

# WAOS AGM 2021 MINUTES

**Meeting Date & Time:** 20/07/2021 19:45 and also by Webex for online attendees

**Meeting location:** Old Woking Community Centre, Woking, GU22 9AT

Meeting called by WAOS Committee

Type of meeting AGM

Acting Chairman Lynda Lawrence

Minutes Amanda Carey-McDermott

Apologies Tasha Bennett, Keith White, Julia Da Costa

Attendees:

30 current members attended (22 in the room and 8 online)

6 previous members attended (3 in the room and 3 online)

## AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of AGM (Informational Meeting) 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020
3. Matters arising from previous minutes
4. Report from Finance Committee – Brian Higgs, Clive Moon, Martine Young
5. Chairman's Report
6. Treasurer's Report
  - Election of independent examiner of accounts
7. Election of Committee Officers and Members
8. Show Focus Group (order of upcoming shows)
9. *Legally Blonde* update
10. Any Other Business

### 1. Apologies

Person responsible

Action

Apologies were received from Tasha Bennett, Keith White, Julia Da Costa

### 2. Minutes from the Informational meeting 2021

Person responsible

Action

Minutes had been shared in advance and the meeting was asked to confirm that they accurately reflected the discussion. The meeting confirmed that they were a true reflection.

Lynda Lawrence

No action

### 3. Matters arising from previous meetings

#### Person responsible

#### Action

3a At the AGM in 2019, Josie Barnett brought up the subject of whether we should drop our Tuesday evening performance and hold the technical rehearsal on the Monday and dress rehearsal on the Tuesday.

Sue Gaastra

No action

After consideration, we decided that as we are changing our marketing and ticketing systems, we may well be able to attract bigger audiences. Also, there is a degree of evidence that this would not save us money overall and, indeed, it may well result in loss of revenue. It was decided not to try this at present.

3b At the virtual Informational Meeting in 2020, Julia Da Costa brought up the subject of diversity. As a result of this, she was invited to a committee meeting in November 2020 to expand on her views. The committee had further discussion on this and, although we do have an equality and diversity statement in our Constitution, it was agreed that we may need to be more proactive in our approach. The Black Lives Matter movement has helped clarify that we need to be actively, rather than passively, anti-racist, and the same approach needs to be used to promote equality and diversity in general in the society. The committee is dedicated to making an inclusive environment for everyone. If anyone has any particular issues or suggestions, please contact a committee member.

No action

### 4. Report from the Finance Committee

#### Person responsible

#### Action

Brian Higgs

None

Brian reported on behalf of the recently formed Finance Committee (Brian, Clive Moon and Martine Young). He shared the exciting news that previous member Ben Delo has made a donation of £100,000 to the society and asked the committee to use the money as they see fit to promote and enhance what we do. Brian shared some stories about Ben's time with the society in performances between 2009 and 2014, and also as a period on the committee. After moving to Hong Kong in 2014 he has become very wealthy as one of the founders of the Bitmex crypto exchange.

On some of his visits back to Woking in subsequent years, he had mentioned the possibility of a charitable donation to WAOS, something that he was also doing for other groups and organisations which he had been involved with. In 2020 during lockdown, the committee asked Brian to follow up on this possibility and following a Webex meeting with Ben, the donation was then made to us in a matter of short weeks. The Finance Committee has been created to look at the best ways to use the money to support and improve WAOS and attract bigger audiences and are looking to invest some of the money for the future.

The Chair thanked Brian for his efforts in securing this very generous donation.

### 5. Chairman's Report

#### Person responsible

#### Action

Lynda confirmed that she has been Acting Chair and Treasurer since last summer.

Lynda Lawrence

No action

She opened by thanking everyone that has helped keep the country going and highlighted the difficulties that everyone in

## 5. Chairman's Report

### Person responsible

### Action

the Society and beyond had experienced over the last very challenging 18 months.

Lynda also thanked the committee for maintaining the work and social role of the society throughout, Sam Moylan-Heydt for hosting numerous quizzes and other social events that have kept us all in contact and all of the Society members who have participated to help keep us all connected.

Lynda talked through some of the things that the Society is hoping to do with our newfound financial resources and invited members to put forward any ideas. She also referred to the upcoming 50-year anniversary of the Society in 2022, and invited suggestions for celebrating this.

Lynda shared news about developments in theatre in Woking and in particular that the Italia Conti school is making Woking its base, and that this will bring new performance and rehearsal spaces. She also updated the meeting on planned changes by ATG which will change the way that our tickets will be sold. This isn't completely finalised but we are hopeful that this will be a positive move for us – there will be more to follow on this shortly.

