

# Community Players Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

## March 5, 2025

Call to Order 6:00 pm

**Board Members Present:** Matt Bogdan, Darrell Mullins, Melissa Dasher, Rusty Mumford, David Allen, Sharon Benchoff, Lynne Bratten, Kim Cuesta, Cass Dasher, Kyle Hayes, Ken Johnson, Charlie Szentesi-Thomas, Shelbie Thompson

**Board Members Absent:** Charlie Linton, Tom Robinson

**Members Present:** Brenda Allen, Bonnie Bosies, Pete Cuesta, Betsy Metzger, Kel Nagel

**Guests Present:** Veronique Diriker from Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore

### Approval of the Minutes from February 2025

Minutes were previously e-mailed to the Board and membership.

**Motion to approve as submitted by Darrell, seconded by Rusty. All responded yea. Motion Passed.**

### Guest speaker: Veronique Diriker regarding Capital Campaign

Veronique shared a Power Point presentation with tips and best practices for holding a capital campaign. She also shared information on establishing a Nonprofit Partner Fund with the Community Foundation. Kel gave his Performance Space committee report following the presentation. (See committee report below.)

### Treasurer's Report

Report previously e-mailed to the Board. A brief summary was given by Matt. No questions or comments.

### President's Report

We are an old organization with an influx of new participants. This is very encouraging.

### Committee Reports

#### **Concessions: Brenda Allen**

Quiet this month.

#### **Facilities Management: Ken Johnson**

Still a mess back there. Thanks for finding new storage locations for all the stuff previously in the now green room. The new hallway wall would have to be replaced in order to store stuff above it, so that idea will not work at this time.

#### **Fundraising: Matt Bogdan (submitted via email)**

The fundraising committee met on February 13, 2025, and discussed the following:

1. The fundraisers held since our last meeting in November 2024. These included the following: Giving Tuesday, which raised approximately \$30,000; It's a Wonderful Life, which raised over \$1100; the 50/50 raffle for A Few Good Men, which raised \$890; and Trivia Night, which raised \$785 over the past two years.
2. The upcoming Spring Craft and Vendor Fair. There is a need for volunteers to help with this event. We are also looking for silent auction items.

3. The calendar of main shows and fundraisers for 2025, which is as follows:

February

Capital Campaign Kick-off

March

March 29: Spring Craft and Vendor Fair from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Community Players' Theater

April

I Hate Hamlet (all shows to be held at Community Players' Theater)

April 4 at 7:30 p.m. April 5 at 7:30 p.m. April 6 at 2 p.m. April 10 at 7:30 p.m. April 11 at 7:30 p.m.

April 12 at 7:30 p.m. April 13 at 2 p.m.

50/50 raffle for I Hate Hamlet

May

WWII: Heroes of the Eastern Shore

May 16 at 7:30 p.m. at Players May 17 at 2:00 p.m. in Princess Anne

May 18 at 2 p.m. at the VFW in Easton May 23 at 7:30 p.m. (venue to be determined)

May 24 at 2 p.m. at American Legion in Ocean City May 25 at 2 p.m. at American Legion in Salisbury

May 26 at VFW in Cambridge

June

The Importance of Being Earnest (all shows to be held at Community Players' Theater)

June 12 at 7:30 p.m. (Players' Night) June 13 at 7:30 p.m. June 14 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

June 15 at 2 p.m. June 20 at 7:30 p.m. June 21 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. June 22 at 2 p.m.

50/50 raffle for The Importance of Being Earnest

Guest Bartending at Brew River (date to be determined)

June 27: Trivia Night at 7 p.m. at Community Players' Theater)

July

Friends and Family Feud Fundraiser (dates to be determined; to be held at Community Players' Theater)

July 25: Trivia Night at 7 p.m. at Community Players' Theater

August

Musical Review (dates to be determined)

The Lighter Side of Aging (all shows to be held at Community Players' Theater)

August 15 at 7:30 p.m. August 16 at 7:30 p.m. August 17 at 2 p.m.

August 22: Trivia Night at 7 p.m. at Community Players' Theater

September

September 26: Trivia Night at 7 p.m. at Community Players' Theater

October

October 5<sup>th</sup> annual Poe show (dates and venues to be determined)

November

Main show production (dates and venues to be determined)

50/50 raffle for November's main stage production

December

December 2: Giving Tuesday

A Gift to Remember (dates to be determined; performances to be held at Community Players' Theater)

Other potential fundraisers to add to the calendar are as follows:

tribute bands, children shows, radio plays, manning gate at winery on Easter Saturday, 8 by 10 vignettes, new directors' showcase, tech workshops, Bingo, one-act play festival

