

**AACTMAD Board Meeting Minutes  
4531 Concourse**

**June 17, 2009**

**7:35 called to order.**

Attending: Mark Hillemonds, Abby Liskow, Ruth Scodel, Pat Micks, Nawal Motawi, Bronwen Gates, Carolyn Texley, Brooke Ratliff, Greg Meisner, Robert Messer. Non-Board members attending: Gretchen Preston, Arlene Kindel, Roger Faust, Kate Moore, Marty Wilson, Betsy Foote, Susie Lorand, Ed Vincent. Carolyn Texley recording minutes for the meeting.

**May Minutes:**

Correct Ruth's addition to the motion. Correct Cindy Keesler (May 27 p.3)

**Greg: Move to table approving of the minutes. Nawal Second. Unanimous approval.**

Agenda additions: Greg: add Conflict of Interest Policy to the agenda, also registering AACTMAD with the State of Michigan to solicit funds outside of our membership. Ruth requested putting the membership vote on new facility on the agenda after the Communications Committee report.

**Motion: Abby to approve Agenda, Nawal Second. Approved unanimous Communications Committee:**

Need revised language for the Conflict of Interest Policy. Next meeting board should be prepared to approve. Send out by July 6.

**Communications:**

Greg: The Board needs more effective communication w/ the membership. Greg and the committee have scheduled information sessions (in conjunction with already-planned events) with the general membership. July 4, July 31 Fifth Friday, POB later in July or August, ECD has sent out membership survey, wants to meet after a dance. The information sessions are not to interfere with Committees events. Greg was estimating 1 – 1 ½ hours. The meetings will be scheduled as often as possible through the summer to provide information and to hear the members' concerns. They will be scheduling meetings in conjunction with the Swing Dance and International Dance groups.

All members are always welcome at all information events (and events in general). As many board members as possible will attend the informational meetings. The content/intent of these meetings will be to answer questions related to the new facility – management, fundraising, building, business plan, etc. The whole purpose of the new

facility is to create an accessible, affordable, reliable venue for our dances and events (concerts, etc).

Betsy: asked about the detailed discussion of the business plan. Nawal gave her a hardcopy of the business plan. Board emphasized that the final version will be available on the website.

Greg: reviewed the FAQ he has been editing that will also be on the website.

Ruth: this is a huge project for AACTMAD. It won't happen without a large percentage of enthusiastic members. It has become clear that the board and committees have been focusing on the detailed work, and sufficiently informing the membership has been left behind. The board is addressing this lack of communication and needs to continue to make clear to all how the final plan approaches our definition of the ideal facility.

Greg: set up an account aactmad@hotmail.com for questions that may be added to the FAQ. He's received one question so far, and will keep publicizing the FAQ. Questions will be answered by the communication committee, and the board in general will be in agreement with the responses. Greg passed out the draft marketing brochure to all attending. The photographs may be changing, but the content will remain essentially the same. Bronwen and Greg emphasized to the members attending that the board is asking for input.

Business plan questions should go to Brooke; Brochure questions to Gretchen. Gretchen repeated that it's a rough draft. Mark suggested that sending questions/comments to any board member would be fine - all will be directed to the most appropriate person(s) and answered asap. Mark repeated that we want as much communication with the members as possible. Nawal: all needs to be proofread (Business Plan, brochure/marketing information), Abby and Gretchen will take on the proofing task. Both will documents will be on the website; the brochure may also be sent to the membership (in the form of a link to the website). Ray Bantle has been continuing to act as webmaster. Discussion followed about the website and whether we might need a different website for the project. It was thought that simpler is better. Carolyn and Mark suggested that draft, version number and date be included in the footer of all materials until we reach final documents.

### **Membership vote issue**

Greg: letter from Betsy requesting membership vote reinforced need to create better communication with membership as a whole. We haven't communicated all that is necessary or desired. Ruth: we might want to have a vote. Vote by mail is worrisome, not eager to have a vote that bypasses the communication meetings. We may want to have a vote in case we find a single large donor and need to demonstrate the commitment of the whole membership. The Board can't go to the membership without the plan – which requires a smaller group to finalize – but at the same time the board shouldn't let members feel left out as a group. Marty: had initially wanted a general membership vote immediately, now feels that the vote should happen after the informational meetings.

Arlene: the membership should have some time to look over the plans in detail before the informational meetings. Discussion: An AACTMAD-owned facility has been 10 years in the making; not all of the members have been able to keep up with all of the changes over that period. Time to read materials and absorb information is necessary. We should provide printouts of the Business Plan and brochure at Committee events. Mark: we're finding that this facility has only a 6 month history, so there is a lot of old information that needs to be replaced by accurate information going forward. Bronwen: there are new assumptions that are different from the original idea (Wagner Waters) It is a different level of investment, and there are changes that need to be considered. Concourse is a much smaller building and project. (\$2 million for the Wagner Waters project that was cancelled; Concourse is only \$300,000 ). Greg: Membership participated, started the Board in this direction some time ago. We are carrying out the original (10 year ) plan. This is a more realistic project. Betsy: wants to see informational meetings after the business plan and brochure are finished. Greg/ Mark pointed out that that was the boards' intent. Nawal suggested that the latest FAQ would be a good item to leave out at the events/ dances for information until the other documents are finalized (as well as being on the website).

