

OUR FAIR CAROUSEL, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
OCTOBER 1, 2009

Present: Peter Boehm, Arthur Curtze, Barbara Deneen, Michelle Furrer, Trude Harmon, Lorraine Kenfield, Bob Marabella, Linda McDonald, Mike Merrick, Ed Mishmash, Bill Nunn, Nancy Peterson, John Willy, Vic Wittgenstein. Guest: Tammi Beckley

Minutes of the April 23, 2009, meeting were approved as mailed.

Finances. Boehm reported in Jim Weichert's absence that Weichert couldn't prepare a statement for the board because Boehm had not provided him with the information. Boehm noted that the fiscal year had ended September 30, 2009. Sunday, September 27, was the final day of operations for the fiscal year. Boehm reported that ridership was higher than he estimated for this season, which offset the fact that gift sales were below estimate. Boehm had estimated total income from operations at \$170,000, and the actual was \$170,994.

Boehm distributed a rough estimate of expenses and bank balances as of October 1. They show OFC with assets of nearly \$230,000 in the bank account and in CDs. Boehm pointed out that there will be at least \$50,000 in expenses from October through December, for such items as insurance, payroll, and the annual payment to the City of St. Paul.

Volunteers. Ed Mishmash reported that a new emergency stop procedure has been drafted for the volunteer manual. There has been a suggestion that we stop selling tickets while the speech is being given, as a potential way to keep people from rushing into the line without having heard the rules. The board wasn't sure there is a need for this.

We had 87 active volunteers who worked 12 hours or more during the season, and 66 of them attended the recognition event. Many brought guests; with them and board members, we had a total of 104 in attendance. The event was very successful, although for the first time, a few people had complaints about the food or the service. It was noted that parking at Hamline is difficult at that time of day, and suggested that we look into using a shuttle from Como and back again.

Nancy Peterson reported that in response to some interest by volunteers in networking with one another, she was investigating the feasibility of a Facebook page.

Mishmash said 23 sweatshirts have sold to volunteers, so the organization has received back \$690 of the \$1,000 spent on the shirts.

Seventeen volunteers went to Pennsylvania for the National Carousel Association convention. This was great representation for our group and a great way for the volunteers to deepen their understanding of carousels and their operation.

Gift shop. Sales for the season averaged 28 cents per ticket sold. Overall, sales were down about \$8,500 this year. Michelle Furrer said that by contrast, sales at the other gift shops on campus were up this year. Beckley noted that we didn't spend a lot on new inventory because we still had a lot from the previous season. It was suggested that this may have hindered sales. We will carry over much less inventory for next year, Boehm said, so we will be able to buy fresh new products.

Band organ. Mike Merrick reported that the band organ had developed problems with the gear motor and was out of service for a time. He will take out the gear motor and inspect it over the winter. Bill Nunn loaned us new band organ rolls including some music from the 1950s and 1960s, which has been very popular with the volunteers.

Carousel. Arthur Curtze reported that the carousel is in excellent condition. Mark Carlson does such a good job of maintaining it, Curtze said, that Curtze's role now is mostly to ascertain that things are going well.

With its new motor, the carousel has had a tendency to drive, let up, then drive again, constantly fluctuating in order to maintain a constant speed. This results in stress to the gears. Shortly before the board meeting, the people who installed the motor came in and modified the controls so that the carousel maintains a constant speed without stressing the gears. The new controls also bring the carousel to a gentler stop.

During the off-season, Mark Carlson and a millwright will put in a new bearing and overhaul the drive gear.

The top bearing is wearing very slowly, which means it will last a long time yet.

Curtze said that the previous spring he had repaired the platform to the outside of the Carmel horse, where it had been damaged when a large person fell. His repair involved a series of carefully placed screws. He said it has held up over the season and, barring another incident of some kind, it should last until we build a new platform.

At the same time, he said he believes that the existing platform could last another hundred years if we just build a new outer perimeter. He noted that we replaced some broken end boards when we moved the carousel into Town Square, and we replaced the inside perimeter when we moved to Como Park. Boehm noted that there is no sign that the platform is about to fail, so we will do other projects first. But he also asked Curtze to draw up some proposals for how the platform might be strengthened.

Restoration. Four legs were broken during the season, three of them on the outer row. One was on a fire-damaged horse and had been badly repaired at some point while the carousel was at the State Fair. Bob Herskovitz has completed three of the repairs.

