

MINUTES OF THE CAODS AGM ON TUESDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2017

39 Members Present

1. Our President, Gill Plumtree, welcomed everyone to the meeting on behalf of the Officers and Committee.
2. The President asked the Secretary to state the apologies. There were apologies from Ray Jeffery, Rachel Curren, Charlotte Broad, Cheryl & Warren Jennings, Joyce Fisher, Maggie & Martin Burgess, Caroline Escott, Andrew Wallis, Sue Wilkinson, Patsy Page, Karen Whitehead, Stephanie Yorke-Edwards, Amanda Parsons, Katie & Claire Mason, Mary Heath, Emma Escott.
3. There were no matters arising from the previous year's minutes. Robyn Gowers proposed the acceptance of the minutes and Angela Broad seconded.
4. Matters Arising from the minutes
Open Auditions CC said that we did discuss on the Committee, we decided not to have them in 2017 but we could put back on the agenda for 2018 if the members wanted us to do it. The committee had spoken to both Directors regarding this topic, both didn't really mind but RJ was less reluctant. Diana Easton asked why RJ was reluctant, CC said that he wasn't reluctant he would just prefer not to have an open audition. CC felt that we needed a stronger push for that to happen. John Snell asked what the point of having open auditions? CC explained that for some people it helps their own technique and it makes the rest of the cast understand the decisions that are made for casting people in particular roles. CC also said that it can cause problems because more people have strong opinions and it can cause more difficulties. Robyn Gowers had done both but didn't really have an opinion on whether one way was better than the other. Angela Broad said it can depend on the rules as to how successful they are. Alison Wilton said that it should go out to the acting membership as there were not enough acting members at this meeting to make a decision. Kieran Bacon suggested that this issue could go out as a vote to the whole membership. Tracey Perry disagreed as the date of the AGM is always the same and that members should be here to discuss. Gill Plumtree said that we should be able to discuss it at the AGM and make a decision. Becki Wendes suggested that if we decided it at the meeting then the general membership would come next year if they knew that this type of decision would be made at the AGM. CC said that we would discuss at the next Executive Committee meeting and make a decision.
5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – See attached report.
6. TREASURER'S REPORT – See attached report.
7. The accounts were proposed for adoption by Tracey Perry and seconded by Diana Easton, all were in favour.
8. The auditors, J Halliday, were proposed for adoption by John Sullivan and seconded by Robyn Gowers, all were in favour.
9. ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT - CC asked if Gill Plumtree would be happy to stand again for the ensuing two years. She was and all were in favour. CC thanked Gill for supporting the society and her hard work being such a wonderful Ambassador.
10. ELECTION OF THE SECRETARY, Gill explained that the two officer roles were now on different years so we wouldn't lose both of them at the same time. Mandy Parsall proposed

Keeley Denman seconded. All were in agreement and CC thanked her for all the hard work that she puts in for the society.

11. ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – CC explained that there were no members of the Executive Committee due to re-stand for election, however there were 4 members standing down: Kim Anderson, Jessica Broad, Diana Easton and Brad Wendes, CC thanked them for their hard work. CD explained that we had 2 nominations, Kieran Bacon and Stephanie Yorke-Edwards and they would automatically be filling the roles. Therefore there were two spaces still to fill, the Executive Committee could therefore co-opt two members throughout the year if the need arose. Gill thanked the whole Committee and explained that the members would not have the opportunity to be on the stage with CAODS without the work that the Committee continually put in.
12. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES – See attached report.
13. CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY / SAFEGUARDING POLICY - CC introduced the two policy documents, they had taken a long time to put together and would cover absolutely everyone involved with CAODS including members, staff and helpers. These policies would be introduced with immediate effect.
CC read out the brief summary and explained that they were being brought in to protect children and vulnerable people.

As is sadly prevalent these days within the news and day to day life, concerns regarding the safeguarding of children and young people is a matter that organisations need to accept and manage internally. Protocols within voluntary amateur theatrical societies are no different and NODA now fully encourage its members to ensure that it knows how to deal with these issues formally.

