

THE Mansfield

Center for the Performing Arts

ADVISORY BOARD
-- REGULAR MEETING --
Friday, February 19, 2016
Great Falls Civic Center Gibson Room 212
Call to Order: 12:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Advisory Board Members Present: Pam Bennett, Carl Donovan, Keern Haslem, Patty Myers, Larry Gomoll

Advisory Board Members Absent: Allen Lanning, Kelly Manzer

City Staff Present: Jennifer Reichelt, Deputy City Manager; Melissa Kinzler, Fiscal Services Director; Owen Grubenhoff, Events Specialist

Public Members: Linda Fuller, Miss Linda's School of Dance

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Haslem called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

Linda Fuller was introduced.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board Member Donovan moved to approve the minutes from the January 22, 2016 meeting. The motion was seconded by Board Member Myers. The board unanimously approved the minutes (5-0).

NEW BUSINESS

Special Guests

Chair Haslem introduced Linda Fuller (Miss Linda's) and Larry Gomoll (Community Concerts) as today's guests. The Board asked both Linda and Larry to share their thoughts on the following questions:

- *What is working?*
- *What can we be doing better?*
- *How can we partner with you?*
- *What do you need from us?*

Linda shared that she has been on stage for over 40 years and has been a producer of events for 20. She said that she believes that the Mansfield is a beautiful facility and that it has a number of really good things going for it:

- Office and stage personnel are helpful
- Contracts are clear
- Box Office possibilities are good
- Dressing rooms are good
- The facility is clean
- The facility is marked well for safety
- Stage Manager is professional

In terms of areas that could be improved upon or need work, she added:

- The Box Office hours are too short
- The cost to rent/use the Theatre can be prohibitive to many users

Linda said that often times a ticket buyer may come to buy a ticket and find the Box Office closed, and may choose not to come back again. The shortened hours has made it more difficult for ticket buyers.

Other items brought up during the discussion included consistency of Will-Call ticketing and how confusing it can be during the night of an event. The Board also discussed signage, and that it is often hard for event goers to find the Ticket Office/Box Office. The Board discussed the need for better signage throughout the building.

Larry shared many of the same thoughts as Linda, specifically in relation to the Box Office and the need for consistent and longer hours. He explained that one of the best things Community Concerts ever did was have the Mansfield sell their tickets; he encouraged having the Symphony also use the Box Office for ticketing services.

Both Larry and Linda were asked to share their ideal Box Office schedule. Both felt having consistent hours even during the summer was important; but understood that it might be difficult given the fact that less tickets were sold during the summer months due to having fewer scheduled events. Both agreed a 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. or 12 – 6 p.m. schedule might be better than what the Mansfield has now or matching the Box Office hours to the Event Office hours might make things easier for patrons. Other ideas were to have the Box Office stay open later the week of a show; not just the day of.

He did share a concern regarding John Gemberling, the Mansfield's Technical Supervisor. He believes that the City will be in a bad position if John was ever to leave because the City's "eggs are all in one basket." He feels it's important to have John be on better footing due to his expertise and technical knowledge. Board Member Donovan echoed Larry's concerns and said, "I don't know what we would do if John was to leave."

Larry and Linda were asked what they thought the best change/improvement to the Facility has been. They shared that the ticketing system and bringing ticketing in-house was a benefit to all the theatre users.

They were also both asked what upgrade they thought would make the biggest difference. Both felt that having improved seating would make the biggest difference to the facility and that a projection booth upgrade with spotlights would be a benefit to users. Larry shared that he also thought the Mansfield should buy equipment that John/Sunshine Productions is renting out in order to save or make money.

Board Member Myers also expressed concern over the free tickets that the Symphony has been doing and the chaos it has created.

Linda provided the Board a letter outlining her thoughts; it is attached to the minutes.

Mansfield Budget Overview

Melissa Kinzler, Fiscal Services Director and Jennifer Reichelt, Deputy City Manager provided an overview of the Mansfield Budget and answered questions. Budget documents are attached.

Next Meeting

The Board decided to meet on Friday, March 25, 2016, one week later than usual due to Western Art Week. The topic of the meeting will be the Convention Center and how to attract more business. Melissa also agreed to come back and address any budget/utility questions related to the Convention Center.

Motion made by Board Member Bennett; seconded by Board Member Donovan to move the Board Meeting to March 25. Motion was approved unanimously by the Board (5-0)

STAFF REPORTS

Staff Member, Grubenhoff, reported on past events.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

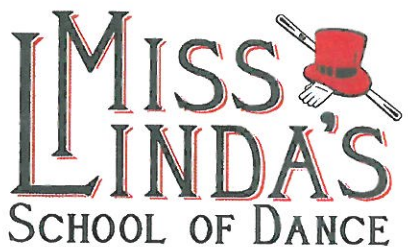
ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Haslem adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.


Keern Haslem, Chairman


Jennifer Reichelt, Secretary

Minutes Approved: March 25, 2016



Use of the Mansfield Theater and Facilities

Over the last 20 some years I have been involved in many performances using the Convention Center and the Mansfield Theater at the Great Falls Civic Center. The building is a wonderful facility and I, as a community member, am grateful and proud to have it in our fair city. Changes have taken place over these years both in policies and physical appearance.

Good Points

The office and stage area personnel are helpful and informative.

The contracts are clearly written.

The box office possibilities with the website and assistance with advertising one's event are great.

The dressing areas and traffic patterns backstage are good.

The area is clean and well kept.

Areas are clearly marked for safety.

The stage managing is very professional.

Points for Consideration

The hours that the box office is open or not open remain a difficult situation. It's not enough time and the lack of being open hurts ticket sales.

It remains difficult for a small business such as mine to pay the fees for using the facilities.

When you consider that I pay the same fees as does the Moscow Ballet or other travelling shows who can charge prices like \$40 upwards to \$65 per seat while I can only charge \$18 or \$20, it's tough. By the time the fees are paid to the Civic Center, it's hard to break even financially.

Seats

Linda Fuller

Linda Fuller