Sterling Opera House Commission
Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
Monday, January 12, 2026
6:05 p.m.

Received
JUL 22 2026
Derby, CT Town Clerk's Office

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. A temporary chair was required for the meeting. Brian Coppolo nominated Gino DiGiovanni to serve as temporary chair. The nomination was second by Dana Florenza The motion was carried unanimously, and **Gino DiGiovanni served as temporary chair.**

2. Pledge of Allegiance
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call
Members present included Dana Florenza, Gino DiGiovanni, Brian Coppolo, Carleigh, Paecht and Karleen Guluzzy.
A quorum was present.

4. Approval of Minutes
The Commission noted that there were no December minutes because the December meeting had been canceled, and minutes from previous months were still pending. A **motion** was made to table approval of minutes by Brian the motion was **second** by Dana. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Portion
The public portion was opened. A member of the public asked whether the Commission had received an update from the firm preparing the assessment. The Chair stated that the matter would be discussed later in the agenda. There were no additional public comments, including from participants attending via Zoom.
motion was made by Dana to close the public portion.
seconded by Carleigh. The motion was carried unanimously, and the public portion was closed.

6. Election of Officers
Chairman
Nominations were opened for Chairman. Dana nominated Gino DiGiovanni for Chairman, noting his long-standing involvement with the Commission and his role in advancing the Commission's work since its inception. The nomination was second by Brian. There being no further nominations, a motion was made by Carleigh and seconded by Dana to close nominations. The motion carried unanimously.

With no objection, one vote was cast for the sole nominee, Gino DiGiovanni. The vote carried unanimously, and **Gino DiGiovanni was elected Chair.**
DiGiovanni thanked the Commission and stated that it had been an honor to serve as part of the Commission from the beginning. Brian Coppola also thanked Dana for her role in initiating and supporting the project.

Vice Chairman

A motion was made by Dana and seconded by Karleen to open nominations for Vice Chair. The motion carried unanimously. Gino DiGiovanni nominated Brian Coppola to serve as Vice Chair. Dana seconded the nomination.
There being no further nominations, a motion was made by Karleen and second by Dana to close nominations. The motion carried unanimously. With no objection, one vote was cast for the sole nominee, Brian Coppolo. The vote carried unanimously, and **Brian Coppola was elected Vice Chair.**

7. Committee Updates

The Commission noted that most updates would be addressed under New Business. It was reported that the firm was finalizing its assessment and related information.

8. New Business

Steinberg Hart Assessment and Final Presentation

Gino DiGiovanni reported that the Commission had received an email update from Evan, the project manager from Steinberg Hart. The firm continues to work on assessment and market analysis and expects to provide scheduling information for a final presentation. The Chair stated that the information has been gathered and is being compiled, with the hope that a final or near-final product may be available by the next meeting.
The Chair explained that the assessment process has included review of HVAC, utilities, ductwork, structural conditions, and design options. He noted that the building never had combined heating and ventilation, and that roof-mounted units were not considered feasible or cost-effective. The Commission expects to schedule a formal presentation once the firm is ready.

Fly System Discussion

The Commission discussed the proposed theater Fly System. The Chair stated that a Fly System would be included, but that it would be scaled appropriately for the venue's intended uses rather than designed for full Broadway-style productions. Brian Coppola stated that the system should support a variety of events, including comedy shows, small musical performances, and similar programming.
The Chair explained that installing a Broadway-style Fly System would require substantial structural modifications, including work from the basement upward, new footings, foundations, and steel support columns, and would displace areas needed for HVAC equipment. He stated that the proposed system would meet the venue's needs and

support lighting, audio, speakers, and related equipment without requiring extensive structural reconstruction.

Fundraising Events

Karleen reported that she is exploring future fundraising events, including a possible cabaret-themed event at Twisted Vine. She stated that several performers in the arts community have expressed interest in donating their time to support the Opera House. The event would likely include ticketed admission, with food and beverages available for purchase separately.

The Commission discussed ticket pricing and noted that the prior walking tour had a strong turnout, though pricing may have been somewhat high. Brian Coppola offered to research comparable cabaret-style events at nearby theaters and provide pricing information for future discussions.

Karleen also expressed interest in holding another walking tour when the weather improves, potentially in the spring or summer. She noted that materials from the prior tour are available and could be reused, making a future tour easier to organize.

9. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting was scheduled for Monday, February 9, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The Chair stated that the Commission would be updated by email regarding the status of the Steinberg Hart presentation and any related scheduling.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business,

Motion was made by Karleen to adjourn.

Second by Dana.

The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Desroches