In the same way that Essex County Council governs the regulations for the use of under 16-year olds in our productions, the Executive Committee fully accept the need for CAODS to internally devise and manage a new 'Safeguarding Policy' for whenever we have children or young persons in our productions or indeed, when on the premises at rehearsal or at the theatre.

The introduction of a Safeguarding Policy is therefore designed to protect not only the children and young people, but also the society's members, staff and the society itself from any allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour towards children.

We have therefore devised this Policy document which we would like to introduce as part of the Rules of the Society, along with a new 'Code of Conduct Policy'. Both these policies would be introduced with immediate effect if agreed by the membership at the AGM in December.

The Code of Conduct Policy runs alongside the Safeguarding Policy and endeavours to ensure that all members, staff and supporters of CAODS achieve and maintain a high standard of conduct and behaviour during their time at the society. This policy is again encouraged by NODA in an effort to help and support all individuals to behave in a manner deemed acceptable within the society, along with fair and consistent treatment for all.

Both documents are attached for your consideration in advance of the AGM.

The Executive Committee would therefore like to propose the introduction of these policies as a new rule, as follows:

Rule 21. All members will adhere to the CAODS Code of Conduct Policy and CAODS Safeguarding Policy.

CC explained that there was a change 'in red' since the documents had been sent out to the membership, as suggested by Tony Carpenter because it was made clear to us that you can no longer chaperone unless you have had a DBS check. This document was now on the members' area on the website for review.

The section now reads:

Potential voluntary sector chaperones must hold a current Disclosure and Barring Services Certificate (DBS) before a Chaperone Licence application is submitted. The Safeguarding Officer or Chairman of the Society will process the DBS application form for the role of voluntary chaperone – and scan with all the required information, including two referees to the Child Employment Team when an enhanced DBS check will be made.

Lynette Sullivan raised the query that the policy could possibly change in the future so we should include something in the wording to allow for the documents to change from time to time. Keeley Denman said that these checks could take a long time so we should possibly get these in place so we always had someone that had the checks in place. JP explained that NODA were now organising DBS checks through the NODA system which would be easier and we would get a group of members through to see how easy it was. Becs Dixon said that if you have just had a check you do not need to get it re-done, Stephanie Yorke-Edwards would be coming back on the Committee and has experience so would be able to help work this out. Becki Wendes raised the query that someone needed to be responsible for the cast adhering to the policy. CC said that this could possibly sit with the production team. Robyn Gowers said that the production team could be too busy to keep a watch and wouldn't necessarily want the responsibility. CC said that we could look at it on a show by show basis and see who on Committee etc had the appropriate checks in place. There should be enough Committee involved in each show to manage it so the production team don't have to get involved. Tracey Perry said that you could now get a 3 month volunteer DBS check – the Committee would investigate. Frank Parsall asked if the parents would be made aware of this. CC said they would be informed, the parent could be present or a chaperone could be there and you would normally need someone at both sides of the stage.

The proposed wording would therefore read:

Rule 21. All members will adhere to the CAODS Code of Conduct Policy and CAODS Safeguarding Policy. The Executive Committee reserves the right to make changes to the Policy as and when required.

All were in favour.

14. SHOW FEE WORDING AND SHOW FEE REFUND DEADLINE – To have the ability to increase/decrease the show fee and giving out refunds for show fees. We had had cast changes and we were put in a position to give out refunds for show fees and that there was nothing in the rules. CC read out the following statement to explain the details:

The current wording in the rules regarding show fees reads as follows:

"All members participating in a show will have to pay a show fee, this subscription rate will be determined in a General Meeting of the Society (the current rate is £35.00). This fee shall be paid before the auditions".

