

**HOUSTON BALLET FOUNDATION**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**MINUTES**  
**Margaret Alkek Williams Dance Lab**  
**Monday, May 20, 2019 at 4:30 pm**

**Call to order:**

The Houston Ballet Board of Trustees meeting was held in the Margaret Alkek Williams Dance Lab of the Center for Dance in Houston, Texas on Monday, May 20, 2019. The meeting convened at 4:32pm.

**Quorum:** achieved (per by-law requirements)

**Trustees Present:**

Mr. Cecil H. Arnim III, Mrs. Melza Barr, Mr. Gary V. Beauchamp, Mrs. Kristy J. Bradshaw, Ms. Lindsey Brown, Mrs. Wendy Wilkins Burks, Mr. Richard L. Burlison, Mr. Tripp Carter, Mrs. Amy LeBlanc Cloud, Mrs. Lilly Cullen, Ms. Sasha Davis, Mrs. Sharon Erskine, Mrs. Jo Furr, Mr. Mitchell George, Mignon Gill, Sandra S. Godfrey, Mrs. Anne Graubart, Mr. Joseph A. Hafner, Jr., Mr. Jesse H. Jones II, Mr. James M. Jordan, Mrs. Elizabeth Leykum, Mrs. Kelley S. Lubanko, Jean E. May, Mr. Daniel M. McClure, Mrs. Martha Rocks McMurrey, Ms. Nancy Powell Moore, Ms. Beth Muecke, Mr. James M. Nicklos, Mr. Gene J. Oshman, Mrs. Cabrina Owsley, Mr. Michael S. Parmet, Mr. James J. Parr, Mrs. Macey Reasoner, Laura M. Robertson, Mrs. Leigh M. Smith, Ms. S. Shawn Stephens, Mr. Nicholas L. Swyka, Mrs. Allison Thacker, Stephanie Tsuru, Mrs. Phoebe Tudor, and Mrs. Elizabeth R. Zdeblick.

**Members Present:**

Carl Cunningham

**Guests Present:**

Dancer Representatives: Kathryn McDonald and Bridget Kuhns

Orchestra Representatives: Nancy Nelson and Spencer Park

**Staff Present:**

Jim Nelson, MJ Bavaret, Patsy Chapman, Kelli Gilson, Lucy Graham, Lindsey Hurst, Angela Lane, Angela Lee, Andrew Nielsen, Jennifer Sommers, Christine Stone-Martin, Alexandra Yates, and Cheryl Zane.

Ms. S. Shawn Stephens offered welcome remarks and called to order the Annual Meeting of the Members.

The sole item of business for the Meeting of the Members was the election of the Trustee class of 2019-2022. Mrs. Allison Thacker, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, presented the proposed class of 2019-2022. A motion was made to approve the proposed class. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. The 2019-2022 class of trustees includes the following new members: Mrs.

Lenore K. Burke, Mrs. Lilly Cullen, Mrs. Stephanie Fleck, Mrs. Allison Flikerski, Mignon Gill, Mr. Herschel Hamner, Ms. Michelle Jeffery (Guild Treasurer), Mrs. Elizabeth Mata Kroger, Joshua B. Nix, Mrs. Christine Underwood, and Mrs. Kelli Weinzierl.

Ms. Stephens adjourned the Annual Meeting of Members of the Houston Ballet Foundation and invited the members to stay for the continuation of the Annual Meeting of Trustees.

The first order of business was the election of the 2019-2020 Executive Committee officers and members-at-large. A motion was made to approve the proposed slate of officers and members-at-large. This motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Mrs. Thacker thanked Mrs. Melza Barr, Richard K. McGee, Mr. Michael S. Parmet, and Mr. Nicholas L. Swyka for their eight years of service on the Executive Committee. She also thanked Casey Rowe for her year of service on the committee as Guild President and lastly, recognized Ginni Mithoff for concluding her time on the Board.

The next order of business was the approval of the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting on February 11, 2019. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

Ms. Stephens introduced Mr. James M. Nicklos, Vice President of Finance, to present for approval Houston Ballet's budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020. This budget had previously been recommended by the Finance and Executive Committees for approval. The motion was unanimously approved by the Trustees.

Ms. Stephens then called upon Mignon Gill to provide an update on the Houston Ballet Guild. Mignon provided details on the success of the inaugural Spring Spectacular Market which was held on April 12-14, 2019 and gave an overview of the Guild Board, financials, membership, member events, and volunteer opportunities. Mignon concluded her presentation by recognizing several Guild members for their dedicated service.

Ms. Stephens thanked Mignon for her report then gave an update on Special Events. Ms. Stephens reported the record-breaking Raising the Barre which was held on Sunday, April 28, 2019 and raised more than \$100,000, making it the most successful in its history. Ms. Stephens thanked and offered congratulations to Chairs Amy LeBlanc Cloud, Jeremy Cloud, and Honorary Chair, Beth Muecke, for a successful event. Ms. Stephens also recognized presenting sponsor, BB&T.

Ms. Stephens then highlighted the Opening Night Onstage Dinner taking place on September 6, 2019, chaired by Mr. Jesse H. Jones II in honor of Mrs. Lynn Wyatt. Ms. Stephens concluded her special events report by advising trustees and members to save-the-date for the February 2020 Houston Ballet Ball chaired by Elizabeth and Nick Zdeblick with Honorary Chairs, Phoebe and Bobby Tudor.

Ms. Stephens then invited Mr. James Nelson to give the Executive Director's and Artistic Director's reports.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Nelson began his report by offering thanks for the outpouring of support shown to Stanton Welch during his time of loss and grief and introduced Lucy Graham as his new Executive Assistant and Board Liaison.

Mr. Nelson proceeded to provide a Strategic Plan update. Mr. Nelson gave a comprehensive overview of all six strategic priorities as well as a detailed year-in-review of the 2018/2019 season including total number of performances, tours, World and Houston premieres. Mr. Nelson also highlighted Academy student registrations, Education & Community Engagement impact, and the organization's continued commitment to access, volunteers, and awarding scholarships.

Mr. Nelson noted the passing of long-time trustees William J. Hill and Lora Clemmons.

Following the Executive Director's report, Mr. Nelson provided some artistic updates. He noted the promotion of Nozomi Iijima to Principal and shared the news that First-Soloist Linnar Looris and Principal Jared Matthews will be departing the Houston Ballet for new roles at the Estonian National Ballet. Mr. Nelson also announced Naazir Muhammed's nomination for the 2019 Princess Grace Award.

Mr. Nelson then showcased the various HBII promotions for the 2019/20 season as well as the five new HB company hires.

Mr. Nelson concluded his report by thanking the Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, event chairs, honorees, Ms. S. Shawn Stephens, and Mrs. Allison Thacker, and invited Tom Bosma to join him onstage to introduce a character dance performance by students of the Houston Ballet Academy.

Ms. Stephens thanked Mr. Nelson for his report and reminded attendees that Board packets will be mailed in June and are to be returned by July 31.

**Adjournment:** With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:18 pm.