

**SIXTH MEETING OF THE YEAR 2014 -
FLATO MARKHAM THEATRE ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF MARKHAM**

**Canada Room, Civic Centre
Monday, June 23rd, 2014**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

Present

John Tidball, Chair
Christiane Bristow
Councillor Alex Chiu
Aleem Israel
Regional Councillor Jim Jones
Arun Mathur
Ronald Minken
Stephen Timms
Maureen Weaver

Staff

Eric Lariviere
Debbie Watson

Guests

Joel Lustig
Andrea Tang

Regrets

Anne Gilligan
Suzzette James
Stephen Mathieu
Sophia Sun
Karyn Toon
Ada Yeung

The meeting convened at the hour of 5:35 p.m. with John Tidball in the Chair.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER AND CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

- last meeting before summer break
- need to deal with the issue of ECEY
- resolution re positive variance – asked that it be allocated to theatre reserve fund
- request turned down by Council; lot of negative variances throughout the City, e.g. ice storm budget

2.0 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

- none declared

3.0 AGENDA REVIEW, ADDITIONS/CHANGES

4.0 ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE FLATO MARKHAM THEATRE ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 28TH, 2014 AND MONDAY, MAY 26TH, 2014.

RECOMMENDED: THAT THE MINUTES OF THE FLATO MARKHAM THEATRE FOR PERFORMING ARTS ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS HELD ON APRIL 28TH, 2014, AND MAY 26TH, 2014, BE ADOPTED AS CIRCULATED.

5.0 GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT – ITEMS ARISING

- new anti-spam legislation as of July 1st; will forward on the legal briefing notes
- we are doing what we need to do to move forward to comply; going to be some adjustments
- do we have to go back to entire e-list of 16,000? not until 2017
- better guidelines on-line
- want to be very thorough and detailed
- thanks to Miller Thomson for assisting
- can't buy tickets until you check a box
- penalty – up to \$1 million per transaction
- very busy season; good numbers
- Discovery Co-ordinator started full-time this week
- on-going subscription marketing campaign – ticket sales about 80% of last year; subscriptions behind
- major Toronto campaign delayed until the fall; no Star insert until September
- final report done for balance of Canadian Heritage grant funding; congratulations to Debbie Watson for all her work
- still behind where we'd like to be
- staff salary increase not budgeted for
- will see an improvement in financial data
- endowment fund = \$607,556
- ratio of City support = 28%

6.0 PRIORITY ITEMS – PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

6.1 City of Markham Budget Process

- Andrea Tang and Joel Lustig gave an operating budget presentation and overview
- very impressive and helpful

It was

Moved by Councillor Alex Chiu

Seconded by Arun Mathur

THAT the budget presentation be received with thanks.

Carried.

6.2 Every Child Every Year Update and

7.1 Discovery Committee – Karyn Toon, Chair

- John Tidball explained the background of the meeting and discussion
- gave David Gershon ample opportunity to address his concerns
- will monitor the situation for another year

It was

Moved by Arun Mathur

Seconded by Stephen Timms

THAT the Flato Markham Theatre Advisory Board receive the report of the Discovery Committee on the deputation by Education Arts Canada, and direct the Chair to send the attached letter to David Gershon of Education Arts Canada, with copies to Trudy Moffatt, Risa Productions, Mayor Scarpitti and members of Council, Brenda Librecz, Commissioner of Community & Fire Services, and Moe Hosseini-Ara, Acting Director of Culture.

Carried.

7.0 WORKING COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.2 Sponsorship Committee – Ron Minken, Chair

- going well; lot of work happening
- on-going discussions with a number of leads
- at 64% of goal; grants at 87% of objective
- still a number of active prospects

8.0 TASK FORCE REPORTS

8.1 Gala Task Force – Christiane Bristow, Chair

- at \$35K for sponsorships; need another \$35-40K
- looks good; lot of support re helping
- Forest Bay Homes, Remington Group and Sun Life have confirmed

8.2 Volunteer 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 30th Anniversary Task Force – John Tidball, Chair

- how do we celebrate the 30th season? 2015-2016
- suggestion – one artist from each season
- celebrate the people who make the theatre?
- get old board member names
- do the gala on a Saturday closest to the opening date

9.0 NEW BUSINESS

10.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Monday, September 22nd, 2014, 5:30 p.m.
- Canada Room, Markham Civic Centre
- date and location to be confirmed

11.0 ADJOURNMENT

- 7:15 pm

June 24, 2014

Mr. David Gershon
Chair
Education Arts Canada
2 Lunau Lane
Markham, Ontario
L3T 5N2

Dear Mr. Gershon:

I am writing on behalf of the Advisory Board of the Flato Markham Theatre. Following your May 22nd attendance at the meeting of the Discovery Committee, the full Board had the opportunity to discuss your concerns at our May 26, 2014 meeting. This letter was then considered at our June 23, 2014 meeting, and I was instructed by Board resolution to send it to you. As requested, I am copying Trudy Moffatt of Risa Productions.

The Advisory Board is impressed by the efforts of your organization to promote live theatre to school children, and shares your passion for the vision. A primary thrust of our Strategic Plan is to ensure the sustainability of the Flato Markham Theatre by building future audiences through exposing Markham school children to live arts. This is the basis for the Every Child Every Year program that we launched in the 2013/14 season. The Board sees no reason why the Every Child Every Year program cannot exist in harmony with programs offered by organizations such as yours. Indeed, we believe that the long term success of the Every Child Every Year program is likely to lead to improved business opportunities in the education sector for organizations like Education Arts Canada.

We considered your proposal for a form of "voucher" system as a modification to the Every Child Every Year program. The Board does not believe that such a system will be attractive to corporate sponsors that we continue to actively solicit.

The Board understands your concern that the Every Child Every Year program will reduce attendance at your performances in Markham, and at other venues across Ontario if other theatres follow the same course. However, the Board also understands that there isn't any evidence that the shows offered in the Every Child Every Year program in 2013/14 had any measurable impact on your ticket sales, although you did advise that one school cancelled after learning that free tickets were available. We will continue to actively monitor this situation through the 2014/15 season, and would appreciate staying in touch with you in this regard. The Board suggests that we all review this situation again in the spring of 2015.

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As you know, we modelled the Every Child Every Year program on a program operated by the River Run Theatre in Guelph, which has been generously underwritten for over a decade by a local corporation. The Guelph program is based on every elementary school child attending **two** performances per year. The Board would like to think that we could do that here, but the size of the school-aged population in Markham is a deterrent to finding corporate sponsors for a program of that magnitude. We would still like to provide opportunities for schools to send students to one or more other performances at the Theatre and, for that reason, continue to offer other daytime programming on a paid ticket basis. We see programs offered by organizations like Education Arts Canada fitting exactly into that position. The Advisory Board is very open to the idea of promoting your Once Upon a Tune programs in promotional materials provided to Markham elementary schools. Please let Eric Lariviere know if you would like to pursue that opportunity.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to raise your concerns with the Board.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Tidball', with a stylized, cursive script.

John Tidball
Chair
Flato Markham Theatre

c.c. – Trudy Moffatt
Risa Productions
216 Bassett Boulevard
Whitby, Ontario
L1R 1G4

- Mayor Scarpitti and Members of Council
- Brenda Librecz, Commissioner of Community & Fire Services
- Moe Hosseini-Ara, Acting Director of Culture