

**SOUTHEASTERN THEATRE CONFERENCE, INC.**

**Board of Directors Meeting**

Hilton Atlanta Downtown, Crystal Ballroom

Atlanta, GA

**March 2, 2011**

ExCom Members in attendance: President, Alan Litsey; Programming Vice President Steve Bayless; Administrative Vice-President, Jack Benjamin; Secretary, Mark Charney; Treasurer, Chris Rich; State Representative Rep, Leslie Dellinger; Community Theatre Rep, Lynn Nelson; Past President, Beth Harvey

Board Members: Alabama State Rep, Michael Howley; Florida State Rep, Donna White GA State Rep, Dean Slusser; KY State Rep, Kathi Ellis; MS State Rep, Tom Booth; NC State Chair, David Schram; SC State Chair, Leslie Dellinger; TN State Chair, Darren Michael; VA State Chair, Mike Hudson; WVA State Chair, Greg Mach; Secondary Division Chair, David Giambrone; Theatre for Youth Chair, John Spiegel; College and University Chair, Lesley Preston; Professional Division Chair, Dewey Scott-Wiley; Community Theatre Division Chair, Lynn Nelson

Also in Attendance: Executive Director, Betsey Baun; Finance Committee Chair, David Wohl; Past Secretary and Task Force, Tiza Garland; Denise Halbach; Long Range Planning, Dennis Wemm; Chair of Stage Management, Patricia Crotty; Chair of Bellew Award and Chair of Hist/Theory/Crit, Dawn Larsen; Karen Brewster, VP College and University

12:30 p.m. Convene

1. Announcement of Taping and Roll Call (Secretary: *Mark Charney*)
2. Appointment of Parliamentarian (Past President: *Beth Harvey*)
3. **Approval of Minutes: December 18, 2010 Motion to accept edit: Accepted.**
4. **Report from Executive Director: Betsey Baun:** Introduced Arrowhead Conference and Events, an organization that helps to facilitate conference planning and site location. Discussed committee of three (Betsey, Jack Benjamin and Scott Falk) who do site analyses before conference. Introduced Scott Falk, who works for Arrowhead, discussed his organization's not-for-profit status, the process of site selection and the low rates that his organization helps to arrange, among other items. Scott thanked SETC for trusting his organization. Scott continued by discussing hotel marketing and strategies, and the structure that allows him to work for SETC for no cost to our organization. Betsey and Jack reiterated how fortunate SETC is to have Scott ([arrowheadconferences.org](http://arrowheadconferences.org)).

Betsey distributed a Convention Registration Report—which indicated that we are up in pre-registered numbers **3292**. Pointed out Master Classes, discussing the popularity of Richard Robichaux. Thanked Robin Carr for all her hard work to make it possible for Patsy Rodenburg to attend as a featured guest artist. Banquet at about 1000, which represents a huge increase. Numbers are also great for the design competition. Praised the graphic design for T-shirts, which contributes to endowment funds. Slightly up in numbers of universities for graduate school auditions. Some companies, forced to make bottom line decisions, chose to not to attend.

Betsey discussed her K-12 lunch with students from Troy University, who must attend SETC's K-12 Institute to graduate in theatre education. Chris Rich talked about the rationale for requiring studying K-12 education to attend. Increase also in number of auditions—not just high school students who are auditioning but professional as well.

Betsey then shared information about professional troupes coming to the Fringe—one a puppet company, Wood & Strings Puppet Theatre, which also performs for the banquet. *Julius Caesar* pulled out, but A&T College will present *Mad at Miles*, an ideal substitute as it was written by Thursday’s keynote presenter Pearl Cleage. Betsey thanked several folks who made SETC happen. Please see the ATTACHMENT 1—Special Thanks—for this complete list. Dream Team numbers jumped from 7-10, a dynamite team. Cited evening events and receptions ahead. Discussed the new sponsor of the Show Hub, which will distribute resumes publically, but also do production management. Thanked her wonderful staff.

