

MINUTES OF AGM OF THE HASLEMERE PLAYERS
Held on Sunday 15 August 2021
In the grounds of Beacon View, Hindhead, home of Debbie Bowyer

Hamish welcomed 28 members to the meeting.

1.APOLOGIES:

Mary Coyte, Hannah Lucas, Adrian Stent, Michael Byrne, Judith Reading.

2.MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, which had been displayed on Players' website and were taken as a true record of that meeting and duly approved by Hamish (President) and Pamela (Secretary). It was agreed that the Minutes and Statement of Accounts should be available a week before the meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING AND CORRESPONDENCE: Nothing relevant to report.

4.TREASURER'S REPORT: Read by Vicki in the absence of Mike Byrne.

Vicki commenced by saying that Mike sends his apologies and had asked her to read his report on his behalf. The 20/21 Accounts have been completed, checked by our independent examiner, Nigel Oldham and signed. Mike expressed thanks to Vicki for supporting him through his first year as treasurer and Hamish for such a clear accounting model.

The backdrop (as if we need reminding!)

2020/21 has been a year of no performances due to COVID. This brought with it challenges but made the accounting straightforward and low maintenance.

Our income of £2,719 was almost entirely from membership subs. This compared to prior year income of £47,933 and our expenses of £7,184 were largely due to fixed overhead costs albeit we did receive relief on some of these. This compared to prior year expenses of £39,525.

The result for the year, not unexpected given the circumstances, was a loss of £4,466 vs. a prior year profit of £8,408.

Whilst the storm has been weathered, we very much look forward to getting back to business as usual.

Overall, the 2020/21 result is £13k worse than the prior year. Key contributors to this are:

Shows in the 2019/20 year netted a £2.6k loss. It is worth noting that this loss was primarily due to £4k of Legally Blonde costs. (+£2.6k)

Member and patron fees, donations and associated gift aid were down by £700 vs. prior year (-£700)

Income from social events and fund raising was down by £700 (-£700)

Income from costume and prop hire was down by £3.0k (-£3.1k)

A grant was received of £10k from Waverley in the 2019/20 year (- £10k)

We purchased a share of a new lighting desk at the hall (-£2.6k)

NODA and insurance fees were reduced by £400 (£400)

Studio costs were reduced by £500 (£500)

The Balance Sheet remains strong with Net current assets - £77,104

In Summary

Mike reported that the financial year just passed has been an odd one and one that he was sure no-one wanted to see repeated.

As a society, we have survived and we remain financially stable with a strong balance sheet which will allow us to continue to perform and put on shows as usual.

We benefited from a COVID grant last year which we have been frugal with however, it did allow us to make an investment in a share of long awaited and performance enhancing lighting desk, along with the Hall and the Haslemere Thespians!

Some of the variances to prior year mentioned earlier should make us grateful to our society, committee and volunteers:

For the considerable contribution made from prop and costume hire in normal times

For the ongoing support of our members through their membership subs and gift aid even during a year where there were no performances.

For some very general audience members and friends who make occasional donations to support the society – thank you Mrs Bradshaw!

About the future

As mentioned, we are financially stable and well positioned for performing in the coming year.

Showstoppers has already been and gone and despite the social distancing with a percentage of ticket sales being donated to the Haslemere Hall, we are still on track to make a small profit.

Legally Blonde is back on track for October and with some of the costs already accounted for in the 2019/20 accounts, we hold out hope for a profit.

Mike said that we are of course in the hands of the Government and the pandemic rules. These currently look encouraging – we are all here after all – but Mike said we should rest assured that even should the positive situation reverse, we will do our very best to protect the Society for the future.

Mike was thanked for his comprehensive report

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Vicki said that as already covered in Mike's speech, it had been one very strange year, certainly not one any of us could have anticipated. So, firstly, it was lovely to see everyone in 3D. Vicki said that when she started working from home in March last year, she remembered telling Chris Lloyd that she had just brought everything from the office as she could be working at home for as long as THREE WEEKS. At the time Chris Lloyd said he thought it would probably be closer to three months....and here we are 17 months later....and despite many restrictions having been lifted, life continues to be very different.

Vicki continued that with no shows to report on, the members would be pleased to hear that it would not be too long until we could all be tucking into sandwiches and cakes and dealing with the important business of socialising.

Before that though, Vicki wanted to look back at all we HAVE managed to do, despite all the challenges along the way.

The committee have continued to meet every six weeks or so on zoom and plan to continue to use zoom for meetings, particularly over the winter. She thanked all the committee for their support during the year.

