

OUR FAIR CAROUSEL, INC.
Board of Directors Meeting
January 12, 2012

Present: Peter Boehm, Clyde Boysen, Barbara Deneen, Bob Herskovitz, Bob Marabella, Mike Merrick, Nancy Peterson, Bill Nunn, Jim Weichert, John Willy

The meeting came to order at 7 p.m.

Announcements. Peter Boehm reported that Muriel Poehler had called to tell him she would not be attending because she was recovering from a stroke. He said she still has her speech and an evident sense of humor. Boehm talked with Art Curtze, who said his wife had overcome one major setback but there had been no significant new changes since they had spoken in October.

Minutes of the meeting of October 6, 2011, were approved as mailed.

Finances. Jim Weichert distributed an internally prepared financial statement. He said the annual audit will probably be completed by the end of January. He noted that the statement shows a \$30,000 shortfall in revenue vs. expenses for the year, but with other factors added in, including \$27,000 in amortization, we ended with a positive cash flow.

A five-year summary of key items shows that operating costs have remained basically flat during that period, which Weichert termed a credit to management. He also suggested it is time to move more cash into CDs, perhaps another \$50,000, even though the CD rates are very low. Boehm said he would follow up with the bank.

The board discussed the possibility of advertising to promote attract more riders. Boehm said the return would likely be negligible, given that ridership is most directly affected by weather and parking. A suggestion was made to hire a professional marketer. Peterson noted that in the mid-1990s the City of St. Paul hired a marketing firm and spent \$75,000 on promotion downtown, with no discernable increase in business. That was when we learned that the carousel does not stand on its own as a destination. A carousel benefits from being in a location with lots of traffic; the band organ becomes its best form of advertising.

Peterson said that a large share of the market now gets its information from the internet. She said she is expanding the existing Cafesjian's Carousel page on Facebook and will use it actively to promote the carousel during the season. She also is working on a major revision of the carousel website to make visitor information more prominent.

Weichert closed the financial discussion by saying all filings are current and the audit report should be distributed in February.

Year-end debriefing. Clyde Boysen reported that seven volunteers participated in the debriefing. He said participants expressed great satisfaction with virtually all aspects of the operation. Among suggestions were these: additional orientation for new volunteers, refresher training on the use of the accessible chariot (and making the pivot pin more difficult to remove), clarification of closing procedures, a credit card swiper at the ticket window, and insisting that all volunteers follow the rules and procedures consistently.

Personnel. Boysen distributed a copy of the Individual Performance Plan Form that he uses in setting goals and reviewing the performance of the operations manager. In the past, he has distributed only a summary page. The form lists elements of the job description; he walked through each item explaining expectations and the rating system. He then presented his summary and comments on Tammi Beckley's performance for the season and moved that she be given a 3 percent increase in compensation. The motion carried. Boysen also noted that we gave her a card and \$100 in recognition of her 10th anniversary with the organization.

The board discussed possible ways to give Mark Carlson some consideration for his trips to perform daily maintenance on the carousel. He travels a long while but the day's tasks take only a short time. The current method of compensating him for time spent at the carousel doesn't take into account the travel time, and Boehm would like to find a way to do so. One possibility would be to pay for a bus card. Herskovitz said another way, more consistent with standard practice, would be to establish a minimum time unit; i.e., each time he comes to the carousel he would be paid for at least x hours. The board will revisit this question.

Budget. Boehm said he lowered income projections in the new budget in response to Bill Nunn's suggestion at a previous meeting, since we had not met our projections in recent years. To balance the budget, he has included only a limited number of special projects, one being the replacement of windows in the garage doors. In response to Bob Herskovitz's suggestion, he moved \$200 into the restoration budget so Linda McDonald can purchase silver leaf. The budget passed as amended.

Volunteer Committee. Members of the committee said they will produce a new issue of Pony Post, the committee's newsletter, and they will post new photos on the bulletin board. Boysen mentioned the January reception held for volunteers in connection with the exhibit of the Cafesjian collection of carousel animals in downtown Minneapolis. He said the event was very nicely done, with excellent food and with bus transportation from the carousel. Volunteers appreciated the invitation and enjoyed the event a great deal.

Gift Shop. Boehm said Audrey will continue to handle the shop, and everything is under control.

Carousel. Boehm reported that with Art Curtze unable to come to St. Paul in October, it worked out well to have Mark Carlson work with a millwright to do the annual fall maintenance. Over the years Boehm, Curtze, and Carlson have created a detailed master

schedule for maintenance and Mark works from that. Mark has made a list of which things he can do alone or with volunteers and which require the aid of a professional.

Band Organ. Mike Merrick said the band organ does not require any major work and he will make adjustments just before the season opens.

Restoration. Bob Herskovitz said he has hired a skilled individual to do the joining and carving to repair a badly broken leg. He and Boehm met with that person to agree on an approach. The most damaged section of the leg will be replaced with soft maple, so in the future it will be obvious to anyone working on the horse that this was a repair. It was one of the burned horses. When the leg was repaired it was set in at an angle so it stuck out and constantly got bumped. The joint has been repaired many times. The cost of this repair will be about \$500 plus materials.

Fund-raising. Boehm said last season we received about \$1,000 in miscellaneous contributions. There were discussions about at least one major adoption but it did not come to fruition. He said the loan of the McFadden family rocking horse carved by David Lightfoot is the biggest success of the year.

Communications. Peterson said that in addition to creating a Facebook presence and rebuilding the Web site, she will be working on the grant proposal to the Historical Society for funds to create a book for the 100th anniversary of the carousel. She said it will soon be time to create a committee to plan the centennial celebration, and she will start with the ideas submitted from the volunteer committee.

President's report. Boehm said he had no additional items of business. Everything seems to be going as planned.

The next meeting will be 7 p.m. Thursday, April 26, at the Como Streetcar Station.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy A. Peterson, secretary