**Grants: Matt Bogdan (submitted via email)**

1. I applied for a grant for \$10,000 from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) to produce The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass in 2026.
2. I applied for a grant for \$1000 from Coastal Association of Realtors to help fund the Youth Theater Workshop in July 2025.
3. I applied for a mini grant of \$2500 from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore to help fund the Children's Theater Workshop in July 2025.
4. According to Laura Weiss, program director of Arts Services for the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC), there's not specifically any MSAC grants for me to submit at this time. The FY26 GFO application that I submitted is currently under review. Notifications for this will be sent out over the summer.
5. According to Shayne Parker, Administrative and Programming Assistant at the Salisbury Wicomico Arts Council (SWAC), there are no grants to pursue at this time. Players is in the second cycle for our operating grant. An interim report is due in June.
6. According to Sarah Branch, program director for Creativity in Community Mid-Atlantic Arts, the review process or the grant application to Cultural Sustainability: Community Roots has been extended for one month due to an overwhelming number of submissions. Grant notifications will now be sent in June 2025 instead of May 2025. As a result, the program period will now run from June 2025-June 2026.

**Historical: Bonnie Bosies**

Nothing to report

**Hospitality: Rusty Mumford**

Nothing new to report

**House: Betsy Metzger**

Since our new theater space was put together quickly for our first show, we need to work out a few things in the lobby area. What all is Betsy in charge of? Rusty -scheduling bartenders. Matt -50/50 raffle. Brittney -cleaning. Did clarified with her what all we need done before each show. Talked about moving ticket area, bar, concessions, over so entrance is not so crowded. Will have to remove a few tables. Should we keep the house closed until ½ hour before curtain? Yes. We can block hallways with screens to keep folks in the lobby.

**Lifetime Achievement Awards: Sharon Benchoff (submitted via email)**

Nothing to report.

**Marketing: Rusty Mumford**

The new website should be ready to launch in April. Need to add donate button.

**Membership: Melissa Dasher (submitted via email)**

Currently we have 193 voting members and 20 under-the-age-of-18-student members.

**Nominating: Sharon Benchoff (submitted via email)**

Sharon is in the process of contacting Board members whose terms are expiring to ask if they wish to continue and run again. She is contacting members to see if they would be willing to be nominated. If you wish to run for an officer position or for the Board or if you know of someone who would be an

asset to the Board, please contact her at [fresnelop@gmail.com](mailto:fresnelop@gmail.com). Nominations are accepted through the May meeting. Elections are held in June.

**Patrons: Kel Nagel**

No report

**Performance Space: Kel Nagel**

The back parking lot is graveled. This was approved by the Board in February via an e-mail vote. Need total costs for what we really want, and what we would like, before reaching out to donors. A check from donor C Rodney Layton for \$10,000, was mailed to our physical address, and returned to sender. Need mailing address to be clearer and easy to find on the website and in the newsletter. Do we need a physical mailbox? Kel needs more people to be on the Capital Campaign ad-hoc Committee to complete the steps presented today. All Board members encouraged to be on the committee. Date to be determined soon. This call will be in the next Newsletter.

Betsy suggested “that we need to start bringing potential donors in and show them our "digs" so we can point out what else needs to be done, our wishlist, etc.”

**Production: Darrell Mullins (submitted via email)**

The Production Committee has reviewed all submissions and met with all potential directors for a Directors' pitch meeting. Based on committee discussions as well as hearing Directors' pitches, the committee has developed a recommendation for the 2025-2026 season. That recommendation will be shared with the Board of Directors at the March 5 meeting.

**Program: Tom Robinson**

Nothing to report

**Program Advertising: Tom Robinson**

No report

**Publicity: Pete Cuesta**

We have unfortunately been given a different layout for Billboards this year. They have decreased the number we can use from 5 to 2 billboards for \$320.

Matt proposes a board on our property to promote our upcoming shows. David suggested an LED board. We have piping in place to run electricity. David will get an estimate. Pete will create something temporary using billboard / vinyl posters in the meantime.

**Scholarship: Lynne Bratten (submitted via email)**

The scholarship applications have been distributed. Just waiting for them to come back!! The completed applications will be sent to board members for review and scoring with results ready for the April meeting.

Additionally: We received the first recommendation letter today.

**Season Tickets and Box Office: Rusty Mumford**

Tickets on now sale for *I Hate Hamlet*.

**Social Media: Kate Adkins (submitted via email)**

Please continue to “like, comment and share” CPOS social media posts. Please make sure cast of all productions to engage are aware of our social and ask them to engage and share. It greatly increases our visibility online.

Our highest interaction in February on **Instagram**: on 2/06, reached 227 people, A Few Good Men Sold Out announcement

Our lowest interaction in February on **Instagram**: on 2/25, reached 47 people, I Hate Hamlet: Tickets on sale.