**Ruth: motion to have board take 3 days to make substantive changes to the FAQ Brooke Second. Approved unanimously.**

Betsy: is it possible to receive minutes? Mark: Board minutes will be posted on website under 'office' on the homepage.

**Ruth: motion to revisit the idea of the general membership vote after the first few membership information meetings. Whether, when, what form the vote would take would be decided. Brooke: second. Approved unanimously.**

Greg and Gretchen left the meeting per the COI policy.

**Mark: motion to approve the July rent \$1350. Nawal second. Discussion: We have been approving the rent monthly since March 1 2009. The amount of the rent will be applied to the purchase/ equity in the building. The agreement is in writing in the business plan. The amount changes as the existing partner mortgage is paid. Ruth: clarify that the money that's being paid is from donations for an AACTMAD facility. Approved.**

Mark: We will not be able to approve the business plan at this meeting. Greg: suggested going through the plan page by page. It was decided to go through the plan.

**Brooke led detailed description/explanation of the Business Plan:**

Bronwen brought up that there may not be enough bathroom space in the new facility.

Greg: wanted to change 'Committee rentals' to 'Committee usage'. Pittsfield Grange rental is going up to \$150. Nawal wants to eliminate specific types of outside rentals in

the language (the examples) in order to give us room to negotiate. Discussion followed about the probability of renting to a church on Sundays – a large portion of the projected revenue.

Brooke went over the process of narrowing down the exact numbers necessary for the project – her research, flexible budget (static versus changing costs). Questions/ responses related to the cost of the facility (AACTMAD equity is building), and the application of the rent toward purchase. We may or may not use the full amount of architect/ engineering / legal budget. Nawal has budgeted conservatively. She also mentioned that the builder is requiring evidence that AACTMAD has raised the necessary funds, and the board has committed to raising the funds before beginning construction.

Gretchen: Itemized the cost of the entire building: 8440 square feet \$650,000, mortgage approx. \$600,000. The mortgage payment is \$4,000 per mo. (20 yr mortgage, 3.2%). AACTMAD's space would be 4000 sf. \$14,000 committees pay in per year now. [check details on the business plan].

Abby & Gretchen will be finalizing the business plan for official board approval. Greg: opportunity to review, study and question the plan before final approval meeting (July board meeting). The Plan should be out to the board sometime next week. Schedule special meeting in 2 weeks: July 1. Nawal will draft the fundraising prose in the business plan and Ruth will review.

Nawal explained how the board committees are working, Betsy and Kate would like information about the committees. Susie suggested a blog or a wiki to post reports; communicate about meeting times etc.

Arlene: there is a lot of frustration about a lack of information about the facility, and we need to improve the flow of information to the membership. Greg: trying to get good, detailed information out to the membership as quickly and regularly and efficiently as possible.

Bronwen: all who have been working on the project are appreciated; we are not remembering to appreciate all the work of those working on the committees.

**Nawal: Motion to approve the builder Vanston and O'Brien. Ruth second. Robert recusing: Brooke out of the room. Approved.**

No report on Agreements.

Brooke will check with AACTMAD attorney Ralph Rumsay about outstanding bill.

Abby: David Pardy has asked for additional funds to have legal questions answered.

**Nawal Motion: approve additional \$2000 for legal fees. Greg. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Approved.**

Discussion followed about the suggestion to provide food at the membership information meetings which was raised at the working meeting last week.

**Greg: Motion from the facilities committee to allocate \$500 budget for the membership meetings. Abby: 2<sup>nd</sup>. Approved.**

Nawal reminded the board that we need to be working on a plan and schedule for approaching potential donors for the project.

Greg: described the form to be filed with the State to raise funds outside AACTMAD membership.

**Greg: motion to send required documents to the State. Ruth 2<sup>nd</sup>. Approved, Unanimous.**

Brooke will follow up on 990 (non-profit finance) forms since 2005 with Ray Bantle.

### **Web site**

Discussion followed about separating website maintenance (webmaster duties) from the content (e.g. Dance Calendar).

Robert pointed out that Ray Bantle does a lot of work updating the dance calendar (contacting groups for information, etc.), which is a job that we would very much like him to continue.

The duties of webmaster would not include the data collection/ contact work that is so important – would just be in charge of the format, which could change to accommodate a model that might be easier to update (online, more than one person able to update info, etc.)

**Ruth: motion to adjourn. Mark second. Approved.**