

Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee

June 23, 2008

Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Chair Ron Beach at 8:00 a.m.

Roll Call

Committee Members Present: Ron Beach
 Andre' van Schaften
 Edward Lipton
 Harold Stalf
 Stephan Schweissing

Committee Members Absent: Katherine Roy

Guests: Roger Davidson, Grand Junction Musical Arts Asso.
 Dan Gartner, Chamberlin Architects
 Rich Keller, Shaw Construction
 Illene Roggensack, Third Sector Innovations
 Heidi Ham, DDA Director
 Stephanie Tuin, City Clerk
 Steve Thoms, DDA Board Chair

Visitor & Convention Staff Present: Tim Seeberg, TRCC/Avalon Theatre Manager
 Dina Jones, Sales and Planning Assistant

Chair Ron Beach asked that everyone introduce themselves. Mr. Beach reported Stephan Schweissing will be late, Kirk Gustafson had other obligations, and Kathy Roy is absent for the second consecutive meeting.

Item 2: Approve Minutes

Ron Beach requested corrections be made to the May 20, 2008 minutes, stating on paragraph 3 line 3 the word "sent" should be "send" and paragraph 4 line 1 should be Daily Sentinel not Daily Press.

Harold Stalf moved to approve the May 20, 2008 Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee minutes with the above correction. Andre' van Schaften seconded.

Motion approved by Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee: Yes 4 No 0

Item 3: Fund Raising Feasibility Study Interview Results Presentation & Discussion - Illene Roggensack, Third Sector Innovations, Inc. Q & A

Illene Roggensack passed around the information that is being presented to the people being interviewed. Ms. Roggensack reminded everyone that Third Sector Innovations is hoping to complete thirty interviews with couples, individuals and businesses in the coming weeks. Interviews began last week and so far eight interviews have been completed.

Ms. Roggensack reported they have not had a good response on people calling back to schedule interviews, which is not a good sign. Third Sector Innovations has had six people decline to participate. Ms. Roggensack is still attempting to secure about thirty interviews but that may require that we reach out to additional people that were not on the original list. Illene Roggensack is hoping to have most of them completed by July 4th. Illene Roggensack asked the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee if they wanted to do a press conference or just a press release to get the word out about the on-line survey. Harold Stalf stated, in his opinion, doing public surveys isn't traditionally part of this process. Tim Seeberg stated it depends on what happens with the rest of the interview process but he is not the one to really decide it ultimately. Illene Roggensack stated because it involves public money and public entity with decision making occurring in the public arena, there may be some value to it. Ed Lipton agreed that it is needed for public support. Discussion ensued on the matter. Ron Beach tabled the decision on whether or not the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee seeks public input via an on-line venue, such as a web page survey.

Illene Roggensack reported that the numbers are not looking as good as hoped. Ms. Roggensack stated there is some sentiment that the City and City Council should be doing a more to show support of this initiative (or similar initiatives). Illene Roggensack stated among the eight interviews, mostly couples, all of them feel very well informed about what goes on at the Avalon Theatre. All of these people think this is a good time to do this and all of them plan to give personal gift to this campaign, if there is a campaign. Ms. Roggensack stated there are two "camps of motivation". One is those interviewees who love the Avalon Theatre, and that we should do this campaign, and the other "camp" wants the Symphony to have a home, and the Avalon could be it. Illene Roggensack stated there is some controversy about the small theatre. Ms. Roggensack said they do like the outside look of this building. Illene Roggensack stated she asked the interviewees how much they would see themselves giving. Between the eight people it would be \$110,000. Ms. Roggensack reported the most popular answer was \$5000 over a multi-year period, one offered a gift of \$50,000 and another gave a range of \$10,000 to \$50,000. Illene Roggensack stated the only person so far interested in a leadership roll was Karen Hildebrandt. Ms. Roggensack listed the people she had interviewed so far. Ron Beach asked if there was reason given from those who declined. Illene Roggensack stated some said they thought it was a good idea, "good luck" or they don't have time. Harold Stalf reminded everyone the reason we are doing this is to test what the real capabilities are of raising money for the Avalon Theatre. Mr. Stalf feels this gives the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee a much better range of understanding. The general opinion of the group is that the dollar commitments would increase if this project were to pick up steam and gain momentum.

