

Region III - AACT Board of Directors' Meeting

Minutes
April 5, 1997

I. Call to Order

The board of directors' meeting of the Region III AACT Organization was called to order by Chairperson Bob Miller at 10:33 A.M. in the rehearsal hall of the Quincy Community Theatre, Quincy, Illinois.

Chairperson Bob Miller, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, introduced the members of the board present. John Falkenbach, Ohio; Joanne Berry, Michigan; Joanne Notz, Illinois; Barbara Rowell, Region III Representative; and Secretary Frank Peot, Wisconsin.

II. Approval of the Minutes of the May 18, 1996, meeting.

Secretary Frank Peot read the minutes of the May 18, 1996, board of directors' meeting.

Item IV. Region III, Festival 1997, was corrected to reflect Michigan voting "yes," rather than Ohio voting "yes" twice.

MOTION --Joanne Berry/John Falkenbach The motion was made by Joanne Berry and seconded by John Falkenbach to approve the minutes as corrected and read. The motion passed.

III. Readoption of By Laws

Chairperson Bob Miller announced that all corrections and additions had been made to the By Laws which were approved at the May 18, 1996, meeting. These corrections were only grammatical and syntactical. He circulated a copy of the By Laws for Board Members to sign and date indicating their acceptance and approval of the By Laws of the Region III AACT Organization. A copy of these By Laws is attached to these minutes.

IV. Report of the Regional Representative

Barbara Rowell, Region III Representative, welcomed everyone to Quincy and the Region III AACT FEST '97. She introduced herself and commented on Quincy Community Theatre. Quincy Community Theatre is celebrating National Community Theatre Week in April by selling two different bumper stickers reading: "QCT Actors Do It On Stage" and "I Volunteer for QCT."

Barbara shared information on the International Festival which she received from Larry Nielsen. Sixteen international companies will be performing in Benton Harbor, MI, on June 24 - 28, 1998.

Geoff Leonard, Advocacy Chairperson for AACT, shared information on National Community Theatre Week. He said this is a time for us to "blow our horns" and really celebrate the impact of Community Theatres in our own communities. He had bumper stickers advertising National Community Theatre Week available for \$1.00 each.

V. Report and Comments of the Chairperson

Chairperson Bob Miller reported that he has been able to attend all of the state festivals in Region III this year. Only one of the five festivals was held in a community theatre building. The others were held in high school or college auditoriums. Each festival was substantially different in some way. He felt that even if every festival had been identical the results would have been the same.

Bob further reported that the board, by mail ballot, had adopted the *Handbook of AACT FEST* for use in conducting our 1997 festivals.

VI. Resolutions and Recommended Changes to *The Handbook of AACT FEST*.

MOTION Joanne Notz/John Falkenbach The motion was made by Joanne Notz and seconded by John Falkenbach to adopt all of the resolutions as set forth in the agenda.

This motion provided for discussion of the resolutions individually for vote of the board.

Resolution A: Resolved: AACT Region III recommends that AACT publish a separate manual addressing only those issues that pertain to state festivals. The manual as it stands is confusing and complicated. It is a guideline for use by the states at their festivals. It lets groups continuing know what the format of regional and national festivals will be. It is not something being forced upon the states. This motion passed unanimously.

Resolution B: Resolved: AACT Region III requests that all items contained in the state rules be reexamined with the intention of determining whether each item of requirement does impact on the equality of opportunity of the state winner at regional competition and that, if no inequality is thereby produced at the regional level, the rule under consideration will be deleted as respects the conduct of a state festival. This would only simplify the state manual, keep it short, and much more understandable. This motion passed unanimously.

Resolution C: Resolved: Region III recommends that AACT Fees for entry into state festivals be reevaluated both as to propriety and amount. Many felt that no fee should be charged by the national for non members. Is this a state option or a requirement? Geoff Leonard commented that AACT is the only national organization that he knows that does not require a national membership to participate in competitions leading to national activities. Jill Patchin commented that these fees go to AACT for what the organization does for the state festivals. Jill Patchin suggested board members poll their states for further input on this question. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution D: Resolved: Region III recommends that adjudicators not be barred from hearing each other's comments during festivals. Joanne Berry restated the rule as it now stands. Comments were basically against the motion. Wally Smith felt good adjudicators will not repeat themselves, but be able to go on to other important points of the production. The motion was defeated: 1 for, 4 against.

Resolution E: Resolved: Region III requests that the definition of a community theatre be reconsidered to clarify eligibility in the festival process. Interest has been expressed by many in the region concerning the number of youth and children's theatres participating. The feeling was expressed that this festival is for adult community theatre. Jeff Springgay commented that the youth are the future of our community theatres and should be included. This is asking for a clarification of the definition of a community theatre. The motion passed: 3 for, 2 against.

Resolution F: Resolved: Region III recommends that the principle of equality of opportunity replace the sports analogy of level playing fields in the production of rules affecting the states in the region. The motion passed: 3 for, 2 against.

Resolution G: Resolved: Region III recommends that the region may determine on vote of their board of directors, to adopt a permanent policy of permitting two entries from a state which has ten or more participants in its state festival. The qualifier then being the ability of the regional host to accommodate the additional performances. This motion passed unanimously.

Resolution H: Resolved: Region III recommends that the timing for determining time slots for performing companies be made after the last state registration deadline date rather than before the first state's festival. This would help in festival planning and scheduling on the regional level. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. New Business

The following resolution was brought to the floor by the membership:

It has come to our attention that one of the adjudicators for the 1997 National AACT FEST is a member of the AACT festival commission. This adjudicator has not recused himself from meetings where discussions of 1997 festivals and entered productions have taken place. We believe this to be a breach of the "level playing field" concept and a direct violation of Section IV-A-6-f paragraph 2 of the 1997 Handbook of AACT FEST.

To insure fair judgment at the national festival we ask that one of three things be done from this point on:

1. All adjudicators at the national level be excluded from any meeting of the AACT Festival Commission and any other AACT meeting where there is a chance of a festival or a festival production being discussed until after ballots have been cast for the national festival.

2. Any adjudicator at the national level attending a meeting as described in point 1 be removed from their position as a national adjudicator and another adjudicator substituted.

3. The ballot of any adjudicator at the national level who has attended a meeting as described in point 1 be discarded and **not** be tallied in determining any place rankings at the national festival.

If AACT expects participating groups to follow established rule or be disqualified, AACT must demand the same compliance from their adjudicators, especially at the national level. Even the appearance of prejudicial treatment, prior knowledge, or discussion of a production in violation of the handbook sullies the reputation of both the festival and the organization that permitted it.

Chairperson Bob Miller commented that he did not feel this was the job of Region III and that the itemized factors should be eliminated. A friendly amendment was suggested to eliminate the words "and any other AACT meeting where there is a chance of a festival or a festival production being discussed." This amendment passed unanimously and will be passed on to AACT.

The secretary was instructed to present all of the resolutions of this meeting and the groups decisions to the AACT Festival Commission, Executive Director, and President.

VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Region III AACT Organization Board of Directors will be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, during the national festival. Meeting time and place will be mailed to all board members and published for Region III members.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting of the Region III AACT Organization Board of Directors was adjourned at 11:55 A.M.



Frank Peot, Secretary

Copies of these minutes were sent to all board members, alternate board members, and the state organizations within the region.

Additional copies of the resolutions were sent to AACT's Vice President for Festivals, Paula Sharum; AACT Executive Director, Julie Angelo; AACT President Ron Ziegler; and AACT Executive Vice President Jon Kerkhoff.