

**UTAH SYMPHONY | UTAH OPERA**  
**FULL BOARD MEETING**  
**MAY 23, 2023**  
**MINUTES**

**Attended in person or via videoconference:** Doyle Arnold, Austin Bankhead, Steven Brosvik, George Cardon-Bystry, John D’Arcy, Barry Eden, Brandon Fugal, Kem Gardner, Brian Greeff, Stephen Tanner Irish, Tom Jacobson, Annette Jarvis, Frank Joklik, Tom Love, Ted Merritt (musician), Hugh Palmer (musician), Dinesh Patel, Gary Porter, Pat Richards, Miguel Rovira, Joanne Shiebler, Stan Sorensen, Shane Stowell, Naoma Tate, Jim Tozer, David Utrilla, Kelly Ward, Jennifer Webb (Onstage Ogden), and Henry Wurts attended from the Elected, Ex-officio, and Lifetime Boards.

**Elected and Lifetime Board members not available to participate:** William Bailey, Stewart Barlow, Judy Billings, Gary Crocker, David Dee, Luz Escamilla, Theresa Foxley, Julie Aiken Hansen, Dan Hemmert, Jon Huntsman Jr., Clark Jones, Herb Livsey, Abbie Magrane, Brad Merrill, Judy Moreton, David Mortensen, Scott Parker, Dave Petersen, Frank Pignanelli, Shar Quinney, Harris Simmons, Tom Thatcher, Kim Wilson, David Winder, and Thomas Wright.

**Guests and USUO staff members present in person or via videoconference:** Thierry Fischer, Melanie Giles, David Green, Meredith Kimball Laing, Christopher McBeth, Leslie Peterson, Jessica Proctor, Toby Tolokan, Jean Vaniman (future Onstage Ogden representative), and Gregory Walz. Julie McBeth was present to facilitate the technology and record the minutes

**I. Welcome and Consent Agenda:** Board of Trustees Chair Brian Greeff welcomed the meeting participants and asked if there were any questions about or recommended changes to the Consent Agenda. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Consent Agenda (which consisted of the draft minutes from the March 25, 2023 Board Meeting, Strategic Plan Metrics for audience development and private contributions, and a Strategic Advertising Investment Update) was adopted by unanimous vote.

Onstage Ogden representative Jennifer Webb thanked the board members for supporting her service and for the relationship between USUO and Onstage Ogden. She introduced Jean Vaniman, who was observing the meeting and would be the ex-officio representative of Onstage Ogden on the USUO Board of Trustees beginning June 1, 2023.

**II. Audit Committee:** Audit Committee Chair Barry Eden referenced the draft form 990 tax return for the period September 1 2021 through August 31, 2022 which Mr. Hogan had e-mailed to the Board members on May 4, 2023. He noted that the Audit Committee had reviewed the draft return and asked questions of the finance team that prepared it which were answered satisfactorily. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees voted to adopt the following.

RESOLVED, that the proposed Form 990 Tax Return for the period ended August 31, 2022 be approved for filing.

**III. Finance Committee:** Finance Committee Chair Austin Bankhead provided an overview of changes in the FY23 budget since the January projection. He noted those changes were detailed in the meeting materials. The board members asked clarifying questions.

VP of Marketing and Communications Meredith Kimball Laing shared that ticket sales for the current main season (September 2022-May 2023) had increased compared to the previous season but were expected to end \$800,000 short of the original revenue projection of \$5.3 million. She noted the historical

main season revenue comparison in the meeting materials and shared that the updated projection of \$4.5 million for main season sales would represent the third highest sales on record—with \$5M in FY19 being the highest. The board members asked clarifying questions including comparison to other performing arts organizations—which according to a TRG study were down 30% from their highest sales for most organizations in FY22 (compared to USUO’s 14%). They also discussed volume versus pricing and Ms. Laing noted attention to volume increase strategies, per the Strategic Plan focus and metrics.

VP of Development Leslie Peterson reported that \$7.9 million had been raised toward the total fiscal year goal of \$8.7 million, and referenced the donation pipeline report in the meeting materials which included confident, less confident, and risky amounts projected toward the achieving the goal. She shared details of some recent contributions received. The board members asked clarifying questions and Ms. Peterson noted an overall cautious optimism that the FY23 goal would be achieved. The board members also encouraged follow-up to ensure that all Trustees met contribution expectations.

Mr. Bankhead relayed a recommendation from the Finance and Executive Committees to authorize a lease buy-out of the temperature-controlled box truck used for transportation of instruments. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees voted to adopt the following.

RESOLVED, that the Board authorize the organization to spend up to \$60,000 on a lease buy-out of the Utah Symphony box truck.

Mr. Bankhead relayed that the projected deficit for FY23 would be covered by the operations reserve set aside by the Board for that condition. He added that that reserve would be quickly exhausted in FY24 requiring progress on Strategic Plan goals.

**IV. CEO updates:** President & CEO Steve Brosvik reported that a design team had been selected through a Salt Lake County RFP process to update the Master Plan for Abravanel Hall. He shared that the design team had visited venues in Minneapolis and Miami, and would be meeting with stakeholders and updating the plan over a six-month period. He noted that the updated plan would provide the information needed to make decisions about potential renovations for the nearly 45-year-old building.

Mr. Brosvik shared that recent conversations with the Deer Valley Resort team emphasized their interest in providing the best experience possible for festival patrons and willingness to make adjustments based on feedback from patrons of the 2022 festival. He noted that it was not likely that the policy prohibiting outside alcohol would be changed, due to the type of license now held by the resort.

**V. Thoughts from the Music Director:** Thierry Fischer reflected on his 14-year tenure as Utah Symphony Music Director and encouraged the board and organization to continue striving for artistic growth and excellence to be shared with an ever-growing community in perpetuity. He expressed appreciation for the support and friendship of the board members.

**VI. Other Business / Adjourn:** Mr. Greeff asked if there was any additional business to bring before the Board before adjourning to an executive session. There being no additional business, the musician representatives, staff members (with the exceptions of Mr. Brosvik and Mr. Green), and guests left the meeting and the remaining Board members discussed personnel matters during an executive session.

**Minutes Recorded By:**

Julie McBeth

**Minutes Approved By:**

Board vote at August 16, 2023 special meeting