Andre' van Schaften asked Illene Roggensack how many interviews are scheduled this week. Ms. Roggensack reported five have been scheduled and they are working to schedule more. Illene Roggensack stated eight additional letters went out last Friday and they wait about two days before contacting the people about scheduling an interview. Ms. Roggensack stated there are about 30 letters floating out there not counting the people who have said no and those who have already scheduled an interview. Harold Stalf asked if it would be helpful if Ron Beach were to call and let them know he is the chairman of the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee and would appreciate their participation. Illene Roggensack concurred that it would. Ron Beach agreed to make the phone calls. Illene Roggensack stated realistically she should have the thirty interviews completed by the July 22, 2008 deadline. Ms. Roggensack feels the report isn't accurate unless we have more participation, which is yet to come. Illene Roggensack reported Ron Beach was in contact with a gentleman who was involved with the Fox Theater in Atlanta and Ms. Roggensack has an appointment to meet with him on July 10, 2008 in Georgia.

Item 4: Progress Report - August Workshop, 501(c)3, Committee Vacancies - City Council Interviews

Ron Beach invited Stephanie Tuin to review discussion points he felt the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee wanted to address with City Council. Stephanie Tuin felt it was not a good time to schedule an August workshop with City Council due to the fact that Debbie Kovalik, Director of the Visitor and Convention Bureau, is transitioning her new role of overseeing operations at Two Rivers, which includes the Avalon Theatre. She is not yet familiar with the work of the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee, and her better understanding of this will help garner necessary support to take things forward. . Stephanie Tuin stated the City Council will be scheduling budget workshops in September and that may be better timing. Stephanie Tuin's concern is the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee has recommendations still to develop and we have vacancies and applicants that can potentially fill those vacancies. There may be concern over bringing new people on board when there is consideration to change the make up of the committee to a 501(c)3 board organization. Stephanie Tuin reported that there are six applicants. Harold Stalf suggested Ron Beach and Andre' van Schaften meet with the designated City Council members expected to interview applicants, and discuss the needs of this committee. Stephanie Tuin stated they have to follow the rules as far as who makes up the committee. There is only one at large opening and the other current vacancies are a Downtown Development Authority representative and an Avalon Foundation representative. Harold Stalf suggested it would be wise to "merging" the functions of both the committee and a self-governing board. Ed Lipton confirmed the Avalon Foundation Board has a 501(c)3 and members are self appointed. Mr. Lipton stated the bylaws of foundation could be changed to accommodate the membership that the City Council chooses through the interview process. Andre' van Schaften agreed that utilizing the non-profit status of the Avalon Foundation Board it would eliminate the need to create another 501(c)3. Mr. Van Schaften expressed the need for a stronger Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee or new board with stronger people willing to do work and people who have the capability to raise money. Stephanie Tuin suggested before we advertise for vacancies, that a letter is written from the committee chair explaining the needs and expertise needed by the committee, and

also take the opportunity to give the interview committee and the City Council an overview of what benefits are implied by the combining of the board and committee. Ron Beach agreed to write the letter outlining all these concerns to Ms. Tuin. She would then include it with the applications and a memo to City Council explaining the committee's thoughts and concerns. Illene Roggensack offered to help Ron Beach with the verbiage of the letter.

