

# Candidate statement: Mike Walker

It would be an honor to serve the CCPA again at this important juncture for the Hall. I owe much of where I am within my career to my experience with the Hall, and am excited to offer some cultivated skills in order to help with its re-emergence, transition and expansion. I believe that, with a proper process in place, everyone's passion, experience and vision can combine to drive the CCPA toward a fuller expression of its Mission. I'd love to be a part of that.

My tenure with the CCPA/W.O.W. Hall in the '80s and '90s was intense and deeply immersive on all levels: performing regularly on the stage; serving on the Board of Directors, most notably on the Personnel Committee during some difficult transition times; and working on staff as publicist, house manager, and other roles. This was a particularly transitional time, and under the new leadership of Fran Chylek I rebuilt the marketing systems, founded the still-active *Notes From The Center*, translated a lot of our systems from paper to computer-based platforms, and -- most impressively -- hired Bob Fennessey during my short stint as Interim GM!

As is the case with so many people who involve themselves with the CCPA at a young age, I took everything from that experience with me into my future career. After leaving the Hall I went on to work within the music industry as a touring musician, then with Portland's Crystal Ballroom as stage manager, office manager, newsletter publisher, assistant business manager, and ultimately as music marketer. I'm currently the Marketing Manager for the Crystal and oversee marketing for McMenamins music venues at large. In my almost 25 years with the company I built databases, onboarded a variety of third party apps, initiated a loyalty program, attended several marketing and ticketing conferences, trained staff on tools and procedures, ran internship programs ... and in my marketing role I promoted thousands of shows, building ad plans, overseeing creative, trafficking ads, getting sponsorships, tracking sales, executing tactics for slow-selling shows, etc.

Here's [my resume](#) and my [LinkedIn account](#) for more info about all that.

Again... without the platform provided by the CCPA I wouldn't have cultivated the tools that enabled my career growth to happen.

It was a running joke ... and probably still is ... that the WOW Hall is a big monster that lives on the people that serve it, gobbling them up and eventually spitting them out. Certainly that was my own experience: conflict, negotiation and reconciliation; triumph and embarrassment; anger, joy and humor ... so why am I returning for more?

I'm running for a Board seat as a follow-up to some small contributions I made over the last year as part of the Operations Committee. My intent had been to offer whatever practical help I could with improving event management operations such as ticketing, marketing, office systems, etc., so as to give the Hall a good jump out of the gate when shows started up again. What I quickly discovered, however, was that the Board was entangled as to the proper agenda for the Hall to pursue. So my participation has been largely attending meetings via Zoom, trying to keep my mouth shut and ears open, and getting a sense of whether there can be a positive role for me to play at any level.

Here's how I view things:

- I feel that the hiring of Deb Mahar as Interim Executive Director was a critical plus for the Hall's future. I'm excited to be part of a Board that would be at the receiving end of her expertise and guidance.
- I believe that no single person on the Board, on staff or in the membership has a singularly perfect understanding or vision of the Hall. The Board owes it to the membership to be true to a process that is inclusive, transparent and consistent.
- I see no conflict between maintaining the Hall's legacy of hosting musical performances and the ambition to widen its scope of community offerings. In the short term, prioritizing the music program makes immediate fiscal sense, reinforces the CCPA's brand presence in the community it serves, and provides a staff and marketing platform for expansion. Meanwhile, developing a committed plan for layering in educational, theatrical and other community offerings can happen coterminously. The Board should celebrate such a mission and reinforce a sense of optimism about refining current operations while developing a timeline for rolling out new and exciting community offerings.
- There's some passionate interest in widening the access of the community to the Hall, and I share that. It is also completely doable within a music presentation model, and can in fact be the lead element for rebranding the CCPA in the eyes of the community. Serving a wider community is not only consistent with the CCPA's mission, it serves its financial interest as well. A larger base provides higher gate sales, membership size and improves eligibility for grants.
- Operationally, I would like to play a part in conducting a review of the Hall's marketing and ticketing systems and make recommendations, as this is one area where I bring specific experience. I feel like the Hall is probably under-marketed, which reinforces a perception that it belongs to a pocket niche of the community, not the community at large.
- The volunteer program sometimes goes under-appreciated for the role it plays in the Hall's mission. It serves an immediate need for show staffing, but it has potential to be a greater vehicle for education. Bringing volunteers in on more technical aspects of show promotion (marketing strategies, content building, etc.) and production (sound engineering, mixing, etc.), would serve important practical needs while serving the community interest. Similarly, partnership with local internship and Capstone programs supplements our staff with next-generation energy and fresh skill sets looking for experience and leadership.
- The points above would not only service our music programming needs, but could easily become templates for supporting new offerings in later phases.

My views may or may not mesh with others', and may or may not be actualized by the process. If I'm lucky enough to be on the Board, I am committed to working in a cooperative and reconciling manner within a clear and consistent meeting process, so that we can properly hash through differences and form a unified set of goals and timelines for reaching them.

I'm hoping to be able to be useful to the Hall as it goes through this critical and transformational process. We have much more unifying us than dividing us, and I'm convinced that everyone's visions and passion can mesh into something valuable to the community.

Thank you for your time reading this. In all eventualities, I remain fond and supportive of the Community Center for the Performing Arts.

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