BAY CITY PLAYERS PLAYREADING COMMITTEE POLICY

Adopted March 11, 2019

Mission Statement:

BAY CITY PLAYERS IS A VOLUNTEER-BASED COMMUNITY THEATRE DEDICATED TO PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY THEATRICAL EXPERIENCES FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT, EDUCATION, AND ENRICHMENT OF THE COMMUNITY.

BAY CITY PLAYERS PLAYREADING COMMITTEE GUIDELINES 2019 PURPOSE

The purpose of Bay City Players Play-reading Committee is to select a Season of Shows that satisfies Players’ needs, which are to:

• Maintain Players reputation for theatrical quality in play selection and production.

• Maintain Players “Mission Statement” to “entertain, educate and enhance” within every season.

• Make a profit after paying all show related expenses.

PROCESSES

• A Facebook group site will be used for discussions regarding play selection.

• All committee members will have read plays given serious consideration before voting on a season slate. The only exception made is if a perusal of a musical is not available or if the musical is well known by all committee members.

• The Play-Reading Committee will consider a diverse themed show for each season within the five slots.

• A strong effort will be made to prepare a slate for the following season as well as the slate being worked on. Those shows might serve as backup choices should the Board request changes from the presented slate.

• Play-reading is welcome to execute surveys from audiences which will seek play suggestions, changes, and/or improvements for the committee.

• To accommodate a knowledgeable response from the Board, the committee chairman in co-ordination with committee members will prepare a report to the Board containing detailed background regarding each play and a brief statement suggesting how the season fulfills the Mission Statement to accommodate a knowledgeable response from the Board. The ultimate decision regarding season selection lies with the Board.

PLAY SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

Quality

• Is it a well-written play? Are characters interesting and well-drawn?

• Will the play be interesting enough to attract actors and directors?

• Does the play provide an element of interest and variety to support a thoughtful and balanced level of entertainment?

Actors/Directors/Crew

• Does Players have access to a competent pool of volunteers that can fulfill the requirements of the show both on stage and behind the scenes, for example: cast size, ages, genders, ethnicities, skill levels? • Will the pool of potential talent understand thoroughly all production requirements to create a successful show for a Players audience?

GUIDELINES FOR SEASON SELECTIONS

Each Season should follow this format. Any desired change in format should come before the Board for consideration well in advance of the season slate being presented.

Show #1 – The Fall show needs to be capable of drawing large numbers of patrons. Large attendance brings people who will purchase Flex Passes when they like the show. Small-scale musicals and popular comedies are excellent choices.

Show #2 – The Board determined the December/holiday show will be a recognizable family-oriented show. It may or may not have a Christmas theme. Selections should ensure adult members of families will be entertained as well as children.

Show #3 – The January/February selection should consider this show usually has the lightest attendance of the year. A show to encourage people to come out of the house in cold weather is a possibility. And a show with unusual staging or an adult theme could fit well into this slot. Of course, a drama, comedy, mystery, or revival would be a comfortable choice as well.

Show #4 – The March selection is an ideal place to balance the season. Working with Show #3, this is an opportunity to aim at Players’ Mission Statement seeking to educate and enhance the community and Players’ reputation as well. The coming of spring also suggests possible selections.

Show #5 – The final show of the season not only completes the season but also serves to sell the most Flex Passes for the coming season. It should be recognizable to Players’ patrons and able to draw large numbers of audience members outside those subscribing. Big scale musicals are often an excellent choice for this slot.

Play Reading Selection Committee:

The Play Reading Chairperson(s) and an external board member will solicit applications no later than two months prior to the New Year, will review them and choose the most qualified applicants to fill the open positions. In no way shall the Chairperson(s)'s and the external board member's decision on selection be swayed by personal preference of one applicant over the other. Once the open slots are filled by the chairperson(s) and the external board member, and prior to the first meeting in January, a complete list of new members for the coming year will be presented to the existing members of the Play Reading Committee.

Terms:

It is important to encourage fresh perspectives into the play reading process. While we appreciate the insightful input play reading has received over the years from our play reading veterans, we also need to bring new ideas and different viewpoints into the mix. For this reason, we are recommending that members of the Play Reading Committee serve 3-year terms. Members who leave after their term has expired must remain off the committee for at least 1 year. The Play Reading Chairperson may serve a 3-year term unless the committee members agree to keep the Chairperson and/or Co-Chair for an additional three years.

