



CHARLES IVES AUTHORITY FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
A Nonprofit Organization

Minutes Board of Directors Meeting, February 18, 2015

To: Mayor Mark D. Boughton and Members of the Charles Ives Authority for the Performing Arts Board of Directors

Re: Minutes of the Ives Authority Board of Directors meeting held Feb. 18, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 6:20 p.m. The members were recorded as:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Greenberg, Sherri Hill, Frank Herbert, Tanya Wulff Truax, Tony Vournazos

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Sean Loughran, Brett DeWeese

ALSO PRESENT: Phyllis Cortese, Executive Director; Sophia Vournazos

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: After motion by Frank Herbert seconded by Tony Vournazos, the minutes from the previous meeting were unanimously approved.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Steve Greenberg

- Steve reported that he had a lunch meeting with WCSU President James Schmotter and Mayor Mark Boughton a few months ago during which President Schmotter expressed his appreciation for what Ives has meant to the university — the students get to perform on our stage and many are employed by Ives during the summer.
- President Schmotter turned the lease renewal negotiations over to Sean Loughran, Luigi Marccone and John Murphy from the university. Steve, Phyllis and Sophia met with them and they indicated that the cost of maintaining the Ives grounds is a concern due to state budget cuts and would require \$50,000 from Ives to make it work. They proposed acquiring this by adding a \$5 per ticket facility fee, which Steve said is not an option.
- Steve indicated it was better for negotiations with the university to be handled by Corporation Counsel for the City, who drafted the initial agreement in 2007.

- Mayor Boughton met with Sean Loughran, Luigi Marccone and John Murphy. The city offered to do the park maintenance at no charge, but the university rejected the offer. The WCSU representatives indicated that they want to purchase the city portion of the venue for \$150,000 or the highest appraised value. The Mayor was drafting a letter to President Schmotter.
- Steve indicated that in his opinion when former Vice President for Administration Paul Reis left, it ended an era of joint compromise and cooperation in the Ives relationship with WCSU. John Murphy is already vocalizing he will be booking the Ives next summer to vendors. Although Steve's hopes were compromise, or as he expects, the University will grab at the good will and revenue created over the 40 years of Ives and hopefully it carries on in that image.
- Steve apologized to the board and thanked them for their service and volunteer work over the eight successful years and that it is clear that this relationship benefited the university and their students, not just the City.
- Steve indicated that President Schmotter upon receipt of the letter from the Mayor, we in good faith have to anticipate shut down for the 2015 season, cancel shows, pay the bills and work with staff on shutdown so it is done correctly. Phyllis and Sophie deserve the board's respect and admiration and help going forward.
- The university has also indicated that it is cutting off funding for the arts programs – theatre and orchestra – going forward.

At that point, Sean had the floor and responded to Steve's comments.

- Sean said Luigi Marccone had asked for the city to take over the maintenance, but had not asked for a dollar amount.
- He said that the mayor asked for exclusive use of the property if the city was going to take over the maintenance.

The floor returned to Steve.

- Steve thanked the Ives members from the University who have served selflessly over the years. Frank Herbert, Fernando Jimenez and Sherri Hill. He mentioned other WCSU partners like Peggy Stewart who have given so much to the relationship and the venue. Sadly a portion of the WCSU administration does not see it that way and have become adversarial to their own partnership.

- Steve individually thanked every member of the board and said it is a sad day because building a community around the arts is so vital.
- Brett stated that he felt WCSU is getting the outcome it desires and it seems as though it was designed this way. The university is not being a good neighbor.
- Tony agreed with Brett and said he sees no future in dealing with the university given the current set of circumstances. He indicated that a special board meeting should be called to determine the status of the Ives assets, severance packages for the staff, etc.
- Frank expressed his disappointment with the university's position.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT: Phyllis Cortese

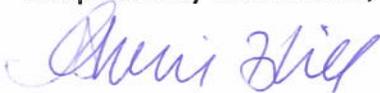
- Phyllis said she had been working with Frank and the BeFoundation to seek funding for cooperative arts programs for underserved youth in Danbury. She said there are endless opportunities for working together and that the perception of the Ives, city and WCSU relationship is the ideal business model of cross-sector collaborations envied throughout the State. She said she believes the university and the Ives can continue to work cooperatively together.

Steve took the floor again and provided Sean with a recap of the history of the Ives and reiterated that the mayor wants the venue to continue to operate. As members of the board began to address their concerns to Sean, he abruptly left the meeting.

After motion by Tony Vournazos, seconded by Sherri Hill, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

The next meeting is Wednesday, March 25.

Respectfully submitted,



Sherri Hill, Secretary