



**FLATO MARKHAM THEATRE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING – MAY 27, 2024
CANADA ROOM – CIVIC CENTRE
5:30 PM TO 7:00 PM**

MINUTES

Board Present	Staff Present	Regrets
Dawn Donaldson Anne Gilligan Regional Councillor Jim Jones Brad Fletcher Ken MacDonald Brent Matthews Sarah Micallef Ronald Minken Richard Morales Celeste Pelliccione Sophia Sun Srinka Wallia	Scott Hill Siobhain Fray Andrew Rosenfarb	Michael Chen Diane Lai Larry Matthews Susie Nunes

1.0 Call to Order and Chair’s Opening Remarks

That the meeting convened at the hour of 5:31pm with Srinka Wallia in the Chair.

2.0 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None

3.0 Agenda Review, Additions/Changes

Srinka Wallia recognizes Diane Lai (former Chair) and Eric Lariviere (former Theatre General Manager) for their contributions and thanks them for their service to the Advisory Board, and that it is reflected in the agenda formally.

It was
Moved by Ken MacDonald
Seconded by Dawn Donaldson

That the acknowledgement to Eric Lariviere and Diane Lai for their contributions to the Advisory Board, be approved.

CARRIED

4.0 Approval of Minutes of the March 18, 2024 meeting

It was

Moved by Richard Morales
Seconded by Brent Matthews



That the minutes of The Flato Markham Theatre Advisory Board meeting of Monday March 18, 2024 be approved.

CARRIED

5.0 General Manager's Report and Team Updates

Refer to supporting documents.

Scott Hill and Andrew Rosenfarb present the Team Report. Some highlights are as follows:

- The proposed Terms of Reference was approved by Development Services Commission and will now go to Council for approval;
- Management and staff updates with Scott Hill as Acting General Manager and Maxwell Silva-Chappell as Acting Business and Rental Manager;
- No new updates to the feasibility study status;
- 2023/2024 Diamond Series is now complete and went very well overall. Was a good season from a financial aspect;
- Recruitment for more technicians and front of house staff planned for end of summer;
- 2024 Capital projects going well even though approvals were delayed, resulting in many projects squeezed into the summer months;
- Focusing on the 2025 Capital Project funding requests which are due in June;
- Rentals are going strong. Dance recitals and competitions are underway which yield consistent revenue for the theatre and strong revenues from our concession sales;
- Summer camps keep the theatre booked with little availability in the summer;
- Theatre is fully booked for the fall;
- Marketing summary: Since 2023/2024 season launch, the website has over 1 million views and over 175,000 users resulting in a 69% increase since last year;
- There is a 40% increase year over year on social media presence;
- Collaboration with Joyride 150 didn't go as well as expected for the 360 AllStars performance, but the community engagement was very successful;
- Rental sales and rental ticket income amounts were not included on the dashboard. Year To Date figures are skewed and not reflected accurately. This is a timing variance of the financial reporting not meeting the deadline;
- Would like to break 1 million dollars this year for rental revenues;

A discussion regarding metrics to have a moving dashboard took place. It would show a moving annual total to compare 12 months to 12 months to smooth out the financial inaccuracies and give a bigger picture of the results. An explanation was given that the dashboard is a City dashboard that the Theatre has no control over, and is based on the City's budget year. The current reporting satisfies the overall financial picture and is manageable using the format provided by the City.

6.0 Priority Items

6.1 Management and Staff Updated

Covered in the staff report presentation.

6.2 2024/2025 Season

Scott Hill shows a video presentation featuring the artists for the new season. Discussion highlights as follows:

- Jazz series looks very strong and is already selling well;



- The season launch host is also one of the artists performing in this year's season in, "Girls Nite Out";
- "Ballet Jorgen - The Nutcracker", was sold out last year and the 2024/2025 season features them again;
- Nostalgia series featuring "Classic Albums Live", "The Fabulous Thunderbirds" and "Jeans 'N Classics" are moving well in ticket sales;
- Subscription sales started at the season launch and already ahead about \$10,000 compared to last year;
- Subscribers are given first pick of best seats, then in July, all seats are open to single ticket buyers (all patrons);
- Most performances are for one night, only few are over multiple days (e.g. "Ballet Jorgen – The Nutcracker") and booked when past performances have been sold out;
- Some performances are selected to offer variety to the community and to bring entertainment and new experiences that audiences may not necessarily see. The hope is that all shows will be financially successful, but not always the case when trying to bring diversity to the community;

A discussion took place regarding online ticket purchases and the timer being set for 5 minutes. Some feel that this could be longer. The rationale for a 5 minute limit is based on the research that customers will make a decision in 5 minutes or less. After this time the likelihood of completing a purchase will decrease. The Theatre offers in person and over the phone assistance to help with subscriptions, buying tickets and choosing seats. This option is recommended for patrons to enhance their customer service experience. Patrons that prefer the online service typically have sufficient time to complete their purchases. Many other ticketing venues offer this time frame.

ACTION: Theatre staff will look into the feasibility to incorporate a "need more time" prompt for online purchases

6.3 Terms of Reference Update
Covered in staff report presentation

6.4 Theatre Tour
Tour will take place on Monday June 10th, 2024 at the Theatre commencing at 5:00pm

7.0 Working committees and task forces:

7.1 Markham Performing Arts Awards
Scheduled for October 30th, 2024

7.2 Annual Discovery Gala

The Annual Discovery Gala will not be happening this year due to declining ticket sales, financial bottom line, as well as Justin Reid's departure, whose impact on the funding the gala was significant. A new approach to fundraising for the Discovery program is needed. Need to take the time over the summer to reinvent, engage audiences and have a new strategy for future fundraising events. There are enough funds currently and should not impact this year's Discovery program. Board members are encouraged to share new ideas over the summer.

7.3 Other working committee(s) or task force(s)
Update on Foundation



While the basis of the Foundation is to fundraise and advocate for a new Theatre, it is not the sole purpose and focus. Establishing the Foundation cannot happen until the City has given their approval. In addition to this, a full-time staff member will need to be hired and approved by the City as there is no capacity within the Theatre staff to take on that role. The Task Force (comprising of Celeste, Brad, Ken, Srinka and Scott) will need to work towards having a structured framework, Terms of Reference, approval for the staff member and work on the business plan to present to the City. From there, recruitment of new Board Members can take place. This will be a long process and a lot of work will need to be done.

8.0 New Business

A suggestion was made to utilize the intermission time to host and promote community clubs, local artists or businesses, using the area where the step and repeat resides. It was explained that the intermission time is used primarily for concession sales, artist merchandise sales and bathroom breaks. It is also used to feature and promote the sponsors who are funding the performance. The use of the step and repeat is successful and continues to have a positive impact in our social media presence. The Theatre needs to be aware of artist and sponsor conflicts however, this suggestion holds merit and will be examined in the new season for these opportunities.

9.0 Date of next meeting:

November 25, 2024

Future meetings:

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at the hour of 6:58pm.