Linda McDonald said the paint weathered the summer well; the majority of the wear and tear is what we always get from the rings of the reins. It was suggested that we might coat

the rings in something with a soft finish like vinyl to prevent their chipping the paint. McDonald said there is quite a bit of worn leafing that she will repair in the spring.

Board members discussed the need to spread the knowledge of how to maintain all aspects of the carousel by finding younger people interested in learning some of the specific skills as well as serving on the board.

Fundraising. Boehm noted that we have 17 horses yet to be adopted, and we have had a few inquiries but no new adoptions recently.

Operations manager's report. Tammi Beckley reported that of approximately 1,400 volunteer shifts during the season, there were only five open slots all season as of October 1. One volunteer has put in a record 200 hours for the season.

Beckley had bronchitis during the season and had to hire some extra staff, but staff expenditure total is still within the budget.

We had one standard rental, in July, and four events for which we contributed the use of the carousel to non-profit groups for fund-raising or program purposes. Rein in Sarcoma continues to grow in attendance and in dollars raised; they recently sent a thank-you letter telling us that with the 2009 event they have now raised a half-million dollars for sarcoma research, awareness, and support. The Como Block Nurse Program suffers from lack of continuity in staffing and planning; they had a two-hour event with only 127 riders. ARC Twin Cities used to rent the carousel for an event for their client families; we now provide it rent-free and they are pleased with the arrangement. We also operated in late July for a "Sunset Affair" donor event for the Como Zoo and Conservatory. Boehm said we'd received no feedback on that event. Michelle Furrer said it had been a successful event and the organization had hit its fundraising goal.

Staff and key volunteers participated in emergency training with Como Park staff, covering what to do in a wide variety of situations. A written protocol is available for all volunteers.

Beckley is working with Clyde Boysen to prepare for the first performance reviews for other staff members; she will conduct this in the fall.

The penny machine has been an annoyance because it often doesn't work, so she is negotiating with the vendor to possibly get a new kind of machine that is hand-operated. In discussion, it was noted that when the machine is operating, we make a little money from it, and customers enjoy having inexpensive keepsakes.

A number of items need to be painted; Beckley will get estimates.

President's report. Boehm gave an update on the status of longtime board member Herb Karow. Herb shattered his leg, and when it didn't heal, he sought a second opinion. He learned that he had sarcoma. Boehm noted that Herb has regularly volunteered at the

Rein In Sarcoma event. The Rein In Sarcoma group immediately sent him their packet of information on this little-understood form of cancer. Herb and his wife Patty attended this year's event and were able to talk with the couple who head the organization. Boehm noted that Herb has had a lot of pain and has not been able to get around easily.

Boehm reported that two companies have been found that might be able to help fabricate safety inserts for the indoor fence. He will look into this over the winter.

Audrey Clasemann has completed the inventory, using some changes in the reporting methods. These changes were recommended by the auditor as part of last year's audit.

Before next season, we will change the display window that describes the motor. We also will be posting minutes on the carousel web site as previously authorized.

The insurance inspector who routinely inspects our carousel called Boehm because the inspector had recommended that the Santa Monica carousel adopt a remote control stopping device like ours. We provided schematics for our modified garage door openers.

Furrer reported that the Como staff has determined that no product is effective in cleaning the Lexan panels used as windows in our building. She will look into the cost of replacing the discolored panels.

Boehm also mentioned to Furrer that before she took on her current position, we had been told that the City was going to repair the broken concrete on our patios, although nobody has gotten to it this year. The concrete has heaved up and is uneven, forming a tripping hazard for visitors. She said she will look into it.

Mike Merrick commented for the record that in spite of all the problems getting the exterior fence painted, and our concern about whether the outcome had been compromised by the problems with procedures, the paint is in fact holding up very well.

In response to a question about the Como shuttle buses, Furrer said they had more than 22,000 riders. The city had purchased three buses and will buy another this fall. The buses are city-owned, but are operated through a contract with Lorenz. Como is also working with the city to try to get a regular bus stop closer to the heart of the campus. She said the Polar Bear Odyssey is due to open in 2011; the butterfly exhibit will probably be back for summer 2010.

Boehm announced that the next meeting will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, January 14, 2010, at the Como Streetcar Station. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy A. Peterson, secretary