**From Alan Litsey:** Thanked all board members for their work and contributions to SETC. Asked Board members to introduce themselves and discuss one thing that they are excited to do at SETC.

### **Action Items**

1. Administrative Vice President: Jack Benjamin:

Finance Committee—action item on Sunday to present 2011-12 budget.

Recommendation to increase the chaperone fee from 15-25 dollars, also to be voted on Sunday. Explained that the budget will reflect current salary information, with a caveat that Ex Com will review and evaluate salaries by April 15<sup>th</sup>. Finance Committee will defer to Ex Com to present a proposal for salaries. Action Item coming from Ginger Willis to bring an extension to rule III.VIII—Ginger has noted that some of the commercial exhibitors want to participate in the convention, but their exhibiting fee is pretty steep.

**MOTION: Move to amend Rule III.8 “Exemption from Convention Registration” by adding the following sentence to the end of the current rule:**

**Commercial exhibitors whose exhibition fees are paid in full may present convention sessions following guidelines provided by the Programming Vice-President or Exhibitors Representative as approved by the Executive Committee. (3/2/11)**

- **Consistent with Article I Section 4**
- **Could be separate rule III.19 or V.9 “Commercial Exhibitor Presentations” but this offers one-stop shopping**
- **Program Chair solicits review of proposals from Exhibits Rep**

**MOTION carried.**

### **Items for Discussion**

1. **President: Alan Litsey**

Discussed Task Force: Tiza Garland, Darren Michael, Dewey Scott Wiley and Jack Benjamin—along with Alan and Betsey as ex officio members. Tom Booth said that the committee would be sending information about the process discussing Board Governance Models and Programming. He reminded us that there is no agenda in the process and that the committee is working towards what is best for SETC and what it serves. Tom wants our input.

David Thompson reminded us of Dennis Wemm’s model five years ago, which separated committees that provided convention programming from those governance based. He stressed that we cannot divorce ourselves from these two distinctions: administrative functions vs. convention planning. Dennis subdivided committees by function. Tom Booth would love to have that information and any other suggestions, to make transitions as painless as possible. He is attracted to the idea of adapting a model

almost ready to implement, rather than creating a new one. Denise promised to send Tom a model, and the Board reminded Tom that Chris Rich also originated a model during a planning session that should be considered.

David Wohl pointed to structural challenges to the organization as presently organized, especially in terms of budget and long range planning. He emphasized that there was much minutia on the governance side. David has sent Tom a document examining other issues as well. Leslie Dellinger encouraged SETC to be more than a convention. For example, she would love SETC to be a presence, championing those who are economically distressed, as well as a greater resource for teachers, etc.

Steve Bayless discussed programming as a year-long event, and encouraged Board members to begin to identify folks who may want to move into leadership roles this weekend.

Alan discussed the need for leadership development, and a strong partnership between the Board and the Nominations Committee. Asked members of Nominations Committee to send recommendations for us to discuss about leadership and board development. Alan pointed out that we need to be more consistent helping the Nominations Committee, and more proactive in both locating and training leaders. He explained that the work by the new Task Force would result in a draft of a manual to be developed by May, hopefully containing ways to regularize tasks and board training. Policies will also be a section of the board manual.

Jack Benjamin discussed the Advisory Meeting.

Alan specified the need for an interview process as well, if we are going to be intentional about governance, policy, finance, etc. Alan wants to work to develop a survey tool to help to identify rationale and actions, the basis for the first draft of a plan to which the Board, Betsey, and Central Office will respond. Alan wants a consensus from stakeholders as well. He explained that we would only have a draft by May. Discussed the constant need to assess information and set goals. Members of the Board discussed the healthy need for assessment, change, and self-examination.

David Thompson requested that we assign a name to what we are working on, not necessarily labeling, but identifying exactly what we as a Board want to change and adapt.

## **2. Programming Vice-President: *Steve Bayless***

Looking for keynote presenters and a featured guest artist for Chattanooga convention. Asked for performers and more Fringe Festival participants. Discussed the theme for next year's convention, and reminded us that, in about a month, applications for next year's conference would be distributed.