Our highest interaction in February on **Facebook**: on 2/14 reached 1,436 people, I Hate Hamlet: Cast List Announced

Our lowest interaction in February on **Facebook**: on 2/25, reached 153 people, I Hate Hamlet: Tickets on sale.

If you have photos to be shared on social media, please email Kate at “[mariefox18@gmail.com](mailto:mariefox18@gmail.com)” Directors, board members please send me what you want to post, I will share it.

If you have info for posting please include an image if you intend to use one, I will have to create one (Instagram requires an image to post) not an issue, it just delays the post being shared.

### **Old Business**

#### **1. *A Few Good Men* performances Feb. 7-9**

All receipts are in Net \$19,700

#### **2. Use of Square for credit card payments**

Set up to add to new website, create QR code

#### **3. Bartender Training held Feb. 6**

Seven people completed this training.

#### **4. Director’s Pitch meeting was held on Feb. 27**

All potential directors who submitted shows for consideration for next season were presented. They pitched their shows and answered questions from the Production Committee and Board members.

#### **5. Meeting with Steve Dow, Possum Point Players’ president on Feb. 24**

Matt met with Steve to collaborate – one idea is a one act play festival, take turn hosting.

#### **6. Auditions announced for WWII show**

March 6 at 7 p.m. and March 9 at 2 p.m.

#### **7. Discussion of wants and needs for theater**

Two refrigerators are here. **Motion by Rusty to order an extra shelf for each, if can find out where to order, seconded by David. All responded yea. Motion Passed.**

### **New Business**

#### **1) Update on *I Hate Hamlet***

Casted and fully blocked

#### **2) Update on *WWII: Heroes of the Eastern Shore***

While it will be free to attend, we are accepting donations. The venues are very excited to host. It is a documentary of people from the Eastern Shore who served. Matt will send a copy of the script so far to the Board. Will include a WWII band. 1 hour in length.

#### **3) Update on Spring Craft and Vendor Fair**

We have 40 + vender so far, with a maximum of 50. Help is needed the day before to set up out back and 2 shifts the day of (9am-4pm). Inside will be silent auction. The event will run from 10-3. The rain date is Sunday.

#### 4) Update on needs and wants for the theater

- a) Tom Robinson submitted via email 3 estimates for repair and a motion to use estimate #2.  
**Motion amended by Rusty that we accept estimate # 2 from Peninsula Roofing for \$73,100 after we received approximately \$125,000 from the donation and sale of a piece of property by the Robinsons, seconded by David. All responded yea. Motion Passed.**
- b) Can we build a concession/bar stand before next show? Pete will come up with a drawing/plan.

#### 5) Update on Children's Theater Workshop

Grant of \$500 received from Coastal Association of Realtors to help with costs of workshop.

Cass is now the chair. The team met over Zoom. They discussed holding two week-long camps. The first for children going into grades 3-8, July 13-14, capped at 25 students. Alexa may direct again, but if she cannot make it work then Cass will direct. They again want to pay 3-4 counselors and continue with the same format as the past 2 years. They discussed adding a second week for teens going into grades 9-12, July 21-25. Rusty will be directing, and they want to pay 2 counselors. This workshop will be more intensive with a focus on final performance. Cost will remain at \$200 / \$150 for Players' members. Questions to consider - Can we do the Friday show later in the evening? Can the Teen Week have more than 1 show? Trivia night on July 25 is canceled. **Motion by Cass to do 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop for teens, seconded by Melissa. All responded yea. Motion Passed.**

#### 6) Need for new social media committee chairperson

Kate Adkins is resigning from the position. Kim Cuesta will take over role, she requests a job description. Matt asked Kate to create one.

#### 7) Other new business

- a) A 4H group hung the pictures on the new wall.
- b) Worcester Co Library in Berlin is holding a Hobby Fair on March 15.. We are setting up a table. See Cass if you would like to help.
- c) **Motion by Rusty to offer Will Townsend a base Patron membership for as long as he maintains our new website, seconded by Sharon. All responded yea. Motion Passed.**
- d) Saturday at 10am, set building and warehouse cleaning. All are encouraged to help.
- e) Production Committees 2025-2026 Season recommendations.  
November - *Annie* directed by Sherri Trader-Hines  
February - *Misery* directed by Devin La Femina  
April - *The Welkin* directed by Kim Cuesta & Robin Finley  
June - *1776* directed by Sharon Benchoff  
Darrell will send a memo to the Board tomorrow along with the scripts.  
Thank you to the committee.
- f) **Motion by Darrell to permit the All-County Musical to borrow microphones in April, seconded by David. All responded yea. Motion Passed.**

**Next Meeting is April 9 at 7 pm.**

**Motion by David to adjourn, seconded by Rusty. All responded yea. Motion Passed.**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm.**