

Murray Arts Advisory Board
Minutes for September 19, 2017

Attendance: Wendy Richhart, Lori Steadman, Deborah Daines, Kevin Westenskow, Alisa Brousseau, Carolyn Milne, Becca Spjute, Mary Ann Kirk and Lori Steadman (staff), Bill and Susan Wright (Ballet Center), Nanci Shino and Wendy White (Concert Band), Andy Day and Karen White (Murray Arts Council), Skyler Sprouse (visitor)

Excused: Clark Bullen, Michael Wall

1. Local art agency leaders were introduced. Mary Ann reviewed the upcoming winter series and potential 2018 Arts in the Park calendar. She also noted that local grant applications will be coming in November. She asked all groups to send press info to her about 6 weeks in advance so we can list their events in the city section of the *Murray Journal* and on our Facebook and email posts. We also typically list the events on NowPlayingUtah. The school district is trying to hire a specific person for symphony and band concerts so they have a consistent tech person. Groups didn't have any questions or concerns and felt things were going well.

Mary Ann indicated she would like to organize a short performance on January 5th that she is calling My Favorite Things prior to her retirement. She wants to tell her story about the arts in her life and include a sampling of her favorite community and family performances. She has invited some performers from last year's musicals, Carousel and Fiddler, to do one number along with the madrigals and high school percussion students to perform. She wants the symphony to do a musical revue if they are available.

2. Minutes for August 15, 2017 were approved as written.
3. We are need of a housing backup for Missoula Children's Theater November 26-Dec 3. Mary Ann asked board members to feed any leads they may have. She will have Jennifer post it on the Facebook page.
4. All school principals have received packets for the various arts-in-education activities. We have received after school musical requests for all elementary schools except McMillan. Kevin asked what the schools need to provide. Mary Ann said the only commitment is providing the facility so it is not a financial commitment. We pay for all the other costs. We will be looking at the sound because it was a problem last time.

We have a few requests for storytelling, Arts Power, museum, and cemetery tours and will follow up with principals this next week. Wendy and Mary Ann will review this information with the school board on October 12. Doug is working through the music specialist agreement with the district. Mary Ann is not sure all schools have specialists hired yet. This year we provided up to \$30,000. This is less than last year, but they have not typically used the full amount.

Mary Ann encouraged board members to sign the petition or call their state school board members since they are reconsidering their decision to remove the arts from the required core for grades 7-8. They are welcome to attend the meeting on Wednesday night, September 13 from 6-8 p.m. Wendy already signed the petition for the arts board as a whole.

5. The city is renewing the contract with the school district related to the use of the old firestation. The city owns it but allows the community preschool and Headstart to use it during the school year but has retained exclusive rights to the fire station from May through August in the past. The city is expanding that use to include April since rehearsals begin in April and the school district is not willing to provide an alternate space for free if needed. The June show has been able to use the Murray Theater for the past few years, but that may not be available for 6-8 week rehearsals once the theater is renovated.

6. Mary Ann reviewed the attendance numbers for the winter and summer series. We had 27 total patrons purchase the winter community art pass which is pretty typical. We have ranged from 9 to 50 tickets over the past 20 years. The purpose of the pass is to market all the school and community events as a whole and provide an affordable way for locals to support the arts. The pass is largely used by seniors who want to stay close to home.

The summer Arts in the Park evening season was attended by 7984 patrons which was very similar to last year. Music Man and Fiddler had very good attendance. The other shows including Carousel were about average and a few were below average, likely due to the move to Murray High since the amphitheater was not complete. The jazz concert was very small. Board members who attended did not like the gospel choir. Mary Ann said we had one complaint that the music was too religious.

Most groups run their own gate and are responsible for their own production costs. We have very little presale except for the Arts Council musical so revenue for those shows are minimal. The financial summary shows a smaller revenue amount for Fiddler compared to attendance but that is because it only represents presale which is a flow through. The ballet used to be considered a grant but we have been paying a performance stipend instead which represents a much smaller amount than if we had to pay for two ballet performances. We then allow them to run and collect their gate to enhance that fee since we would not recoup the full expense. About \$14,000 of ZAP and UDAM funds were used to cover differences between expense and revenue which was also similar to last year. The City covers the cost for the facility and tech. It reflects how Murray supports the arts in our community. Poulsen Construction reimbursed the city for backup facilities and sound.

Our UDS marketing campaign numbers for the 3 musicals and the ballet reflected a high response. We can track impressions and clicks but we don't have a way to track if they actually purchased tickets. We did have about 10% of our ticket sales come through on-line purchases. On Facebook, Fiddler had 22,062 impressions with 919 clicks. Music Man had 182,117 impressions with 2482 clicks. We were also able to track ages. The highest group of clicks came from females between ages 25-44. The other ages were evenly spread out.

Our own social media is now at 978 likes on Facebook, 145 followers on Twitter, and 72 followers on Instagram.

7. The amphitheater public art will be finished mid-October. We had 71 donors for \$16,735 which should cover any additional costs of the project. The board liked the idea of hosting an open house where donors could tour the full facility. Once we confirm an installation date, we will send out a thank you and invite donors to attend. We can also invite the broader public. We have been having trouble with skateboarders around the new facility.
8. The board confirmed two individuals to receive a Community Art Award. Doug Hill will be recognized at a city council meeting for his significant support for the arts – especially the budgetary sacrifice he made during the amphitheater remodel. Kristen Davies will be recognized at a school board meeting for her help in facility scheduling including the challenge we had with the amphitheater delay.
9. Board members discussed potential plays and directors next year. Will Saxton was interested in directing if we produced *“Into the Woods”*. Board members liked that idea. The Arts Council was thinking of several shows but are leaning toward *“Singing in the Rain”*. A few board members had heard some concerns about the production staff of the August show. Mary Ann asked if the board wanted to look at another director. Kjersti Parkes directed 1776 and had expressed interest. Mary Ann and Lori E. will work through that issue. The board liked the idea of *Seven Brides* but we will wait to finalize everything next month. We can review other titles.