

## **Memorial Opera House Foundation**

Board Meeting

February 12, 2018

Porter County Community Foundation

### ***Our Mission – Providing opportunities for the community to support the preservation and growth of the Memorial Opera House***

Members present:

Kaye Frataccia

Shannon Franko

Paul Kohlhoff

Chad Bush

Members absent:

Michelle Bush (excused)

Rich Ferlazzo (no excuse)

Also in attendance:

Scot MacDonald

Natalie Klobuchar

Laura Blaney

**The board meeting was called to order at 8:05 am**

### **Guest Speaker - Laura Blaney**

Commissioner Laura Blaney was on hand to provide an overview of the relationship between MOH, MOHF and the county.

MOH is a department of county government; therefore, it competes with other county government agencies for budget dollars. The MOH employees are county employees and the building is a county building. Currently, the Opera House could not exist without the county's financial support. Scot, as the department head, makes the budget and it is approved by the council. Ticket sales go to the county's general fund.

The Commissioner's budget covers:

- Health insurance for 2 full time employees
- Building and liability insurance
- Ticketing software
- Utilities
- Licensing expenses
- Office supplies
- Phones and computers
- Building maintenance and repair
- Grant writing expenses
- Snow removal and landscaping

In Laura's opinion, there are always questions about the county's involvement in the arts and entertainment. Twenty years ago, the council wanted MOH to be self-sustaining but it did not work. When Laura became a commissioner 5 years ago, the foundation was defunct.

Laura feels there is more support than ever for MOH because Scot is executing the council's vision and doing all the right things. Although the MOHF is legally independent, the council wants a cooperative relationship because the Foundation can do many "fun" things the council can't because of strict monitoring of funds by the state board. They are limited in how much they can spend and on what, where as the foundation has more flexibility to support the staff and provide much needed funds for opportunities that arise throughout the year.

Laura does not see current support for MOH dwindling in the future, but said there are likely no additional funds for repair in the next 3 to 5 years due to budget constraints and higher priority items such as infrastructure.

### **Approval January minutes:**

The minutes of the January meeting were reviewed for accuracy and a few minor corrections were recommended. Paul made a motion to approve the minutes; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chad and the motion passed.

### **Staff Report:**

Scot presented his report. Highlights included:

- Letting go of the marketing director due to having the ability to outsource projects.
- Star plaza donated 400 seats and equipment. Scot will have the subfloor checked for safety before installation occurs.
- The new drapes have been hung
- 170 RSVPs have come in for the 2/15/18 ribbon cutting after-hours event.
- Schmidt & Associates are coming on 2/15/18 to kick off assessment stage of DNR study
- Scot distributed new playbooks with updated graphics

Natalie reported on the Rock the Block event:

- The museum will partner with MOH to be a 50/50 endeavor
- They are exploring unique ways to get people in, including involving the animal shelter
- Natalie is already talking with the police, city reps, vendors, and volunteer coordinators about the event
- Scot will talk to United Way about trying to get volunteers through the annual Day of Caring event the day prior to Rock the Block

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Paul Kohlhoff presented the January financial report. The balance in the MOHF general account stood at \$60,178.00 as of January 31, 2018. The DNR Matching Grant Account balance reflected \$35,000.00 as of 1/31/18.

Paul mentioned that there are no significant expenditures in the near future. Shannon made a motion to approve the financials; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chad, motion passed.

### **Endowment Match:**

Kaye mentioned the deadline of March 31, 2018 for the matching grant from the Porter County Community Foundation. The current balance in the account is \$6,250. Chad made a motion to move

\$3,750, or whatever was needed taking into account future donations, to make the balance \$10,000 by March 31; Paul 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed.

**Communication and Marketing:**

Discussion regarding Scot's contract and role in foundation marketing materials and outsourcing graphic design projects followed. Scot will make a proposal regarding anticipated projects throughout 2018. Shannon passed along information to Scot regarding the Foundation's website which is currently hidden from view because it is outdated. Scot will review the information and include this in his proposal of marketing initiatives he or a third party would cover in 2018.

The board also discussed events to host in 2018 and requested more information about co-sponsoring a concert to occur in November.

**Board Leave of Absence:**

Kaye has reached out to Rich Ferlazzo who would like to take a leave of absence until further notice from the board. Paul made a motion to accept the leave of absence, Chad 2<sup>nd</sup> and the motion passed.

**Adjournment:**

Next meeting: 9:00 Tuesday, March 13, 2018 at the Porter County Community Foundation