

SOUTHEASTERN THEATRE CONFERENCE, INC.

Executive Committee Meeting

Central Office

Greensboro, NC

Friday, May 28: 2010

Convened: 9:05 a.m.

ExCom Members in Attendance: President, Alan Litsey; President Elect Program Chair, Steve Bayless; Administrative Vice-President, Jack Benjamin; Secretary, Mark Charney; Treasurer, Chris Rich; States Representative, Leslie Dellinger; Divisional Representative, Lynn Nelson; Past President, Beth Harvey

Also in Attendance: Executive Director, Betsey Baun

- I. Executive Committee Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.
- II. Announcement of Taping (Secretary, *Mark Charney*)
- III. Announcement of Parliamentarian (Immediate Past President, *Beth Harvey*)
- IV. **Approval of ExCom Minutes** from Wednesday and Sunday, March 3 and 7  
**Motion: Beth Harvey made a motion to accept the Wed and Sunday, March 3 and 7, 2010 minutes**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>: Alan Litsey**  
**Motion Carried**
- V. **Executive Director's Report**

--**DRIVING REIMBURSEMENT:** Those driving should give Betsey as soon as possible, through email (40 cents/mile)--may reimburse the cost of the flight if driving exceeds flight costs

--**PROGRAM CHAIR:** In the budget, the Program Chair has an additional line item. He or she must come in early and stay afterwards to plan the program.

--**INSTITUTE OF OUTDOOR DRAMA (IOD):** Betsey distributed a proposal from the Institute of Institute of Outdoor Drama. IOD is losing its home at UNC Chapel Hill. Looking to relocate at Eastern Carolina University, but no definite answers. Advocate Bill Friday hired to protect the Institute. Might be a good institute to fold into SETC. Current E.D. losing his position at Chapel Hill. Their budget of 250,000 dollars is being confiscated by the university

Proposal budget distributed, along with valuable explanation of what IOD does for the nation. Under New Business, the committee agreed to look further at folding the Institute into SETC. Reference to Volume 17 of THEATRE SYMPOSIUM JOURNAL about Outdoor Drama for a more complete analysis of outdoor dramas.

Discussion of IOD Conferences—all agree that it is very valuable. Their auditions happen the week after ours, mostly from NC.

Question: How do we take them in? Self financed? Under our umbrella? Initially give them a home to land/physical space/support? Right now, IOD is represented by Susan Phillips. If SETC “adopts,” the board of IOD, now university employees, would have to be reestablished. The board encouraged support, but warned about liability issues in bringing IOD into SETC. Discussed how IOD may contribute to bringing SETC national attention and the worth of their feasibility studies, formulas where Scott Parker, David Weiss, Mark Sumner, and others discuss the feasibility of outdoor dramas in various locations.

--**STAFF REPORTS:** Staff will report individually.

**A. Cheryl Ann and Advertising:** Total Sales: 21, 345.75 (advertising) up from last year. Total advertising sales: 57, 057.50—8% increase over last year. Winter Issue paid in full already. For Volume 52, we’ve sold 13, 511.00 . The 13,000 will be applied to next year’s budget. Push to get folks to advertise early. Our magazine follows a university calendar year, not parallel with our fiscal year. May need to re examine this discrepancy and consider this for most efficient advertising. Question: In terms of the calendar, what dates are best for constituents? Ad information must be gathered in the summer for the November issue, difficult because few folks work in the summer and budget often shut down. Advertisers—more from universities than anywhere else.

Need to produce this volume in September, when students are doing their senior year auditions, not November. Betsey and Cheryl Ann: **ExCom charges PubCom to look at the cycle of publication.** Could put the college information in the Summer issue. Cheryl Ann wants to streamline the request for information, working with Chris Chandler to find a means to gather all information in one place.

**B. Quiana Clark Roland and archives:** Is working to establish a formal process for archives. Her next-door neighbor, Jen Motszko, happens to be the UNCG manuscript curator currently working on SETC’s archives. We learned that 14 boxes have not been archived. Goals: organize archives, determine the relevancy and validity of materials, and create a formal process. In contact with Christine Woodworth at UNCG, our new Chair of the Archives Committee to find student interns to help with archives.

**C. April Marshall and auditions:** Auditions holding steady, professional companies up; job contacts down a bit. Job contacts and professional auditions loved being side by side. Fall auditions—will be in Atlanta at the Westin Hotel Airport. Trying to video

the audition this year to sell videos to many companies. Financially feasible. Looking for a good videographer.

