

**FIRST MEETING OF THE YEAR 2016 -  
FLATO MARKHAM THEATRE ADVISORY BOARD  
CITY OF MARKHAM**

**Canada Room, Civic Centre  
Monday, January 25, 2016**

**MINUTES**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Present**

John Tidball, Chair  
Eric Fagan  
Aleem Israel  
Deborah Jestin  
Arun Mathur  
Billy Pang  
Heather Reading  
Shaun Sauve  
Sophia Sun  
Maureen Weaver

**Staff**

Eric Lariviere  
Scott Hill  
Debbie Watson

**Guests**

Moe Hosseini-Ara, Director of Culture  
Dawn Adams, YRDSB  
Jeff Wrigglesworth, UHS

**Regrets**

Councillor Alex Chiu  
Councillor Amanda Collucci  
Anne Gilligan  
Councillor Alan Ho  
Ronald Minken  
Justin Reid  
Stephen Timms  
Karyn Toon

The meeting convened at the hour of 5:30 p.m. with John Tidball in the Chair.

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER AND CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS**

- guests at the meeting – community and education groups who use the theatre:
  - Markham Little Theatre
  - Unionville High School

**2.0 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

- none declared

**3.0 AGENDA REVIEW, ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

- Item 3, Governance and Appointments (Theatre Board Chair and Vice-Chair), deferred to the February meeting; key people absent

**4.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**4.1 Flato Markham Theatre Advisory Board Minutes - Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015**

Moved by Arun Mathur  
Seconded by Maureen Weaver

That the minutes of the Flato Markham Theatre Advisory Board meeting of Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, be confirmed.

Carried.

**4.2 Flato Markham Theatre Advisory Board In-Camera Minutes - Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015**

Moved by Arun Mathur  
Seconded by Maureen Weaver

That the in-camera minutes of the Flato Markham Theatre Advisory Board meeting of Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, be confirmed.

Carried.

**5.0 GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT – ITEMS ARISING**

- refining RFQ for Strategic Plan
- Marketing position –
  - posted locally, nationally and internationally
  - lot of interest; over 200 resumes
  - position now more marketing oriented
  - sponsorship aspect taken away
- recently in New York; biggest challenge is value of Canadian currency
- BBoyzm workshop at theatre; great outreach engagement
- March break camp at Cornerstone

- digital marketing –
  - new and improved transition page; all mobile friendly
  - no cost to renters
  - [www.markhamtheatreshows.ca](http://www.markhamtheatreshows.ca)
  - major improvement
  - also implementing survey re shows; simple and quick
  - younger audience needs short videos

## **6.0 PRIORITY ITEMS – PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

### **6.1 Flato Markham Theatre Community Partners**

#### **➤ Markham Little Theatre – Terry Browne**

- all volunteer community theatre with between 80 and 90 members
- not-for-profit registered charity
- our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; also 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Markham Theatre
- great event; pleased to be involved
- relocated to theatre from Markham High School
- in fact, used to have a member on the theatre board
- 4 plays per year; 120 over the years; talking about reducing to 3 per year
- subscription base of 720
- fill rate is about 50% per show
- rehearsal home is “Backstage” location at Markham Museum
- audience base has eroded over the last 15 years; a universal problem in theatres
- have only been mildly successful in getting sponsors
- don’t want to raise ticket prices but have been told don’t charge enough
- more aware of costs than ever; discuss lower rental rates
- budget for a performance is \$12,500
- human resources are limited
- extremely pleased to have a home at FMT
- also extremely pleased with staff; invaluable, friendly and helpful
- have been discussions in the past re renting out workshop, however, were safety issues
- had some discussions with Unionville Theatre Company re sharing subscription base but talks fell through; same result with Markham Youth Theatre and Markville Secondary School
- other groups tend to do musicals; royalties cost a fortune
- other groups charge their members a fee to appear
- would love to partner with someone; would help us both
- more publicity and advertising? are promoted in the theatre season brochure; also web site, e-mail blasts, posters
- re changing demographics, have attracted a number of Asian members; some stay, some don’t
- shows based on English drawing room comedy; don’t necessarily appeal to other cultures
- try to get more contemporary plays but then the older audience doesn’t come

## **6.2 Flato Markham Theatre Education Partners**

### **➤ Unionville High School – Maureen Weaver, Jeff Wrigglesworth, Dawn Adams**

- construction of theatre and high school was a partnership between the York Region District School Board and the town
- school was originally intended to be on Carlton Road at the now William Berczy Public School site
- currently in the process of updating the original agreement
- UHS had the first arts program in the board; originally Arts York but now Arts Unionville
- is curriculum-based, with music, drama, dance and visual arts
- technical department buildings the sets; students and teachers
- do use the theatre quite a lot; biggest user is the music department
- also host events
- visual arts show in the lobby but want to become more involved
- relationship with theatre second to none; really unique situation and a very important relationship
- staff sets it apart
- lucky to have a professional venue rather than having to use the school
- wish to make a public acknowledgement of the school staff
- mindboggling how the 4 areas can come together and produce performances, fascinated by skill level
- visions of department heads and teachers are large and inclusive
- students start at Grade 9
- elementary school students invited to watch, dance department does outreach programs
- kids understand the benefits of arts in general
- Showtime (started 1987) – 100 kids signed up for the course
- set design, orchestra, actors, etc.
- has a community reputation as being worthwhile
- part of that reputation is the association with FMT
- parents also contribute to the cost; support by buying tickets
- very proud that 3,000 have graduated from the arts program since 1985
- kids want to be hands-on; sing, dance, act
- working on minimum standards re planned day use of the theatre

## **7.0 WORKING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **7.1 Discovery Committee – Karyn Toon, Chair**

- nothing to report at this time

### **7.2 Sponsorship Committee – Ron Minken, Chair**

- nothing to report at this time

## **8.0 TASK FORCE REPORTS**

### **8.1 Gala Task Force – Deborah Jestin and Heather Reading, Co-Chairs**

- Shaun Sauve will also be on the task force
- don't have to be board members
- need to get started soon

### **8.2 Volunteers Task Force – Arun Mathur, Chair**

- nothing to report at this time

### **8.3 Youth Engagement Plan Task Force – Stephen Timms, Chair**

- nothing to report at this time

### **8.4 Foundation Task Force, Aleem Israel, Chair**

- nothing to report at this time

## **9.0 NEW BUSINESS**

## **10.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- Monday, February 22, 2016, 5:30 p.m.
- Canada Room, Civic Centre

## **11.0 ADJOURNMENT**

- 7:00 pm