

**The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company  
Board Meeting**

**August 3, 2020**

In attendance were: Wally Benbenek, Alexander Gerchak, Stephen Hage, Shawn Holt, Barb Hovey, Malka Key, Anna Maher, John Orbison

This Board Meeting was conducted via Zoom and was called to order at 7:34 pm.

The board held a discussion regarding ways to increase the diversity of The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company, understanding that to do so is a long-term commitment.

Cast:

The GSVLOC is committed to diversity in casting. We need to ensure that our Directors are aware of that commitment. The issue of concern will be striking a balance between casting those who are known commodities, those who demonstrate the greater abilities and the goal of diversity.

We will strive to write our audition notices to encourage greater diversity in those auditioning.

We could consider posting audition notices with groups such as ALMA and Twin Cities Theater of Color Coalition, as well as with theaters of color such as Penumbra, Mu Performing Arts, Teatro Del Pueblo and Full Circle Theater Company.

Alexander Gerchak will research to determine what other organizations and theater companies may be resources for recruiting.

A challenge that we face is that people of color with the talents we require are often recruited by MN Opera and other organizations who can pay more.

Production Staff:

Our company retains a significant number our Production Staff members. We could make a greater effort to hire Production Staff members who are people of color, as positions open up.

Orchestra:

Orchestra replacements and subs are found by orchestra member word of mouth, as well as who Ann Marie or Randy know. We need to make sure that they are aware of the GSVLOC's commitment to diversity, including diversity in the orchestra.

Board:

Diversity on the Board will occur through the course of time, building as G & S increases its diversity through the cast and/or production crew.

We could consider instituting term limits to increase the flow of membership within the Board.

We could consider instituting Board members “at large,” mentoring them for Board membership for specific positions in time.

Two Show Seasons:

Two show seasons, allow for the potential of more diversity as replacements will need to be found as some regular cast and production staff members chose not to do both shows.

Actions:

Alexander Gerchak will draft a letter to affiliation groups.

Stephen Hage will talk to Randy Buikema regarding his thoughts regarding more diverse casting and orchestra member recruiting, etc.

Wally Benbenek will talk to Lesley Hendrickson regarding her thoughts regarding more diverse casting, etc.

The next Board Meeting will be scheduled for mid-September, based on availability to be determined by a Google Poll which Malka will issue.

Topics to be Discussed at September Board Meeting:

Sales force for Non-profits (a free data base, but would need to buy the ticketing platform)

Discuss drafting a survey asking people about their experience with our group, allowing them to speak their mind, offer suggestions, etc.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Shawn Holt