Recently, April recruited in Branson, Missouri to meet with eight theatres and discuss their using our services. Looked for theatres to take advantage of our emerging artists program. Branson is very conservative and has an in-grown way of recruitment, but there *is* a need. Good technicians out there. Job contact is 100% current on all invoicing and payment because of Mark Snyder. Claire has been cleaning up the database, helping it be up to date. Active participants are up to date, and she is now tackling the inactive population. Audition forms revised on the state level—more of an objective take on the auditions.

Betsey reminds us of “hub” concept for auditions. Still discussing it. We have recently added the Northwest Theatre Conference, and can extend to other companies/conferences as well. We need wisdom from ExCom how to proceed in exploring the “hub” concept. Asking for ExCom to make this become a directive. Introducing an entirely new conversation. Examined how the percentages are set up, according to Chris Rich. Might take up to two years to handle this transition effectively. Formal Directive from ExCom?

**Motion: From Jack Benjamin: For ExCom to begin negotiation with Northwest Drama Association to examine a proposed screening auditions process.**

**Friendly Amendment: Betsey Baun wants to note that this is both based on a previous model and discussions that were initiated at the request of NW Drama Conference.**

**2nd: Chris Rich**

**Motion Passed**

**c. Mark Synder and accounts:** Reduced account receivables and has everyone current right now in terms of advertising. Improved accounts by continually following up with folks. Discussion of what happens when checks bounce. Not enough check payments to justify the cost of vetting them. Once collected funds, brought here, and balanced at the bank. Mark and Betsey have signature recognition at BB. Claire Wisniewski praised for t-shirt sales and keeping meticulous records. Set up procedures with the bank, hotel (secured there).

**d. Claire Wisniewski and new companies:** In the process of exploring new companies: 121 active, 307 inactive but functioning, 20 are defunct, and 76 are still be explored. 1201 prospects.

**e. Chris Chandler and website/social networking:** Provided a handout of accomplishments and job duties. These include giving the program and website a

similar look; Developing programs in house; revising program for managing the college directory; Working on on-line resumes for theatre; creating a place for websites to post resumes. 800 active people and 67 active companies.

## VI. Items for Discussion:

### ALAN LITSEY: PRESIDENT

--**MANUAL REVISION AND PLACEMENT ON LINE (Jack Benjamin): Question: Do we want manuals on line?** Jack Benjamin report: **Manuals** need to be updated—Jack's responsibility. Presently working with David Thompson. Will use the month of June to bring all manuals up to date and make consistent. Jack plans to make changes in June from the March meeting, and should have them no later than July 1. Will present on the Saturday meeting in Atlanta.

ExCom and the Board then will be asked to accept all changes to manuals. To do that, several rule changes have to occur that By-laws is in process of putting together. David's Proposal in By-Laws: Present manuals to ExCom; then defer the vote to accept them until the Board meeting. Then, we can arrange the vote to revise rules first, and vote on the entire change in one motion.

--category 1: to rename and revise the entire manual based on name changes

--category 2: add revised bylaws plus rule III.3

--category 3: manuals that have to do with rule changes to rule II.1

--category 4: manuals that have minor changes

--category 5: No manual changes anywhere

Discussion about committees: We have several committees on our books that are not necessarily committees and no longer do the work traditionally associated with active committees. Jack will examine these. Chris Rich presented a new model that streamlines committees and redefines their structure. Discussion of accountability.

Also discussed the role of liaison chairs, specifying exactly what that means. All liaisons follow the same rules, but are uncertain to whom they report, and exactly what goes into their report. Discussion over the best time to write/receive a report—after March? At the beginning and not the end of meeting? After the fall? Spring? Discussion of whether we need a password protected part of our website for Board members and others with responsibility to protect the intellectual property of SETC and log who is interested.

ExCom supported the idea of manuals being on line.

**--REMOVAL OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE**

ExCom discussed the Rules in By Laws Section (Article 3, paragraph 3): *The President may remove from any office any State Rep who is not fulfilling the duties of that office, whereupon the affected state organization shall be asked to appoint a new State Representative.*

As requested, ExCom examined our policy about removing members who do not perform their job. ExCom agreed that it is unfair to give President the sole responsibility to remove someone from a position. ExCom agreed that this should be a shared responsibility. Jack explained precedents of removing state representatives in the past. The memo suggested that, if the state appoints, only they can remove.

