

PAM'S funding shortage result of lack of vision, acumen and attention

Last week, failing to make payroll, the leadership of PAM finally got around to requesting that the bankruptcy court judge release \$250,000 from over a million dollars in the endowment funds to cover the school expenses over the summer.

According to the *Intelligencer Journal New Era*, “The troubled Pennsylvania Academy of Music says it is too cash-strapped to cut paychecks. To tide it through until students return to the fall, PAM asked a judge to let it tap its \$1 million endowment.”

Non-payment of staff has gone on for two weeks while the board and leadership dithered, failing to make the request for freeing up of funds on hand that should have been filed within days of the seeking protection under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Act. The very purpose of the Act is to provide liquidity to enable businesses to continue to operate. To file for Chapter 11 and not then seek relief under it is inexplicable.

The current distinguished and well meaning leadership not only is unfamiliar with the business challenges at hand, but their time is consumed by other pressing matters unrelated to the Academy... in the case of board president Dr. Holmes Morton, sometimes matters of life and death. Also much time has been devoted to “inventing the wheel” and chasing theories rather than spending a few hours reviewing the records of the Business Committee that advised the previous board and debriefing those involved.

Concerning a proposed move in 2011 to the Brunswick Annex, a non-musician Board member

told *NewsLanc*: “This project is far beyond the reach of current Board of PAM, technically & financially.” Had they sought help from others with the expertise, the effort could be underway.

Two things:

1. The only way a non-profit institution devoted to the arts can function properly is through dual leadership – art and business – and support from philanthropists.
2. The proper goal is to achieve a level of annual deficit that can be covered through contributions from supporters. In PAM's case, that means raising \$250,000 a year through grants and private donations, not over \$1,500,000 as was the situation in the past.

The view of PAM's leaders: Until current activities can be funded, talk of the future would be misperceived by the community as inappropriate and unsound. Furthermore, they believe that PAM must have a balanced budget to move forward.

They do not comprehend that current relatively modest funding needs would be swiftly met if potential major donors had a sense that the school would continue and might ultimately achieve its full potential. Given a good location and a viable plan and the right person to place the calls (not the **Watchdog** for obvious reasons), adequate funding probably could be raised on five phone calls.

INTELLIGENCER NEW ERA:

A feature article “**The state of AIDS in Lancaster, Fastest-growing group locally: middle-age, heterosexual women**” reports “*With more than 47,000 new cases in 2007 (these are the most recent figures available), according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the disease is still being spread — the age group between 13 and 29 being the largest, according the CDC.*”...

“The [Lancaster General Comprehensive Care Medicine -LGCCM] provides medical treatment, education, counseling, testing and referrals for more than 500 HIV/AIDS patients in Lancaster. About 80 percent of these patients are heterosexual and have contracted the disease through high-risk sexual contact or intravenous drug use, whereas the other 20 percent contracted the disease through high-risk homosexual contact...”

WATCHDOG: Sorry, we don’t buy into what appears to be more LGH propaganda spread uncritically by the Lancaster newspapers.

First of all, LGH refused to fund the Urban League’s proposal to operate a full service, expanded syringe exchange here in Lancaster. Its

purposes would be to help the estimated 5,000 to 10,000 heroin addicts to obtain treatment, and to prevent the spread of disease by testing for HIV / AIDS, providing clean needles to prevent sharing, and distributing both male and female condoms. (A decade old small scale exchange continues to operate weekdays from Bethel AME church’s office building at 450 E. Strawberry Street, funded by the publisher of *NewsLanc.*)

Secondly, despite good work of the above mentioned independent LGCCM, LGH’s own Suboxone clinic is a virtual sham, operating only half a day a week with a single physician and thus seeing at most a score of patients, many of whom previously had been treated elsewhere in the hospital.

Although a daily clinic would be cost effective in the big picture and of great service to the community, LGH’s interest seems to be to maximize show while minimizing expense, since only a portion of its costs are reimbursed through government programs.

So sad... considering the long term cost and human tragedy that could be avoided.

The ‘fat lady’ has not yet sung re end of recession

In his travels, the **Watchdog** hears from bankers, business executives, and others that they are not yet seeing strong signs of a recovery.

It is also apparent that the effects of the Recovery Act are finally being felt, as projects evolve from the planning stage to implementation. For example, travelers encounter construction activity (and often delays) on virtually every major highway.

The big question is what happens when this close to

a trillion dollars is spent? Will the incipient upturn screech to a halt or will we have succeed in “*priming the pump*” for recovery?

One thing we do know. Although balancing the budget and reducing deficits is an important long term goal, it is economic insanity to try to do so now. This is what was done during 1937 and it brought about a plunge into an even worse depression than earlier in the decade.

**The above have been excerpted from NewsLanc.com.
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