

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES,
OF THE HOUSTON BALLET FOUNDATION**

September 29, 2025

Call to order: The Houston Ballet Meeting of the Board of Trustees was held in the Margaret Alkek Williams Dance Lab on Monday, September 29, 2025, in Houston, Texas. Mrs. Stephanie Tsuru called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Mrs. F.T. Barr, James Leader, Mrs. Kristy J. Bradshaw, Ms. Gay Currie, Mignon Gill, Chad Libertus, Mr. Daniel M. McClure, Ms. Andrea Medina, Mrs. Cabrina Owsley, Mr. Kent A. Schaffer, Ms. S. Shawn Stephens, Mrs. Allison Thacker, Stephanie Tsuru, Mrs. Phoebe Tudor, Ms. Leslie Alston, Mrs. Kyle Baker, Mr. Nicholas Baran, Ms. Ann C. Bean, Dr. Patrick Bengé, Mr. Walter Bering, Michael Bertuccio, Mrs. Susan Binney, Ms. Zoe Cadore, Mr. Michael Collins, Mrs. Margaret Vaughan Cox, Ms. Sasha Davis, Mahalia Doughty, Sharon F. Erskine, Mrs. Jo Furr, Mrs. Marianne Geagea, Mrs. Twana Griffith-Faykus, Victoria Gutierrez, Mrs. Nancy Ferguson Haywood, Ms. Michelle Iversen Jeffery, Mrs. Jayne S. Johnston, Mr. James M. Jordan, Ms. Amy LeBlanc, Ms. Judy Liu, Mr. Mark Loveland, Mrs. Kelley S. Lubanko, Ms. Michelle Maresh, Mrs. Jean E. May, Mrs. Kris McGee, Ms. Beth Muecke, Mrs. Patti Murphy, Ms. Melissa Reihle, Mrs. Akemi Saitoh, Ms. Samira A. Salman, Mr. Aaditya Satija, Mrs. Tricia Singer, Mrs. Leigh M. Smith, Mrs. Alicia Smith, Amelia X. Zhang Esq.

STAFF PRESENT: Brittany Broussard, Julie Kent, Rachel Koenig, Sonja Kostich, Angie Lane, Kristi Roberts, Jennifer Sommers, Simon Thew

GUESTS PRESENT: David Connor, Tyler Donatelli, Samuel Rodriguez

Mrs. Stephanie Tsuru welcomed everyone and invited everyone to recognize this season's new trustees. With a quorum present, the minutes from the May 20th meeting were approved.

SPECIAL EVENTS REPORT

Mrs. Stephanie Tsuru congratulated the Onstage Dinner chairs and honorees on a record-breaking event. She then reviewed upcoming special events for the season including the Nutcracker Market, Ballet Ball, and Raising the Barre and shared her excitement for the Spring Nutcracker Market, returning in April 2026.

Stephanie then invited Chad Libertus to provide information about the Board's IDEA Committee.

Chad invited Trustees to join the IDEA committee, noting that its purpose is to ensure that leadership—specifically Sonja, Julie, and Stanton—remains accountable for upholding Houston Ballet's commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access throughout the organization. In addition, he noted the vital role that trustees play in recruiting and cultivating a diverse set of trustees to serve Houston Ballet.

Stephanie thanked Chad then invited Ms. Sonja Kostich to give the Executive Director's report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Kostich began her report by welcoming Trustees to the first Full Board meeting of the fiscal year and extending a special welcome to new Trustees. She expressed gratitude for the warm reception she has received and noted her growing understanding of the Company's operations. Ms. Kostich also emphasized her commitment to keeping these meetings engaging and encouraged Trustees to raise questions or suggest topics for future meetings.

She then reviewed the August month-end financials, noting that the Company is tracking as anticipated and exceeding expectations in most categories, consistent with previous years during comparable timeframes.

Ms. Kostich provided an update on ongoing Academy year-round registration and shared progress on two new initiatives: the proposed Houston Ballet Center for Wellness, which remains under contract review and preliminary market research into a potential satellite Academy location.

She also shared that Houston Ballet now holds full ownership of the "Nutcracker Market" trademark following a successful reapplication supported by Vinson & Elkins LLP.

In closing, Ms. Kostich expressed gratitude to the Production and Dancer Underwriters for their support of the 2025–26 season and highlighted additional opportunities for Trustee involvement throughout the year.

Mrs. Stephanie Tsuru thanked Sonja for her report and invited Mrs. Julie Kent to begin the Artistic Director's report.

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS' REPORT

Ms. Kent began her report with a recap of Houston Ballet's summer tour to Japan. She noted the tour's success and shared that the Company performed mixed repertory programs featuring *Clear*, *Velocity*, and excerpts from *Sylvia*, *Sons de L'âme*, and *Madame Butterfly*, along with multiple performances of *Giselle* in both Tokyo and Nagoya. Ms. Kent also noted that several Trustees and guests, led by Angie Lane and Lindsey Hurst, joined the Company in Tokyo.

She continued her report by highlighting Houston Ballet II's summer performances at the Chautauqua Institution, as well as additional Company programming there.

Ms. Kent reported on Houston Ballet's participation at Eisteddfod in Australia, where Ms. Jennifer Sommers provided a recap of the Company's presence and representation abroad.

Ms. Kent also shared updates on the Ucross residency and on recent performances of *Onegin* and *Rock, Roll and Tutus*.

In conclusion of the Artistic Report, Julie invited Jennifer Sommers to provide an update on the upcoming sensory-friendly Nutcracker performance. Following Jennifer's remarks, the Academy performance was introduced.

Mrs. Stephanie Tsuru thanked the students for their performance and invited everyone to the reception following the meeting. She then welcomed any old or new business, and with none, the meeting was adjourned.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 p.m.