Committee Size:

The Committee is not to exceed 9 members with a minimum of 7. This does not include the Chairperson and/or the Co-Chairperson

Expectations:

Committee Member Expectations

• Attend Play Reading meetings. Members are allowed 2 absences. More than 2 and they are off the committee. Attendance at the meetings is critical to allow for a thorough and complete understanding of the play selection process. If a members’ attendance is spotty or irregular, they miss the benefit and insight of committee discussions, research and background information. Extenuating circumstances for additional absence will be explained in writing and given to the chairperson for consideration.

• Members will participate faithfully in Facebook Group discussions regarding playreading activities. If unable to participate online, then the member will provide Play Reading Chairperson with their input in writing. Any committee member not on-line is responsible to acquire the on-line materials.

• Members will fill out completely the Play Reading Review Forms, one for each play they wish to be considered by the committee.

• Each member will read all Play Reading Review Forms and be prepared to discuss and ask questions.

• Each member will read the FULL PLAY that is being seriously considered for a season. Play Reading

Committee Chairperson Expectations:

• Keep the committee on task during the meetings.

• Provide members with equal opportunity for input.

• Order necessary materials, i.e., Sample scripts, well in advance.

• Seek out persons or groups with expertise in theater production to help answer questions or concerns the committee may have regarding plays under review. For example, people with expertise in set design, costuming, sound, stage management, direction, lighting, props etc.

• Set the agenda for each meeting that will foster open discussions, set time limits, when necessary, follows the Play Reading Calendar.

• Provide Bay City Players Board with a monthly report that includes the nature of discussions, issues being considered, timeline updates.

• The Play Reading Committee Chairperson must implement the Play Reading Guidelines with vigorous intent at every opportunity and every meeting.

Play Reading Committee Calendar

January

• Begin researching plays for next season beginning with the Fall and Spring shows.

• These anchor shows could set the theme and balance for the season • Fall show – small scale musical, popular comedy

• Spring show – big scale musical

February

• Review, discuss, possible selections for Fall and Spring Shows

• Consider adding selected shows to following seasons. Create more than 1 slate of shows to be considered for future seasons and perhaps alternates to next season.

March

• Begin to narrow selections for Fall and Spring Shows with identified titles under consideration

April

• Finalize Fall and Spring Show selections and begin working on selecting shows for other show slots.

• Dec – family/holiday show

• Jan/Feb – straight drama, edgy, chestnut, mystery

• March – comedy, farce • Summer production???

May

• Finalize Fall and Spring Shows

• Work on remaining season

June

• Continue to work on open slots reviewing shows with these considerations: Do the selections provide balance to the season? Are the selected plays well written? Are characters interesting and well-drawn? Is the play interesting enough to attract actors and directors? Is there an accessible pool of talent to meet plays’ requirements i.e., Cast size, ages, genders, ethnicities, skill levels?

July

• Continue to work on open slots reviewing shows with these considerations: Do the selections provide balance to the season? Are the selected plays well written? Are characters interesting and well-drawn? Is the play interesting enough to attract actors and directors? Is there an accessible pool of talent to meet plays’ requirements i.e. Cast size, ages, genders, ethnicities, skill levels?

August

• Begin to narrow selections for remaining shows with identified titles under consideration

September

• Begin to finalize a season of shows.

• Begin working on Board presentation for slate of shows approval with consideration for how the shows might satisfy Players’ needs to: o Make a profit o Maintain Players reputation for theatrical quality o Maintain Players “Mission Statement” to entertain, educate and enhance

October

• Present a slate of shows for next season with a special Board Presentation. Board votes on Play Reading recommendations or makes suggestions.

• Provide sufficient background for each play selected including: o Play requirements – set, costume, music, technical, directing/acting talent pools o Marketing – how potential marketing strategies will be implemented, usual cards, posters, logos etc., special tie-ins to sponsors or events o Budget - What are the budget requirements for each show, production costs orchestra, costume, sets etc. o Audience Favorability – How will each show satisfy and entertain the typical Players audience or draw in a new audience?

November

• A final Board vote on season if necessary.

December

• Chairperson will not hold a meeting unless the board has sent the slate back for a second time. If the slate has been voted on it would be suggested the Chairperson host a small gathering as a thank you for the committees work throughout the year.

Revised: May 2021