

Houston Ballet Foundation
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
MINUTES
Monday, February 7, 2022

Call to order: The Houston Ballet Board of Trustees Meeting was held virtually via Zoom web-conference on Monday, February 7, 2022 in Houston, Texas. The meeting convened at 4:30pm.

Quorum: achieved (per by-law requirements)

Trustees Present:

Dr. Julia D. Andrieni, Mrs. F.T. Barr, Mrs. Diane Bazelides, Ms. Ann Bean, Mrs. Susan Binney, Mrs. Leslie Blanton, Mrs. Kristy J. Bradshaw, Ms. Lindsey Brown, Mr. James Cowan, Mrs. Molly Crownover, Ms. Sasha Davis, Mr. Bastiaan de Zeeuw, Sharon F. Erskine, Mrs. Martha Finger, Hon. Charles C. Foster, Mrs. Kate Fowler, Mrs. Jo Furr, Mr. Mitchell George, Mrs. Mignon Gill, Mr. Jeremy Griggs, Mrs. Donald M. Graubart, Mr. Herschel Hamner, Mrs. Nancy Ferguson Haywood, Mrs. Winell Herron, Ms. Gillian Hobson, Ms. Michelle Iversen Jeffery, Mr. Jesse H. Jones II, Mr. James M. Jordan, Mrs. Russell C. Joseph, Natasha Khan, Elizabeth Mata Kroger, Ms. Jennifer Kushner, Mrs. Elizabeth Leykum, Mr. Mark Loveland, Mrs. Kelley S. Lubanko, Mr. Jerry Martin, Mr. Joseph A. Matula, Mrs. Jean E. May, Mr. Daniel M. McClure, Mrs. Kris McGee, Mr. Shane A. Miller, Tammy Tran Nguyen, Mrs. Cabrina Owsley, Mr. James J. Parr, Mr. Ron Rand, Macey Reasoner, Laura M. Robertson, Mrs. Akemi Saitoh, Ms. Samira A. Salman, Ms. Elizabeth Schwarze, Mrs. James Shaffer, Dannika E. Simpson, Mrs. Leigh M. Smith, Dr. Liliana Soltero, Ms. S. Shawn Stephens, Mrs. Ileana Treviño, Stephanie Tsuru, Mrs. Phoebe Tudor, Mrs. Christine M. Underwood, Mrs. Margaret Alkek Williams, and Mrs. Elizabeth R. Zdeblick.

Staff Present:

MJ Bavaret, Ermanno Florio, Kelli Gilson, Lucy Graham, Lindsey Hurst, Rachel Koenig, Angela Lee, James Nelson, Megan Raines, Kristi Roberts, Jennifer Sommers, Stanton Welch AM, and Alexandra Yates.

Guests Present:

Orchestra representative Christina Carroll, Dancer representative Fernando Martin-Gullans, Ms. Toni Wilson, and Mr. David Ruiz.

Mrs. Leigh M. Smith welcomed everyone and called to order the Meeting of the Board of Trustees. Mrs. Smith welcomed new advisory trustees – Mrs. Martha Finger and Tammy Tran Nguyen.

With a quorum present, the minutes from the Board of Trustees held on September 20, 2021 were approved.

Mrs. Smith then recognized and thanked Ms. S. Shawn Stephens and Mr. Jesse H. Jones II for co-chairing two successful fundraising campaigns over the past two years.

Mrs. Smith proceeded to give a special events report.

Following this, Mrs. Smith announced the Lauren Anderson Young Dancer Scholarship Fund.

Then, Mrs. Smith invited the IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, and access) Board working group to provide an update on their work. The members in attendance included Mrs. Leigh M. Smith, Ms. S. Shawn Stephens, Mrs. Kristy J. Bradshaw, Mr. David Ruiz, Mr. Jim Nelson, Mr. Stanton Welch, and Mrs. Rachel Koenig. With support from IDEA consultant, Ms. Toni Wilson, the group presented the IDEA Board Statement which was accepted by the full board.

Following IDEA updates, Mrs. Smith invited Mr. Jim Nelson to give the Executive Director's report.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Nelson began his report by noting plans to return to in-person board meetings in March.

Then, Mr. Nelson congratulated Mrs. Lucy Graham on her recent transition to the development team, and introduced Ms. Laurel Rowe, who will assume the position of Executive Assistant & Board Liaison effective February 14th.

Mr. Nelson then shared the success of the subscription campaign which met and exceeded its budget for the season. He also provided a comparison of *Nutcracker* sales over the past ten years, highlighting the success of the 2022 run with a 91% capacity average along with a high average ticket price.

Following this, Mr. Nelson commented that Japan tour planning is at a standstill due to the ability to enter the country because of COVID-19. A final decision on possible tour postponement is forthcoming.

Mr. Nelson then invited Mrs. Mignon Gill to give an update on the 2021 Nutcracker Market.

Mrs. Smith thanked Mr. Nelson for his report and invited Mr. Stanton Welch AM to provide the Artistic Director's report.

Artistic Director's Report

Mr. Welch began his report with updates on the upcoming reps-*Jewels* and *Sylvia*, and highlighted the confirmed collaboration with Dance Theatre of Harlem for rep 5.

Mr. Welch then welcomed newest Houston Ballet Principal Dancer, Skylar Campbell, and announced that Ballet West Principal Dancers Beckanne Sisk and Chase O'Connell will be joining Houston Ballet in the FY23 season. Following this, Mr. Welch announced four HBII promotions to the company for the FY23 season.

Additionally, Mr. Welch shared a preview of FY23 season programming, and concluded his report with a video highlighting solos choreographed by a few company dancers.

Mrs. Smith thanked Mr. Welch for his report.

Adjournment: With no further new or old business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:22pm.