Lynda thanked the Legally Blonde production team for maintaining the momentum of the show and confirmed that the focus of the committee was to make this a truly tremendous return for WAOS MT.

Lynda thanked the committee for all their amazing efforts over the last 18 months.

The meeting thanked Lynda and the committee for all their efforts over the last year.

*Standing down from Committee: Brian Higgs after many years in charge of publicity*

Complete Report in Appendix A

## 6. Treasurer's Report

### Person responsible

### Action

6a Following the recent donation and good performances over the last few years the bank balance and outlook is extremely positive with a total of £116,725.29 across the accounts. Full details are available at Appendix B.

Lynda Lawrence

No action

6b Lynda outlined that the bank account signatories had been updated and proposed an approach for keeping these updated going forward to ensure that

As detailed in the full Treasurers report

## 6. Treasurer's Report

### Person responsible

### Action

there are sufficient current committee members at all times.

This was approved by the meeting.

6c The Accounts were approved by the meeting.

6d The Accounts for year-end 2021 will be audited by Roger Thomas.

6e Roger Thomas asked a question on behalf of Keith White who had sent his apologies for the meeting. Keith asked the committee to confirm whether gift aid had been processed recently.

Lynda responded that this has not yet been done for the last year but that there is still plenty of time to take action and that this will be one of the first tasks for the new Treasurer once appointed.

---

## 7. Election of Officers and Committee Members

### Person responsible

### Deadline

7a Lynda Lawrence – Chairman

7b Martine Young – Business Manager

7c Katie Winfield – Secretary

7d Ellen McDermott – Treasurer

7e Sue Gaastra (Membership / Patron's Secretary)  
Samantha Moylan-Heydt (Publicity Manager and NODA representative), Clive Moon (Chair of Constitution sub-

7. Election of Officers and Committee Members	Person responsible	Deadline
committee) and Amanda Carey-McDermott (Chair of Show Focus Group) in non-officer roles.		

**8. Show Focus Group (SFG)**

8a Amanda briefly outlined the work of the Show Focus Group (SFG) for the benefit of new members and confirmed the current membership is Josie Barnett, Roger Thomas, Hannah Dare and Amanda. She advised that since 2 members have stood down this year that we would welcome new members to help with this important work.

**Person responsible**

Amanda Carey-McDermott

**Action**

No action

**8b. Future Shows**

*Legally Blonde – November 2021*

*Sweet Charity – May 2022*

*Addams Family – November 2022*

*Made in Dagenham – May 2023*

No action

9. Legally Blonde Update	Person responsible	Action
	Beth Flitton	No action

Beth updated the meeting on the highly successful online auditions which following the loss of a number of key cast members, had enabled us to return to a cast actually 1 person larger than the original very large cast! This included a number of existing company members who have now decided to do the show as well as a number of new members – we are very, very pleased with the high quality of the cast.

Rehearsals restarted in May and in line with COVID government guidance these were carried out in small groups. We are restarting full scale rehearsals with the company from 22 July, and again we will continue to follow all government guidance; the safety and wellbeing of the cast remains our primary concern. All this said we are absolutely delighted with progress and are well on track to have an amazing show.

Beth and Amanda thanked the committee for all their support in keeping the show going throughout and confirmed their thanks to Dick, Hannah and Jon.

10. Any Other Business	Person responsible	Action
NONE		

## Appendix A: Acting Chairman's Speech

### WAOS MT AGM 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Hello all, and welcome to all of you new and old hands and Committee Members. It is WONDERFUL to see you all in person.

What eighteen months this has been! Thank you to all the healthcare workers, teachers, frontline supermarket employees, delivery drivers, home schoolers, parents and everyone else who kept their lives together through these awful lockdown months. We have learned how to Skype, Webex and Zoom to keep contact with others. We missed or postponed weddings, funerals, christenings and other life events. And were very resourceful at keeping in touch with people. It has been hard and I know many have suffered and hopefully the rest of 2021 will get us back to real life and we can start safely living life again.

WAOS Musical Theatre has found a way to keep in touch, we had monthly quizzes, meetings, rehearsals, information sessions, auditions and even a Christmas Party via Webex thanks to Sam Moylan-Heydt. Everyone knows it is not the same as being together but it was lovely to be in contact with others in the best way we could. Thank you for all of you who participated and we hope you found the connection enjoyable!