A big thank you to our social team, Fiona and Becca McGregor and Arran Treacher-Evans for putting together two great themed quiz nights for Christmas and Easter (despite Arran's terrible jokes), as well as a brilliant bingo night. Vicki said she still did not know how Hamish won so many lines (4 out of a possible 12!) but she had been assured that no money changed hands.

We were also able to come together, if not in person, then virtually for the two "Players Sing" videos, Mamma Mia and Rhythm of Life. Mamma Mia raised £1,000 for the Shooting Star children's hospice in Guildford and Rhythm of Life has so far raised £685 for Haslemere Hall. Vicki reported that The Just Giving link on the website was still live so anyone feeling generous could still contribute. She expressed a huge thank you to the team that pulled these recordings together, Chris Snelling for arranging the music and sorting out all the backing tracks for us to sing along to, Adrian Stent for his video editing skills, Verity Foster for her choreography and Hannah Lucas who joined the team as project manager for Rhythm of Life. They were both great achievements and a great way to stay in touch and involved during lockdown. She also thanked everyone who took part. Both songs had their challenges and it was great to see both of them again in our recent Show Stoppers.

Vicki continued that, as with any year, there is always sad news to report. In late 2020 we said farewell to Ian White who was a backstage regular as well as appearing in many Music Hall barbershop quartets. Then, in our June 2021 newsletter, Linda reported that his wife Elaine had also passed away. Graham Chester, Elizabeth Chester's husband, lost his battle with cancer on 13 June. Whilst Graham did not appear on stage, he regularly helped front of house and with scenery and was even sometimes persuaded to help backstage. Lastly, Richard Tytler was lost to Alzheimer's and Motor Neurone Disease on 24 May. Richard had appeared in no less than 68 Players productions and had taken many leading roles. Everyone who knew Richard will have their favourite. He was also on the committee for many years, 5 of them as chairman and could regularly be seen helping with scenery. Thank you to Fay Foster who wrote a wonderful tribute for the newsletter.

Vicki also wanted to take a moment to thank Linda Donaldson for continuing to produce such a great newsletter and keeping us all up to date. Looking back through the last year's newsletters Vicki had re-read news of Jonathan, Christine and Peter Foster's baking adventures in Polperro, Cornwall, and wonderful desert island disks from Doreen Wylde and Bob Cantan.

Vicki considered that we had done a great job of keeping in touch. However, there is one last thing before we move on to cake....sorry....sandwiches, then cake. She had thanked the committee earlier but had not mentioned that Sally Barr, who has served on the committee in a variety of roles....as treasurer, social secretary

and heading up our marketing over, I think, at least 14 years, is stepping down so she would like to say a particularly heartfelt thank you to Sally for all her support in her many and varied roles. Vicki finished by saying that that was really all that there was left to say, so here is to the coming year and may it prove to be slightly more “normal”.

6. SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Acting members £30, Students and non-acting £10, Patrons per family £20.

It was suggested that members should have the option of a subs ‘holiday’ as no shows have been presented or intend to be presented for this year. It was pointed out that we still have ongoing expenses, e.g. upkeep of the Studio, etc. and subs paid on a voluntary basis would be much appreciated.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

At present the officers and executive committee members are:

President: Hamish Donaldson. Chairman: Christopher Lloyd. Treasurer: Vicki Gavin, Secretary: Pamela Depledge.

Present members of the Executive Committee: Sally Barr, Mary-Lou Knox, Jane McMichael, Verity Foster, Fiona McGregor, Andy Johnston,

Vicki explained the roles of committee members. Fiona as vice chairman and social events. Sally governance and marketing. Mary-Lou Wardrobe. Alex researching show selection together with Verity and Tony Creasey, Arran and Adrian. Hannah will be moving to Cambridge but will continue to join meetings on ZOOM. She also covers Face Book and social media.

Debbie Bowyer continues to cover publicity with local papers and magazines and Carolyn Lane art work, programmes, posters, etc.

Andy Boughton proposed that Arran serve on the Executive Committee which involved the taking of a vote by the members present. Voting sheets were supplied to facilitate an anonymous vote. Arran was duly voted on to the committee together with the rest of the committee members, apart from Andy.

8. AUDITOR: Mr Nigel Oldham has agreed to continue as our Independent Examiner.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Vicki suggested that Sally Barr, who is standing down from the committee, be elected a Life Member in view of her long service with the Haslemere Players in various roles. This was unanimously agreed by all present and accepted by Sally.

Hamish thanked everyone for attending the meeting which was closed at 1pm (1300 hours).