## **3. Administrative Vice President: *Jack Benjamin***

Explained that the proviso statement in the new officers manual that discussed transition will no longer be needed. The new titles of Programming VP and Past Present are covered by the transition, so we no longer need the Proviso statement.

The scholarship Committee will be working to strengthen wording and reaching more people.

## **3. States Representative: *Leslie Dellinger***

Discussed items that came from the states meeting this morning about how SETC can help the states communicate and run more efficiently.

a. **Request:** Big item: Suggested an Ad Hoc committee or Interest Group Committee to create an adjudicator list for Community Theatre, Secondary Committee, Auditions. She especially wanted to find a method of determining good adjudicators, and avoiding poor ones. Alan asked which State Reps would like to be a part of the process. Dean Slusser will be training folks next year, and/or forming an Ad Hoc Committee. Also, the states would love help finding Key Note Speakers.

b. **Governance:** Majority of the states felt governance is their conduit for their voices, not programming. The question was raised about how many state reps are needed on the board? State reps are concerned that fewer numbers on the board may mean less voice in governance. Dean Slusser asked if the state reps represented the states or the organization. The GA board believes that the state rep primarily supports GA's need, and is not necessarily an officer of SETC.

c. **Insurance Issue:** Greg Mach discussed that SETC could create a means to help smaller theatres find affordable health insurance. Betsey says she has researched several times and found nothing viable for these theatres yet, but she will continue the research and provide information about this for the next meeting.

d. **Chaperone Issue:** The States discussed the origin of the chaperone fee. Why not have them register as full time theatre practitioners? Although many chaperones do just that—protect their high school students—others abuse their privilege and attend more SETC events than their chaperone status allows. Duke believes that high school students and faculty will pay—but Greg mentioned that few have time to experience the conference. Dean wants to be clear about the smaller fee IF the chaperone does not do any other work with SETC. There is a need for a new, consistent policy. John Spiegel discussed how payment necessitates a contract and protects SETC.

## **Items of Interest**

### **1. Immediate Past President: *Beth Harvey***

Beth has withdrawn her name from consideration as Past President to finish her Ph.D dissertation. If she finishes by December 2011, she will want to step back in. She thanks members of the Board.

### **2. Administrative VP: *Jack Benjamin:***

Explained that the Nominations Committee will be presenting a slate of deliberations and new possibilities for Past President.

KCACTF thanked the board for their continued support of the Region IV festival.

The Auditions Committee is putting together a study group meeting Sat at 10:30 in Room 404 to discuss adjusting the audition process—what's working, what's not, what can be improved.

The Semi-Annual report will be sent out finalized along with an attachment—the five step guide to SETC BY-laws, or “Acting with Directions without Drama.”

Endowment: Silent auction will benefit the organization with T-shirts and mouse pads/coffee mugs.

We have 4 recipients of the KEAP award. Recognized Chris Rich for excellence in running the KEAP award from its inception, and thanked him as he is now stepping down. Paul Crook may take over.

Encouraged Board Members to attend Long Range Planning meetings.

### **3. State Rep: *Leslie Dellinger***

Handed out updated 2011 Best Practices State Survey Results, everything from Newsletters to Governing Board to Membership. They will be posted on the website when finished.

### Unfinished Business

1. **Dewey Scott-Wiley**—Looking for ways to improve company numbers.
2. **Steve Bayless**—Thanked Quiana and Betsey for all their most excellent help with programming.
3. **Betsey Baun**—Thanked Steve Bayless as well
4. **Steve Bayless**—Colleges and high schools that use Barricuda as their server sometimes refuse SETC.org. Ask folks to check their spam filters.

### New Business

1. **Kathi Ellis**: Discussed a play she directed about the Triangle Factory Fire. Week of March 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>—will be performing that show 2 blocks from the Triangle fire in New York.

### Announcements

3:45            Meeting Adjourned