

THE Mansfield

Center for the Performing Arts

ADVISORY BOARD

Friday, December 14, 2012
Gibson Room at the Great Falls Civic Center
Call to Order: 12:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Advisory Board Members Present: Sue Ferrin, Joe Fontana, Mary Sheehy Moe, Rick Tryon

Advisory Board Members Absent: Jennifer Fritz, Shelley Marra, Larry Gomoll

City Staff Present: Mark Willmarth, Training & Development Coordinator; Dona Hughes, Events Supervisor

INTRODUCTIONS

None necessary

OLD BUSINESS:

Minutes

No action taken.

Strategic Planning

Mark Willmarth facilitated the meeting. He noted the transition of the Board from the Civic Center Advisory Board, encompassing all the building inclusive of City Offices, to the Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts Advisory Board, encompassing the Theater, Convention Center, Missouri Room, Gibson Room, other meeting rooms and the events held in them. With this transition came alignment and clarity. Aligning around a small set of motives enabled the Board to become more productive. Clarity is identifying what is important – not single minded approach.

What's next?

Replacement of all theater seats is the next project. To achieve this, the Board must take it one step at a time. A case needs to be made and awareness created for the importance of the Theater seats.

Making the case:

- Provide data, information and why
- Awareness of issues/inadequacy
 - ADA accessibility – the code has changed through the years
 - Safety – with the aging population we have more and more patrons with walkers and no space to keep them while seated
 - Comfort - people are larger now than in 1939, 1940 when Theater was built
- Physical plant considerations:
 - Change configuration of seating to continental seating or retain existing format
 - How many seats would be lost (loss of inventory for renters)
 - Electrical for the aisle lights
 - Maintaining the historic character while making it a 21st century theater.
 - Floor treatment: paint it; strip it back to original dyed concrete; carpet?
- Best way to approach/action items:
 - Present at a Commission work session
 - Get on the docket – Dona will do this. Is it possible to get on late January or early February agenda? (Post meeting note: Dona spoke with Department Head, Marty Basta. Marty will take the request to City Manager, Greg Doyon, to be added to a work session agenda. Marty

recommends requesting April 2nd and being prepared for earlier presentation should the Commission have an opening in an agenda.)

- Possible funding sources:
 - Bond issue
 - Selling naming rights
 - Grant writing
 - Is there a market for the used seats?
 - Sponsor a seat
 - Major donor
 - Fund raise through the People's Park and Recreation Foundation
 - \$800,000 is a rough number that Dona obtain through pricing 1776 seats and informally seeking advice on cost of addressing the floor
 - Perhaps ask to hold the Commission work session in the Theater and include what we have accomplished
 - Load in door
 - Dressing & green room remodel
 - Sound system inclusive of the installation of an Assisted Listening System
 - Lighting system
 - Climate control

Preferred Caterers Program

Rick asked as to the status of the proposed Preferred Caterers Program as a new source of funding. After visiting with caterers and staff, Dona recommends the Board forgoes on the plan for the following reasons:

- In the current format, very difficult to administrate
- Not user group friendly - potential loss of existing business. (Dona noted that current renters have pointed out that it would raise their costs as the caterer would tack the fee on to the cost of catering. One renter commented that he would rather have the rent raised than the added hassle of the program. It would financial be the same for him.)
- None of the caterers Dona visited with were interested if the plan did not grant exclusivity to a limited number of caterers.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board

The Board recognized Rick Tryon's service on the Board. Rick is the longest serving Board Member to date. Perhaps a ceremony presenting a plaque and inviting the media would be a good way of recognizing out-going Board Members, Rick, Jen and Shelley. It might also be an opportunity to get press on the accomplishments. It could be a year end story. Perhaps Jenn Reichelt would assist or have some advice.

Board openings still need to be filled. Keep recruiting.

Looking to the Future

Mark invited Rick to share any thoughts/advice with the Board. Rick stated that the Commission is looking at core services – Police, Fire, and Public Works – first for funding priorities. He also emphasized that the Commission relies upon Advisory Boards, citizens' input, in making decisions.

Rick asked what plans are there for future revenue. Dona shared that she is working with members of the Convention and Events committee (comprised of Tourism Business Improvement District, lodging properties, Central Montana Tourism Country, Convention Visitors Bureau and the Fairgrounds) in community efforts to bring more conventions and events to Great Falls. This will result in more rentals at The Mansfield.

Rick also recommended that we encourage families and explore partnerships. Primary is the replacement of the seats which includes public relations, physical improvements and partnerships.

Next Meeting:

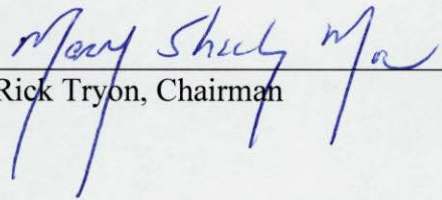
It was recommended that the next meeting be the walk through of the power point presentation for the Commission meeting.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS (Public Comment)

No petitions or communication were presented.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 1:38 pm.



Rick Tryon, Chairman

1-18-13

Action Items Pending

1. Power Point Presentation for Theater Seating Project