As you have heard from the Finance Committee, we have a really good reason to be thankful to a kind benefactor, Ben Delo. Now that we are financially secure, and to be honest, for the last several years we have been very solvent and have kept breaking even or making money and for that I thank previous committees and directors for keeping our shows great and on budget! With our new found wealth, we hope to be able to raise our profile in the Woking Community and try to bring in more members and new audience members to WAOS Musical Theatre. We hope to do a Christmas Concert this year and if members have any other activities, they would like to put forward for the wider membership to do and members who wish to organize these activities would be most welcome.

As many of you know, the original auditions for ***Legally Blonde*** were December 2019! We have postponed the show **three times** and had many casting changes, revised rehearsal schedules and countless starts and stops! Through all this, Beth Flitton, Amanda Carey-McDermott, our co-directors and Richard Stockton, our musical director and Hannah Dare, our choreographer, have stoically carried on and kept the show together. Now we are moving forward and want to make ***Legally Blonde*** the best thing to happen in Woking in November! Keep up the hard work and but make sure that you have tremendous fun doing it! Well done and thank you!

Speaking of moving forward, WAOS Musical Theatre started in its present format in 1972, so 2022 will be our 50<sup>th</sup> year performing in Woking and bringing great Amateur Musical Theatre to the region. We hope to mark this momentous occasion with special concerts and certainly great displays for Front of House and in our programmes. Lots of things have been suggested from sweatshirts to concerts in the town square. Again, let us know if you have any ideas to mark this milestone in the Society.

Other news in the Woking Theatre World. Woking County Council have made a deal with the acting school, Italia Conti, to make Woking its sole base. This includes a new small (about a hundred-seater) theatre to being built behind the current box office area in the Peacocks. There will also be new rehearsal and dance areas behind the restaurant across from the box offices that may be able to be rented out to local groups. The Rhoda McGaw will be refurbished backstage, hopefully by our show, and the Italia Conti will be renting out space in the Rhoda.

Ambassadors Theatre Group (ATG) runs the New Victoria Theatre, the Cinema and the Rhoda. Woking is the only place in the country where ATG runs a cinema, professional and amateur theatre. ATG has decided that they will be handling all tickets sales for all these venues. While many have opinions on this, we rent our space from ATG and we have to abide by their decisions. This new ticketing will include a member of staff selling tickets at the Rhoda door and their staff doing front of house. We can still have members greeting and selling programmes, but the ATG staff will do all the Front of House and in theatre supervision. How the ticket sales are going to work for Rhoda's users has not been totally figured out, but the box office manager assures us there will be a plan and training on how the booking site works for us. We will let you know, as soon as we know, how to order tickets for our show, so all your friends, family and anyone else you know, can order tickets, because after all, we all want bums on seats!

It's been a long year but a short speech! I want to thank you all for being here and again, it is lovely to see you all, in person!

Finally, I would like to thank the committee, who have been working hard over the last 18 months, through many trials and tribulations, been great friends and a source of strength to me and each other, making sure everything is in place for us to keep doing what we do better than anyone, putting on great Musical Theatre!

Thank you.

## Appendix B

### Treasurer's Report WAOS MT AGM 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

#### Accounting Year 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021

- 1) Income: **+£101,160.33** (including donation from Ben Delo)
- 2) Expenditure: **-££2532.53** (including **Legally Blonde** expenditure, general overheads – insurance, rehearsal space, lib and other refunds)
- 3) Amount carried forward from 2019-2020: **£18,137.24**
- 4) Total Available Funds (as of 31. May 2021): **£116,766.04**
- 5) The Committee wishes the new treasurer's input for putting the accounts online through choosing the right format and product for the society.

	Current Year 2020 - 2021	Notes
<b>Incoming resources</b>		
Show ticket sales	0.00	2 shows
Other show income	0.00	2 shows
Settlements from ATG	0.00	
Subscriptions	145.00	
Patrons	0.00	
Donations	101011.46	Bank 1 and Bank 3 (split with Bank 2)
Other Fundraising	0.00	
Gift aid	0.00	
Other income	3.87	Other plus bank Interest on 3 accounts
Fundraiser event income	0.00	
Deposits received	0.00	
	101160.33	
<b>Outgoing resources</b>		
Production expenditure	-665.00	Rehearsal Pianist June 2020
Fund raiser costs	0.00	
Future shows expenditure	-8.70	
Exceptional items	0.00	
Administrative expenses	-1473.83	General overheads
Subscriptions refunds	-385.00	
Repaid deposits	0.00	
	-2532.53	
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing)</b>	98627.80	
Total funds brought forward	18138.24	EXCL £675 Lib Deposits
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>116766.04</b>	0.00