

# THE Mansfield

Center for the Performing Arts

## ADVISORY BOARD

Friday, September 20, 2013  
Gibson Room at the Great Falls Civic Center  
Call to Order: 12:15 p.m.

### ROLL CALL

Advisory Board Members Present: Carl Donovan, Larry Gomoll, Keern Haslem, Mary Sheehy Moe, Kim Thiel Schaaf

Advisory Board Members Absent: Sue Ferrin, Joe Fontana

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

### INTRODUCTIONS

None needed

### OLD BUSINESS:

#### Custodial Services

Board reviewed two proposals for staffing of custodial services that would be cost saving measures See attached.

It was asked if we would get to choose the custodian. Dona shared that most likely it would go by seniority. The custodian with the most seniority would have the option first and so on. Mark shared that all the custodians are great. Much of the discussion centered on Proposal 1:

- Service to customer would escalate through ownership. Joel is a great example. He "...goes way above and beyond."
- Cost savings to the City is an estimated \$10,984.07 due to on call labor hours saved.
- Flexibility
- Hours and dollars saved in Events Specialist's time due to less time spent training new staff, calling to fill schedules, etc.
- Eliminates custodian having to "answer to 2 supervisors."

Kim Thiel Schaaf moved, Keern Haslem seconded and Board voted to recommend option 1 to the Commission, that is, to transfer 1 custodian to The Mansfield.

#### Fees

Larry Gomoll explained a new fee that was added to the proposal since our last meeting. It is a **\$2 per ticket box office fee** to assist in defraying the costs. The fee would be asking all who purchase a ticket through the box office to be part of the solution in keeping The Mansfield's doors open. This would be in lieu of the convenience fee that most people already pay for purchase by phone, mail or web. The proposal is to charge \$2/ticket for all tickets whether they purchase by phone, mail, web or in person. It is based on the idea that purchases at the window, by phone and filling pre-sold season series are more time consuming than a web based sale. Besides the window sales, it would be asking the patrons who purchase Great Falls Symphony seasons, Great Falls Community Concert Association season and the Great Falls Ski Patrol's Banff Film Festival "hand sales" to pay \$2/ticket more. It was affirmed that the tickets sold on the behalf of outside organizations will be charged the fee as well. The fee could be included in the cost of the ticket or it could be collected in addition to the ticket price. Larry recommended collecting the fee outside the ticket price as it attributes it to the cause. The Board was in agreement to his proposal. It was discussed and agreed that we

would need really good press to inform the public of the fee and the need for it. Dona will be sure that Carolyn Valacich, Executive Director of the Great Falls Symphony, is aware of this fee proposal.

**The Facility and Equipment Surcharge fee** is not secured; in that, it does not have to be used for only its intended purpose of purchase of events equipment and small capital improvements to the events areas. As is, it may be used to cover the shortfall within the operational budget. To assure this fee is used for its intended purpose, either an ordinance would need to be established or authorization would need to be granted for The Mansfield to collect it on behalf of the Park Foundation. The Board consensus was that the fee needed to be used for its intended purpose or dissolved. Mark was asked whether he recommended an ordinance or the Foundation. Mark recommended the Park Foundation since we have a fund already established with the Park Foundation for the Theater Seat Renovation Project. He also noted that the Park Foundation charges an administrative fee, but felt that was fair and reasonable. The consensus was to go with the Park Foundation. Discussion ensued, as to, whether this should be an issue presented separately to the Commission so not to way lay the proposal for the other fees.

**It was agreed to recommend to the Commission the fees as listed on the attached.**

A separate conversation would be to charge \$1/head to all Convention Center users so to raise additional revenues to cover hard costs. It was discussed and agreed that we would be pricing ourselves out of the market. It would almost double the fees. It was then suggested that a Facility and Equipment Surcharge is established to address elevating need for improvements to the Convention Center. It was recommended that the Board make the Commission aware of the equipment and facility needs as well as aware of the impact that the \$.50 Facility and Equipment Surcharge has had on the Theater. It has enabled the Mansfield Theater to keep costs down as well as attract more business/shows. Carl suggested a \$.75/head Facility and Equipment Surcharge so that the needs could be addressed and our client would feel the benefits of it sooner. The consensus was a \$.50/head fee would be more palatable. **Larry moved, Carl seconded and the Board approved to recommend the fee schedule with the amendment to include the \$.50/head Facility and Equipment Surcharge for the Convention Center.**

### **Budget**

Dona reported that with the fee increases and cut in hours, the projected earned revenues cover the hard costs of opening The Mansfield's doors. However, we fall short in covering the soft costs of internal service charges. These are charges that come from other City offices for their services rendered to The Mansfield. However, there is no significant costs saved for those departments should The Mansfield's doors be closed. The exception is janitorial services and utilities costs. Dona wasn't sure what that amount may be. She will contact Craig Raymond, Department Head Planning/CD, for a ballpark figure.

Board discussed the importance to keeping The Mansfield open.

- Guest performers rave about what a jewel The Mansfield Theater is.
- Public investment in downtown has value. It encourages private investment.
- Economic impact of tourism

### **PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS (Public Comment)**

Larry reported that Great Falls Community Concert Association is doing well with number of memberships sold. They are already at the same number of memberships that were sold at the end of the season last year.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Board Larry moved, Kim Thiel Schaaf seconded, Board unanimously approved to adjourn at 1:20 pm.

  
Mary Sheehy Moe, Chairman