Question from Alan: Should we revise the article to read that *The ExCom may remove/* and the second piece: *The ExCom will appoint an interim officer to serve the remainder of the term.* Steve suggested we resolve that conflict? Jack wants more discussion about a procedure for any removal from office. Chris Rich asked questions about insurance, legality, and ramifications of that. ExCom will examine revising the Article in regards to all board members.

Typo in ARTICLE III, Board of Directors, Section 1, b. Should be Programming Vice President to serve for one (ADD) Typo in ARTICLE III, Board of Directors, Section 1, b. Should be Programming Vice President to serve for one (ADD) year.

**--STATE CONVENTION DATES FOR OFFICER VISIT ASSIGNMENTS:**

Betsey explained that SETC members attending state festivals have several functions: First and foremost they are SETC representatives, greeting and welcoming those who attend the state convention. They can also work as adjudicators, attend official meetings, conduct workshops, attend convention events, invite participants to attend SETC auditions, work as liaisons, sit on the state board meetings for Strategic Planning—anything that makes their presence known and is helpful. They should file a report when they return.

Those in black are assigned; those in red are planning to be there anyway.

Representatives:

AL	Lynn Nelson	Chris Rich
FL	Leslie Dellinger	Steve and Beth
GA	Steve Bayless	
KY	Alan Litsey	
MS	Jack Benjamin	Lynn Nelson
NC	No one	
SC	Beth Harvey	Mark Charney and Leslie Dellinger

TN	Chris Rich	Lynn Nelson
VA	Mark Charney	
WVA	Lynn Nelson	

The President will contact the States for their conventions.

--**ExCom NOMINATION PROCESS:** New process consistent with Actors' Equity on the website and email—maybe use Survey Monkey to let folks know that surveys are still open. Process: Board reviews nominations, selects the appropriate candidates; candidates will receive email and be asked to send back a letter of interest and a picture. This information will be uploaded on line, Board will reconvene to vote on candidates, and candidates selected will be announced. Membership will do a straw vote for the candidate. The process is still in the hands of the nominations committee, so will run any changes by them. Hope to secure a larger group of nominees. Goal: to be more intentional about finding qualified candidates and making the process more transparent. Alan suggests we begin this now.

By-laws ask for slate, and this is more modern way of achieving due diligence. This does not change their process, but gives them additional information, expanding their being in touch with constituency. Validates process and what we stand for. Entire membership votes on candidates in a straw poll, with the option to vote. Alan will send revised ideas to Nominations Committee to solicit their opinion.

The ExCom committee believes this is a great idea. Alan will fix the verbiage; send to us and Glenn (Nominations Committee). Then, he will share Glenn's response, ask for and respond to changes, and submit in early June.

--**NOMINATION FORMS:** Passed out forms from Glenn, asking us to nominate officers and awards. Folks can self-nominate.

**STEVE BAYLESS: PROGRAM VICE PRESIDENT**

--**FIRST KEYNOTE SPEAKER: PEARL CLEAGE:** Discussed themes of the conference and needs: Wants dynamic speakers who specialized in voice and speech. Needs dynamic speaker, possibly a performer such as Hal Holbrook. Maybe producer NEA Leader Rocco Landesman. Other possibilities include performers from LOST, among others.

**BETH HARVEY, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:** *None to report*

**JACK BENJAMIN, ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT:** *None to report*

**MARK CHARNEY, SECRETARY:** *None to report*

## **LESLIE DELLINGER: STATES REP**

### **--THREE REQUESTS BY STATE REPRESENTATIVES:**

**1)** Technical/Design group needs plugs. The hotel charged them 75 dollars for access to electricity. Betsey encouraged them to plan and request needs in advance.

**2)** Suggestion about reservations for the high school auditions: Some schools want students from the same school grouped together so their teacher/mentors can finish earlier. Steve explained that seeing the same students from the same school could hurt the kids, because the adjudicators will see many of the same styles repeated.

**3)** Forms for the auditions are frustrating because individuals must complete the same information on every form. May be solved by turning on the Auto Fill.

**Mississippi State Rep:** Question: How to define how and where nine groups in MISS (where children perform for children)—almost children's community theatre—can participate. Ideas discussed included a developing a proposal under the community theatre umbrella and/or a ten-minute festival for these kids. Leslie's recommendation: That interested parties form an Interest group and then submit proposal. Possibly apply to the fringe festival.

**ELECTION TO STATE REPRESENTATIVE CONSISTENCY:** State Rep meeting: Took a poll on how state reps are elected in each state, and whether their state pays for their trips. Some are appointed, some are elected, some are Past Presidents, some are Presidents. Michael Howley is compiling a list of suggestions we will encourage all states to follow, such as these: Current members, Administrator, should try to attend the convention; new reps attend orientation at the beginning of the festival. We encourage states to accept reps for three years to improve coordination. Michael will type up, email after, and ask for feedback at the September meeting.

