seconded by David. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

17. Tony

Tony distributed to the Board written thoughts he wished to share. **Matt stated that the board members should look over the paper and we will discuss it at the next meeting, if needed.**

18. 2024-2025 Season

Motion by Rusty that we dedicate our 2024-2025 season to Joanne Little. Seconded by Sharon. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

19. Interior Locks

Rusty thought that at one time the key to the exterior door also worked on the interior doors. This is no longer the case. Agreed this is a building maintain issue and all the interior rooms that need to be locked should be replaced.

20. YouTube subscription

Rusty proposed getting a YouTube video premium subscription which would remove the ads.

Discussed. Questioned if our ASCAP license covered getting music from sources better than YouTube. How often would this be needed or used?

Motion by Rusty to get YouTube Premium yearly subscription for \$139. No second. Motion died.

21. Performance Space Committee

Shelbie commented that several of the items on tonight's agenda should have been discussed with the Performance Space Committee and then their recommendations presented to the board. There is a lot of research, discussion, and input that needs to happen outside of the board room with people who are experts in those specific areas. Getting this committee back up and running should be a priority to have more conducive use of time during board meetings.

Motion to adjourn by Charlie L. Seconded by Shelbie. All responded yea. Motion Passed.

Adjourned at 9:02 pm

Next Meeting – September 4, 2024, at 6:30 PM