



**Haliburton
Highlands
Arts Centre
Foundation**

HHACF AGM President's Welcome Message - AGM 2021/22

Good evening and welcome all to our 2021/22 AGM and Feasibility Study reveal.

Although it might not have shown publicly, the Haliburton Highlands Arts Centre Foundation's fiscal year 2021/22 has been the most active yet (and, spoiler alert, 2022/23 is already on track to out do it).

The board had one main goal starting out Summer 2021: commissioning a Project Feasibility Study. A comprehensive study of this nature is vital to the kind of large-scale capital project we're envisioning. Beyond answering many questions and unknowns, it's the due diligence needed to open doors to large-scale public, private and corporate funding. We won't know what to build if we don't know what kind of performing arts centre is feasible in the Haliburton Highlands.

Via an RFP process, the HHACF hired the firm of Janis A. Barlow & Associates to execute the study and they quickly got to work in October. Stakeholder interviews and surveys were conducted with many in attendance here tapped for their thoughts. Candidate and wish-list locations were discussed and visited. Usage numbers and requirements began to surface which would inform the scope of a potential centre - size of the performance hall, number of seats, rehearsal space, green rooms, ancillary functions and more.

A vision for a performing arts centre was beginning to materialize - David's expert theatre technicians at Novita Techne created space and function diagrams showing relationships between rooms. Square footages were estimated to include even hallways, stage wings, space for specialized piano storage, mechanical closets and double door entries for sound- and light-proofing.

Meanwhile, Janis and Rebecca worked with the Foundation's board to form our strategic plan, mission, vision and values. What kind of arts centre do we want to be? What would be our education mandate? How would we interact with local and external arts presenters? Would we be simply a rental facility or producing our own content and shows? What do we want to be to Haliburton County? Some questions were quick to answer - while others will take time to shape and mold.

Next came one of *the most* anticipated moments of the HHACF (so far): getting a first glimpse at what the design team at Yallowega Architecture did with all of the data, numbers and functional requirements. Upcoming phases of the project are going to need something to inspire donors and funders at the potential and possibilities of the project. A little eye candy, if you will. Rick's team asked us for words and feelings to describe what the Haliburton Highlands are. We could barely wait to see what they created and the excitement on that Zoom call was palpable, let me tell you.

I'm sure you're all excited to see this for yourselves - just as much as we are to reveal it to you. So enough talk about arts centres, studies and stuff.

Let's talk about us - the board. We've been basically flying under the radar, but we've been hard at work. Building partnerships, speaking with stakeholders, starting a Founding Sponsor program and touring comparable arts centres in Peterborough, Huntsville, Orillia, Richmond Hill and Parry Sound. You might be following our progress via social media, or as a subscriber to our newsletter and press releases. Maybe you've seen some big cheque photo-ops in our local papers - and for that we give heartfelt thanks to both Canoe FM and Home Hardware for their generous sponsorships!

But do you really know who we are? While you can read our bios on our website, we thought we'd share a little pitch from each of us. Let's start with our newest board member, Maryssa Danilko, a big proponent of dance in the Haliburton Highlands - why does she believe in a new performing arts centre?

Her belief that music satisfies your soul is one that carries her through life and has now encouraged this enthusiasm in her community. Maryssa has been involved in the Highlands for the last 10 years, while engaging in the arts community with DH3 - Dance Happens Here Haliburton; whereby arts and culture are presented. She desires an Arts Centre, not only for the thriving arts community near and far, but for her own children to embrace what the community has to offer.

Up next, creative powerhouse Justin van Lieshout - what does a new arts centre mean to him?

We need to create more opportunities for youth engagement in the arts in Haliburton County. A new performing arts centre in the region will open doors and create brand new experiences.

Royal Conservatory piano teacher, fundraiser and boundless enthusiasm, Dorothy Stavrinou joined us just as the Project Feasibility Study was started - what motivated her to join the HHACF?

Building a Centre that encapsulates all the Arts from the education side to live performances, young and old, novice to professional, excites me!

This level of 'community involvement' allows growth in so many aspects of healthy living that I feel so proud of being a part of!

Bringing with him a career in arts sponsorships and feasibility studies, Drew Allen strongly feels that the HHACF's mission is a worthwhile one -

There are so many bands and singers who pass the region by due to a lack of suitable performance spaces. A new hall could see us tap into a touring market of great Canadian and international talent we'd otherwise have to travel hours to see in person.

Beth Kipping's love of voice and theatre is well known in the community - why does she think the timing is right for this project?

I have performed and worked in the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion for 15 years. As a family grows, so has our Performing Arts Community and it has become abundantly clear that due to this fantastic growth we need a larger Facility. I am proud to be a part of HHACF to help make that happen.

Tammy Rea, well known for being a big proponent of film and media.

A performing arts centre for Haliburton can be a place where national and international storytellers, performers, musicians and filmmakers can come and enchant us, and in turn, allow our own local creators to provide a world for our community, especially our youth, and to then create, produce and perform.

Feeling perfectly at home on just about any theatre stage, Michael Clipperton sees the broader picture of the impact of the Arts.

At the height of the Blitz during World War II, Winston Churchill was asked why the government wasn't diverting all Arts funding into the war effort. Churchill's response was the following: "Then, what are we fighting for?"

The Arts are an essential element in creating a healthy and prosperous community. HHACF will be a springboard to economic, social, mental and physical well-being for many of the residents of Haliburton County. Drop a stone into a pond, and the ripple effect is infinite.

Wil Andrea has been with the HHACF since its very beginnings - though currently on leave, the Foundation's mission isn't far from her heart.

We truly need to make a new Arts Centre in Haliburton a reality; it will be the venue Haliburton County deserves as a community for performances, events, musical education and rehearsal space for the many music groups and musicians in the County.

Finally, there's me

The Haliburton Highlands have always punched above its weight - someone once told me this and it's stuck with me. We've also become victims of our own success -but I can't take credit for that quote either. What I might want is that perfect reverb when the orchestra plays the final thrilling chord of a symphony and that ever so brief moment of silence that follows before everyone exhales.

So there you have it - the team behind the HHACF. If you feel as passionate about a new performing arts centre in the Haliburton Highlands, please reach out to any of the board members you see here.

Let's get on with the AGM proceedings - we're all very excited to the star of the evening.