

Great Falls City Commission
#2 Park Drive
Great Falls, MT 59401

March 7, 2023
RECEIVED
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CITY CLERK

Dear Commission Members,

It has come to my attention that you are considering remodeling the Missouri Room for different uses. That causes me great concern.

Over the last 25 years I have held many Miss Linda Productions in the Mansfield Theater. When that happens, we use the Missouri Room for meeting, rehearsing, as a holding area, and a dressing room. Our shows have from 75 to over 250 performers. There is obviously no way for that many people to change costumes in the backstage dressing rooms or in the Green Room downstairs. Most of our productions involve children and the Missouri Room is a safe, clean place for them to be. It can be kept closed off and the doors can be monitored which is very important.

Other organizations need the space too. This past weekend the Sheer Elite Dance Convention and Competition was held at the Civic Center using the stage, the Gibson Room, and of course the Missouri Room for around 175 young people. Dancers from across Montana and Idaho came to compete and attend a workshop. Sheer is originally based out of New York City and is an offshoot of Dance Educators of America.

Please consider an arts fueled economy. These events bring many people to Great Falls, parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends of those involved in the event. They spend money on lodging, shopping, and meals. They see what our great city has to offer and many times return later to further enjoy what we have.

I am asking you to please reconsider the use of the Missouri Room. If it is taken away, it will result in a loss of income for the Civic Center and Great Falls itself.

Yours truly,



Linda Fuller
Miss Linda's School of Dance
612 1st Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59401

Dear City Commissioners,

It has been brought to our attention that the Mansfield Missouri Room and adjoining meeting rooms are being considered for conversion to City Court. The Mansfield Advisory Board strongly opposes this action and would like the Commission to carefully consider other options, as once this local historic treasure is lost, it is unlikely to ever be recovered.

The Missouri Room has been a public space for citizens to enjoy for more than 80 years. It is currently rentable for public and private events, and has been the centerpiece for many weddings, receptions, dinners, art displays and conferences over all these decades, since the Civic Center opened in 1940. If this space is removed from public use, it would be akin to closing a public park.

The Missouri room is essential for large multi-day events like the CM Russell Art Auction, Organic Farmers Association, Sheer Elite Dance competition, and many large conferences. It is a critical intermediate size for events in the Civic Center, as we can seat up to 240 people in that room. If we lost this room, we would only have the Gibson Room that seats 80 and the Convention Center that seats 800 and nothing in-between for medium sized events. We stand to lose not only the rental income of the Missouri Room, but also many of these larger functions which require multiple spaces simultaneously in order to utilize our building for their events.

We understand that the Rainbow Room, IT Training Room and the Risk Manager's office will also be converted to court space. The Rainbow Room alone is used for more than 200 COGF meetings per year. It also provides some public rental income and is used as a breakout area for larger conferences. The Missouri and Rainbow room revenue is sufficient to cover a part-time employee for Mansfield operations.


It would be a small tragedy to destroy the ball room ambiance of the nicest room in the Civic Center with its high ceilings, historic light fixtures, and wooden dance floor, not to mention the room's versatility.

If City Court needs new space, this is a prime opportunity to execute the plans the City already paid for to nicely remodel the lower level and to incorporate currently wasted square footage. Another approach would be to move the Court from the Civic Center altogether, such as to the current Children's Museum building or a joint usage. Facilities to explore could be the Federal Courthouse, County Courthouse, County Annex, or 2nd floor of the US Post Office.

Finally, the safety and security of City employees is currently compromised by having court facilities in the same location as employees who do not work in the criminal justice division, and this would only be amplified by having court defendants wandering the upper floor, immediately adjacent to meetings and other functions in the Gibson Room and City offices.

Thank you for considering other alternatives for City Court operations.

The Mansfield Advisory Board

Carl Donovan, President 

Caryl Olmstead

Christina Horton

Ben Nelson

Christina Thiel-Smalley