Betsey passes out a document about restructuring with a big portion about the states. State Rep agrees that SETC can dictate who serves. Her proposal is aligned with Leslie's report. They feel comfortable encouraging all new reps to begin at the same time. Chris believes we can dictate time, etc, but we can't dictate how they choose their reps. In some states, the reps are a voting member of their board, and some they are not. Can't dictate voting members. All elected at different times. Leslie proposes that we consider a time when we want the new rep from that state to join the board at the September meeting.

Discussion: Jack: Suggests that all new board members begin in September at the fall meeting. Looking for a way to use the Sunday of the convention as a training day (with business meetings on Saturday). Instead of just State Reps we would love all new board members to begin at the same time. Steve wonders if there will be enough time to change the process.

**MOTION:** Leslie moves that we ask all ten states to form a system where the new state rep for the upcoming term be selected prior to the September Board Meeting so that all new state reps will be at the fall board meeting effective fall 2010.

2<sup>nd</sup>: Beth Harvey

**Motion Carried**

--**FINANCIAL SUPPORT:** State reps brought to the forefront their concern that ExCom members are reimbursed for SETC meetings, but state reps are not.

GA, NC, WVA—states do not pay anything

AL, SC, TENN—state pays partial (approximately half)

FL, KY, MISS (travel and hotel), VA—state pays all

Betsey encourages us to look at support for all of the Board Members.

--**MEETING TIME FOR STATES AT THE CONFERENCE:** At the States Rep meeting, reps asked specifically how much ExCom members were supported. Leslie and Chris delineated exactly what SETC paid to support ExCom members at the conference. All state reps agreed that they did not miss the reception. Question for Betsey—the meeting did not work at noon, so state reps prefer late afternoon time slot. Would love food and drink at their own afternoon meeting—Betsey explains that they go through her, and should specify what they want in terms of food/drink. Also needs the probable attendance.

Meeting initially moved to earlier afternoon because programming does not like to give up 90 minutes of programs for state meetings. State reps explained that the noon hour reduced attendance. ExCom worries about scheduling programs against state meetings, but programming will try to accommodate.

--**ADJUDICATORS:** Issue from Mississippi: Where adjudicators come from—must be out of state from some regions, and in state from others.

**CHRIS RICH: TREASURER**

--**SYSTEMS THOUGHT QUESTIONS AND RESTRUCTURING OF COMMITTEES:** Handed out the **System Thought Questions** and government structure we discussed yesterday as well as by-laws. In Board of directors: the number is 23. 10 state reps, 7 division reps, Past President and ExCom. Board currently 21. Betsey asked us to look at proposed Board structure with responsibilities. Streamline. Offers another way to look at the committees so you don't have to go through the AVP. Lots of commonalities between Betsey's and Chris's ideas of restructuring.

Chris has agreed to work with Alan on a new committee structure with a rationale. Chris offers to make it an email discussion for ExCom and the Task Force, taking into consideration Betsey's good ideas.

--**TRENDS:** Membership—has seen a steady decline over the last several years: 07/08, and a drop of 4900. Will see more funding from restructuring and from the central location of the next conference.

Total Auditions Income: Real jump in income. Last year 30,000 dollars, and before that 22,000 dollars. Trend is jumping much faster than the number of states coming on board. If we begin to consider auditions at hub sites, that income will pick up because of more central locations for connectors/auditions.

SOUTHERN THEATRE income—dropped income last year, but big improvement this year, mostly because of Cheryl Ann and terrific advertising.

Also some GROWTH based on new initiatives: paid for workshops, concerts, a bit of market growth. Increase in expense. Saved 9000 to go digital, but ate that up in office expenses. Increase in screening auditions.

ON LINE STATE SCREENING—increases because of more involvement, but disperses back to the states. We do make a small profit, but the on line process decreases work and follow up time. Helps us from the state end. In kind help gives Leslie some time relief.

AUDITIONS EXPENSE: Increase because of new folks. Collect fees and disperse back to the states.

TOTAL CONVENTION EXPENSE: We were slightly down with convention expense this past year. Net income of 154,364.38 for this year's SETC general until April 1. Investment accounts have been working for us. Very strong fiscal and physical growth when we expected to see a downward trend. Product that is holding steady and slightly increasing in our constituency. Many thanks to Bestsey's strong leadership.

