

THE Mansfield

Center for the Performing Arts

ADVISORY BOARD

-- Regular Meeting --

Friday, February 21, 2014

Great Falls Civic Center Missouri Room 213

Call to Order: 12:00 pm

ROLL CALL

Advisory Board Members Present: Michael Gilboe, Larry Gomoll, Keern Haslem, Kelly Manzer and Mary Sheehy Moe. Advisory Board Members Carl Donovan and Kim Thiel Schaaf were absent.

City Staff Present: Greg Doyon, City Manager; Jenn Reichelt, Deputy City Manager; Melissa Kinzler, Fiscal Director; Patty Rearden, Deputy Park and Rec Director; Dona Hughes, Events Supervisor

Guests: Bud Nichols, Linda Fuller, Kathy Lear, Bill Larson, Carolyn Valacich, Commissioner Bob Kelly, Commissioner Bill Bronson

INTRODUCTIONS

Everyone present introduced themselves.

NEW BUSINESS

Fiscal Background of the Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts

City Manager Greg Doyon reported that the general fund is having a difficult time supporting services such as the Mansfield. Groups that are dependent on the general fund will have to find other sources of revenue to support operations rather than be subsidized by the general fund. The settlement with Southern accelerated the City's already difficult financial position. Manager Doyon noted that he would like to see the performing arts continue to be successful in Great Falls and that he wasn't recommending closing the Mansfield. However, the FY 2014 Mansfield general fund subsidy was reduced in order to meet other needs.

Fiscal Services Director Melissa Kinzler provided several handouts and discussed balance statements and adopted vs. actual budgets for the Mansfield for the past eight years. She also reviewed a fund summary as well as general fund contributions for operations for all the City's funds. She reported that all City funds receiving general fund support were reviewed for FY 2014. Cuts in general fund contributions were then made to those subsidized funds with the intention that those divisions will use their cash on hand to pay for the shortfall in the budget.

Director Kinzler explained that the challenge is the City's collection of general fund taxes does not keep up with increasing expenses. Reducing and/or eliminating some of the subsidized amounts is necessary due to the general fund resources being tapped out. She noted that it is necessary to look to fees to support the various services. She discussed the City's sewer and

water services being totally self-supported through fees charged as an example and model to be used by other departments.

Board Discussion

Board Member Gomoll asked if users should be paying for what they are using.

Manager Doyon responded that there may be ways to do things differently. The community will have to go through a prioritization process. For example, the Police and Fire Departments have a need for training certification, new fire trucks, another fire station, etc. The community may need to look at a bond issue for those needs. He noted that people are passionate about the arts and The Mansfield, but with limited resources fee increases will be a small part, but won't address it all. He provided possible avenues to pursue, such as a private non-profit model to raise funds, or privatizing the box office services.

Chairperson Moe pointed out that many of the members are on the Advisory Board because of their passion for the arts. Number-crunching and seeking alternative funding may not be their expertise.

Manager Doyon responded that the Board can gain the collective expertise from groups in the community to float new ideas to bring back to City staff to have vetted.

Board Member Haslem felt pursuing a non-profit organization could be viable.

Board Member Gomoll emphasized the need to look long term, such as the contracts for next year.

Commissioner Bronson offered his expertise in structuring the private/public model. That model would give more flexibility for grant writing.

Board Member Gilboe inquired the dollar amount of the shortfall.

Manager Doyon responded that the goal would be for The Mansfield to not rely on general fund support. Director Kinzler reported that this fiscal year's projected deficit will be \$162,404. Chairperson Moe noted that the current proposed fee increases are projected to bring in a little over \$70,000 towards the annual deficit of \$162,404.

Public Discussion

Chairperson Moe asked if there were any comments from the public.

Carolyn Valacich, Great Falls Symphony, shared an email she sent to Symphony supporters. She noted that most of the Symphony's tickets are sold as a season package, and expressed concerns that the \$2 per ticket fee may encourage patrons to purchase single tickets rather than a package. She suggested that The Mansfield look at incrementally raising fees or look at other alternatives.

Board Member Gomoll noted that the proposed numbers are necessary in order to balance the budget.

After further discussion regarding process and staff time involved to fill ticket requests and season packages, the proposed \$2 per ticket fee and options that would be fair to all patrons, the Board directed staff to analyze the following fee options and determine how much revenue would be generated:

- Convenience Fee of \$3 for all online/phone and mail ticket purchases
- \$1 ticket surcharge to all season ticket purchases
- \$2 ticket surcharge to all single-ticket purchases
- \$0 ticket surcharge for student ticket purchases
- Raise the Performance Rental Fee from 8% of gross ticket sales to 9% of gross sales for the Symphony, Community Concerts and Broadway

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS (Public Comment)

Events Supervisor Dona Hughes noted for the record that the Great Falls Symphony was kept apprised of meeting dates and times that the proposed fee increases were discussed.

In the interest of time, it was suggested that a special meeting may need to be scheduled in the month of March.

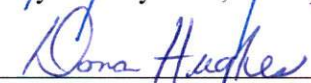
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before The Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts Advisory Board, Board Member Gomoll moved, seconded by Board Member Manzer, to adjourn the regular meeting of February 21, 2014, at 2:01 p.m.

Motion carried 5-0-2.



Mary Sheehy Moe, Chairperson



Dona Hughes, Secretary

Minutes Approved: May 16, 2014