

Board Meeting

10 MARCH 2025 / 08:30 PM / TRINITY ARTS AND LEISURE

Attendees

Mark Atkins, Alicia Bray-Whitworth, Chris Brittan, Corey Butler, Sophie Carter, Livvy Clarke, James Conniff, Heather Cunliffe, Mike Cunliffe, Rachel Dean-Corke, Sarah Godfrey, Natalie Goldsworthy, Mea-Ellease Goodwin, Ed Jones, JB Leeson, Charles Mills, Becca Pountney, Flo Rowntree, Philip Smith, Rachel Spavins, Rebecca Walters, Steve Ward, Colin West, Shannon Wilmot, Samuel Wilthew, Carole Wilthew, Richard Woolmer

Apologies

Joshua Hughes, Mark Burnapp, George Colledge, Eleanor Leonard-Smith, Scarlett Pickard, Anthony Rhodes

Agenda

Matters Arising From The Last Meeting

1. No matters were brought forward.
2. Meeting minutes from the last AGM are publicly available on the Bedford Marianettes website.

Chairperson's Report

3. All persons present were welcomed by NG.
4. NG recalled her beginnings with the Bedford Marianettes and her appreciation for its history.
5. It was acknowledged that the charity has undergone some unforeseen changes within the last year but is thankful for everyone pulling together to achieve two great shows, both of which have been nominated for NODA's Best Musical award and received great feedback.
6. It was confirmed that both of these shows ended with a profit and that more details regarding these accounts would be discussed later. The new members that the Bedford Marianettes gained during these performances were also listed as an area of pride.
7. There have been several social events in the last year, which have greatly improved bonding with the cast. It was recommended that future creative teams continue this trend.

8. Several new policies have been implemented within the last year, which have also improved the transparency and accountability of the board and charity moving forward.
9. The Bedford Marianettes' next show will be Legally Blonde, performing in October 2025. The creative team for this show have been working together well and have come up with lots of great ideas so far
10. It was recommended that the board focus on fundraising events and reinstating a clear and working membership going forward.
11. NG has also been connecting with previous members of the Bedford Marianettes, as far back as 1960, and it is clear that these members are still eager to stay in touch with updates - it was suggested that a newsletter would be a good step to ensure this.
12. NG reflected that while this year has not been smooth sailing, it has been worthwhile. Thanks were extended to those willing to step forward as members of the board this upcoming year.
13. Finally, NG extended her thanks for the opportunity to act as Chairperson this year.

Presentation Of Accounts

14. A handout was given to all persons present with details of the Bedford Marianettes's current accounts.
15. CM explained that, after testing a larger venue in 2023, the charity has focussed on improving our revenue from our \shows performed at Trinity Arts and Leisure.
16. There are costs to running the charity that are often unseen and unknown to those not involved with the inner runnings of the charity, and some of these were explained.
17. Overall, it was confirmed that the charity is in reasonable financial shape and CM gave appreciation to the hard work and commitment the members have put into ensuring this is the case.

Approval Of Accounts

18. Accounts were approved by NG. Account approval was seconded by BP.

Election Of Trustees And Board Members

19. Ballot papers were handed out to members present.
20. MG advised that she would not like to put herself forward for social media manager. It was explained that this decision came from changes in her professional life and that she wanted to be forward with what she could offer the board. Instead, she is putting herself forward for a position that would assist the designated Social Media Officer. She believes this will allow her to best contribute to the charity's goals, while also managing her personal life.
21. FR advised that, while she was interested in continuing to contribute to the board, she does not feel she is currently able to commit to a named role due to professional commitments. She instead suggested she take a role assisting the fundraising and social media officers to ensure they can improve the charity best. Her degree in Musical

Theatre and Arts Fundraising was cited as previous experience for this role. FR continued that she was excited to see the future of the Bedford Marianettes.

22. SC advised that she is putting herself forward for the role of fundraising officer. It was explained that she has been a part of the Bedford Marianettes since FAME and that she has wanted to be a member of the board for some time to be part of the charity's growth, development, and success. Previous experience as a hospitality manager, venue manager, and running her dance school were presented. The fundraising template that SC hopes to implement was presented, including a three-tier system of Social Media Presence, Networking Opportunities, and Fundraising and Show Promotion.
23. SW began by explaining her previous involvement with the Bedford Marianettes, since 2017. She explained that she has seen highs and lows within the charity, and has an awareness of the importance of social media in the current environment. She expanded that a good social media presence will allow the charity to involve younger generations, get in contact with local businesses, and share our presence with the wider community. She proposed working closely with the fundraising officer to ensure the best results.
24. The following people were nominated by the members present:
 - Chairperson - Natalie Goldsworthy
 - Vice Chairperson - Becca Pountney
 - Secretary - Rachel Spavins
 - Treasurer - Charles Mills
 - Front-of-House Manager - Mark Atkins
 - Production Manager - Josh Hughes
 - Fundraising Officer - Sophie Carter
 - Social Media Officer - Shannon Wilmot
 - Stage Manager - Steve Ward
 - Officers - Mea-Ellease Goodwin, Flo Rowntree, James Conniff, Phil Smith

Proposals For Discussion

25. Creation and Workings of Memberships
 - Important to discuss with all members at the AGM rather than in a confidential board meeting. NG will be asking the board to focus on this in the coming year.
 - RW wanted to clarify if memberships were coming into practice because of events of the last year. NG clarified that memberships were previously dissolved following issues surrounding previous fraud. Now that this is resolved, it needs to be relooked at. BP also confirmed it is now impossible for one person to take money out of the charity's accounts without this being seconded.
 - SC wanted to clarify that there would be a fee on top of membership for performers. This was confirmed. The possibility of a discounted show fee for members was brought up, which can be discussed further by the board.
 - CB suggested different levels of memberships, for those who would like to donate more to the charity. NG confirmed the board would discuss this.
 - CW asked what the board's plans were for discussing membership going forward. NG confirmed that the aim is for the charity to have a working membership model by the end of 2025 and that this would be published publicly

on the Bedford Marianettes website. BP also added that members could contact us separately if they would like to be kept up to date on this. Unfortunately, we have not inherited the contact details of previous members and suggested that everyone do their bit in contacting these previous members.

- CW asked what was happening regarding Life Members. It was stated that it was unlikely that more Life Members would be awarded, but that all current Life Members would be honored. SW will reach out on social media to try and get in touch with the friends and family of any current Life Members.
- SW asked if any board members will be nominated before the next AGM. It was clarified that the board is at full capacity and no new members would be nominated except for a resignation.

Any Other Business

26. Youth Productions

- SW stated that we have done many shows, most of which have been focused on adults. The youth shows that the charity has done previously has been very successful. It was suggested to consider doing shows in the summer holidays aimed at youths.
- NG explained that there are a lot of extras involved in putting on youth performances, which as DBS checks and chaperones, but that if enough people were willing to work towards this the board would not be against it.
- SC, RW, CB, and PS advised they would be willing to help with this
- NG advised anyone who would like to assist with this to contact the board
- RW asked if the board would assist in proposals - for example, with budgeting. It was confirmed that any proposals needed to include all the relevant information, but that individuals could reach out to the board before putting in the proposal for assistance
- AB-W asked if the 'show choir' suggested in workshops for At The Movies would be considered again. NG confirmed that it was suggested due to the high turnout at workshops, and could potentially be considered again in the future if numbers were large enough.

Next Meeting

The next AGM will be held in 2026. This will be sent to members in an approximate time frame.