With the cost of productions ever increasing and varying from show to show, the Executive Committee would like to propose adjusting the show fee wording to allow for some flexibility for show fees to be set at a different level if need be. The change in wording will allow the Executive Committee to at least be able to consider what the show fee needs to be whilst ensuring that it remains competitive against other societies. This change will mean that the

fees are no longer agreed by the membership at the Annual General Meeting going forwards, but with the Executive Committee for each production.

We would also like a rule regarding refunds of show fees to be introduced, in that show fees will only be refunded within two weeks of the auditions should a cast member decide to withdraw from the show. For example, we had numerous people dropping out of 'All Shook Up' at various times (including some months into setting) and refunding show fees at this late stage had a huge impact on our budgets. The Committee feel that two weeks is an acceptable amount of time post auditions.

Therefore, we propose the new wording to be:

"All members participating in a show will have to pay a show fee, this subscription rate will be determined by the Executive Committee of the Society. This fee shall be paid before the auditions and only refunded within two weeks of the audition should the member withdraw from the show."

The Committee would like to propose that show fees would not be refunded once two weeks had passed from the audition date. CD explained that she had completed some research on how expensive other societies were to join and some of this detail was discussed. Diana Easton raised the query if people would only choose the cheaper shows. Becki Wendes said that we could have a capped amount at say £70. Robyn Gowers said it would be important for the members to know the other costs that would be involved before the audition date and the Director would also need to be aware. There was a discussion around this and would there be a blanket rule for all or would we consider individual circumstances. Membership agreed that a blanket rule would be so much easier and avoided a feeling of unfairness and inconsistency. Tracey Perry said that we should keep the lower limit of £35 show fee as a lot of previous Committees had worked hard to set it up in the first place. All were in favour of a two week refund deadline and for a capped amount of £70 show fee. So the rule now read:

Rule 12 (end of...)"All members participating in a show will have to pay a show fee, this subscription rate will be determined by the Executive Committee of the Society but will be no less than £35 and no higher than £70. This fee shall be paid before the auditions and only refunded within two weeks of the audition should the member withdraw from the show."

15. 100 CLUB – DY said that we currently had 117 members which was down from last year. 100 club paid for some extra bits for the Fundraiser adding up to £58.17. It was in a very healthy position at the moment. DY completed the draws and the results were: £30 December – Maria Richards, £20 – Pat Burt, £10 – Pat Burt. Christmas Draw £50 – Leslie Salmon, £75 – Warren Jennings,
16. AWARDS – CC hoped that everyone felt that the new awards were a good idea since the Betty Worrell Award had not been used for a long time and it was felt that sadly was no longer relevant.

The Committees 'Society Member of the Year Award' was presented to John Sullivan for his extra work on the technical side, sound and being an all-round great member.

The members 'Member of the Year Award', we had lots of votes and nominations and Natasha Lesley was voted for her enthusiasm and willingness to get involved, being a great team member, helping on publicity and help with dance captain role in 2017. Sadly Natasha was not able to attend the AGM so would be given her award at a rehearsal.

Two Life Membership Awards - the first award was presented to Lynette Sullivan, she joined in September 1972 for Pirates of Penzance, had been on stage as Principal, dancer, ensemble over the years and Wardrobe Mistress. The second was awarded to Russell Day who joined the Society in May 1967 for Flower Drum Song as Honorary Stage Crew, he then went on stage for Pickwick, always helping at HQ, crew, front of house and generally being part of the furniture and supporting CAODS for all these years. Congratulations to you both.

17. AGM DRAW FOR 2018-19 MEMBERSHIP – The lucky winner was Diana Easton.
Daly Dining Draw winner was Fae Goldsworthy.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – CC explained that, this year, we had asked for comments and questions for AOB via an anonymous response system. Thanks were given to CE for organising. We had had a lot of responses which was great. Copies of these had been left on seats for review prior to and during the AGM. CC asked if anyone would like to discuss any of the questions or comments, but no comments were raised. Therefore, if there is any feedback from the question and responses sheet after the meeting then please send these in to the Committee.

There was no any other business for discussion.