## **VI. ACTION ITEMS**

### **ALAN LITSEY, PRESIDENT:**

--**REVISING VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT:** The goal is to have something to vote on by the September meeting.

**MISSION:** Presently--Connecting you to opportunities in theatre. Chris discusses an understood WE. Connecting is less active. Instead, "We connect you to opportunities in

theatre.” Or “SETC connects you to opportunities in theatre” or “Connecting you to opportunities in theatre.”

--**VISION STATEMENT:** Current: “SETC is the strongest and widest network of theatre practitioners in the U.S. We provide extensive resources and opportunities for our members year-round. Our services, publications and produces make significant contributions to financial stability and to the intellectual profile of the organization. SETC is a model of effectiveness and efficiency due to its attention to leadership development, continuity, and to the clarity of mission of the board and management structure. “

Revision suggestion: “SETC is the strongest and broadest network of theatre practitioners in the United States by providing extensive resources and year-round opportunities for our constituents.”

The fine-tuning of the vision statement will continue to be examined in the fall.

Statement of Values: Already in the last vision statement. Sent to the Task Force to consider parallelism and to be prioritized.

ExCom was comfortable allowing Alan to charge the Task Force with the three models of governance.

--**WEBSITE COMMITTEE:** Chair, Central Office and Alan feels the website committee has completed its charge and has been subsumed by Chris. Recommends that the committee be eliminated.

**MOTION: Move that the website committee be eliminated because it has completed its charge as noted in Rule II.17**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Beth Harvey**

**Motion Carried**

**This will go to the Board for a vote in September.**

--**FORMATION OF INTEREST GROUP CLARIFIED: Rule 9: I.9:** Interest group spends two years, sends narrative, suggests Ad Hoc status for two years, second narrative of report written, and then Standing Committee status. Ultimately 4 years from Interest Group to Committee.

**STEVE BAYLESS, VICE PRESIDENT:**

*None to report*

**BETH HARVEY, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:**

*None to report*

**ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT: JACK BENJAMIN:**

*None to report*

**SECRETARY: MARK CHARNEY**

*None to report*

**TREASURER: CHRIS RICH**

*None to report*

**STATES REPRESENTATIVE: LESLIE DELLINGER**

*None to report*

**DIVISIONS REPRESENTATIVE: LYNN NELSON**

*None to report*

**VI. ITEMS OF INTEREST**

**ALAN LITSEY, PRESIDENT**

*None to report*

**STEVE BAYLESS, VICE PRESIDENT:**

*None to report*

**BETH HARVEY, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:**

*None to report*

**ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT: JACK BENJAMIN:**

II.1 Convention Planning Committee—may be recommended for deletion. Established away of assisting program chair, but no longer necessary.

**SECRETARY: MARK CHARNEY**

*None to report*

**TREASURER: CHRIS RICH**

*None to report*

**STATES REPRESENTATIVE: LESLIE DELLINGER: State reps would like the following to be considered:**

- a. Cultural/Diversity committee is worried about finding jobs at our conference.
- b. Perception that jobs only exist for musical theatre people.
- c. Scholarship people want the state reps list. Leslie will announce scholarships to state reps through a flyer. Beth will help publicize a flyer.
- d. State reps want state presidents to come to the conference.
- e. State reps are clear about the state screening auditions and are for everyone, not just college and university students.
- f. Musical theatre interest group still thinks that they can request this year to be an Ad Hoc Committee, but not time yet. Kenn Stillson.
- g. State Reps want their registration packets pulled so that they have them available at their Board meeting.
- h. Request schedule of activities.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**BETSEY BAUN**

--**OUTDOOR DRAMA:** If taken on, Susan Phillips would work with SETC and carry on her business working for us in college, university, and many other initiatives/festivals. Also registration. Alan believes we shouldn't wiggle to make room for her on the staff as a part time employee and also be responsible of IOD. Fiscally, IOD must be able to stand alone. Still confused about Chapel Hill, finances, responsibility but want to help out for sure. General agreement that we want to consider enveloping IOD, but not with Susan as an actual employee.

--**K – 12.** May tie in with the Lincoln Center. Must pay for itself. Want them to spend a morning at SETC. New K-12 chair, Elaine Malone seems very active.

--**AMBASSADORS:** Betsey may bring back the idea of Ambassadors, professionals who take SETC to places that it does not necessarily go. Help with resumes. Bring them into audition hubs and on the state level too. Might promote SETC more effectively.

Adjourned at 4:05