Item 5: Where Do We Go From Here? Discussion

Andre' van Schaften expressed the need to replace Katherine Roy's position. Ron Beach stated he is able to seek Ms. Roy's resignation at any time. Ed Lipton's & Harold Stalf's terms on the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee expire June 30, 2008. Ron Beach expressed the need for replacements soon in order to have a quorum for all the meetings. Harold Stalf's position is designated by the Downtown Development Authority and Ed Lipton's position is designated by the Avalon Foundation Board. Stephanie Tuin stated the way the bylaw reads is it is a recommendation from the Avalon Foundation board and the Downtown Development Authority as to their recommended designees, does not necessarily need to be a member of either board/organization. Ms. Tuin has not yet received a recommendation from either board. However, Stephanie Tuin has received an application from Patty Hoff. Ms. Tuin has informed Ms. Hoff that in order to play the role as representative for the Downtown Development Authority she would have to have a letter of recommendation from the Downtown Development Authority board. Harold Stalf stated the Downtown Development Authority makes their recommendations in July every year. Stephanie Tuin stated the general rule is people serve until they are replaced. Ed Lipton said he can stay until he is replaced. Katherine Roy should write a letter of resignation to Stephanie Tuin or City Council.

Harold Stalf moved to accept the resignation of Katherine Roy. Andre' van Schaften seconded.

Motion approved the by the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee: Yes 4 No 0

Item 6: Avalon Theatre Expansion & Renovation Update, Q & A - Rich Keller, Shaw Construction; Dan Gartner, Chamberlin Architects

Daniel Gartner reported adjustments to the floor plans to be as close as possible to represent graphically the Kirkegaard recommendations. Dan Gartner and Tim Seeberg decided to keep the plans the way they are for now but make sure the people understood the intention was to use the acoustician's recommendations as the basis of detailed design moving forward

Item 7: Other Business

Ron Beach thanked Harold Stalf & Ed Lipton for their contributions to the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee since its conception. They will both be missed and Mr. Beach wishes them the best. Andre' van Schaften agrees the Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee owes them a lot of thanks.

Ed Lipton asked what the status is of exploring a shared liquor license that would benefit the Cinema at the Avalon as well as the City. Stephan Schweissing stated the Cinema at the Avalon has been involved in new discussion with Debbie Kovalik, Tim Seeberg and the City Manager's office about this issue and maximizing revenue any way they can. Mr. Schweissing reported the discussions have been positive. Tim Seeberg stated there are concerns from City Manager's office about moving forward and combining any activities with any contracted group at this time. Mr. Seeberg expressed there may be a short term arrangement put in place with the Cinema at the Avalon. It would be called a "bridge" agreement until long term plans for the Avalon are more clearly outlined. Ed Lipton suggested the Avalon Theatre management in the future not be with the City of Grand Junction but be a designated position on the board and that board have management authority including holding a liquor license. Mr. Lipton believes it is inefficient having the City manage the Avalon Theatre. Ed Lipton stated the City's management it is too expensive and has too many processes the manager has to go through. Tim Seeberg responded there have been conversations with the City Manager regarding this and the City is exploring those concerns. Mr. Seeberg stated that whether the City be the manager with the license servicing both the Cinema at the Avalon and other patrons, or whether it be another entity all together is still all under discussion. In Tim Seeberg's view Debbie Kovalik is looking at short term and long term solutions, and the two may be very different. Mr. Lipton feels the major beneficiary of the Avalon Theatre now and in the future will be downtown Grand Junction. Ed Lipton feels it is unfortunate that the major beneficiaries, the City and the downtown are only tentatively willing to commit \$1 million each toward a renovation project. Steve Thoms stated that this commitment was forged under an assumption that this would be a \$5 million dollar project. Roger Davidson stated if you want to attract strong technology related companies, you must have a facility housing strong arts and entertainment value. Ron Beach spoke to the agent who represents the Smothers Brothers to get their opinion about the Avalon Theatre. They said they had a wonderful experience here, they saw nothing wrong with the Avalon for their type of performance and they would love to come back.

Item 8: Next Meeting Dates - Tuesday, July 22, 8:00 am at Two Rivers Convention Center**Item 9: Items for Next Meeting**

Fund Raising Feasibility Study Interview Results. Public Access Web Site discussion and decision. Avalon Theatre Advisory Committee at-large candidate interviews, Downtown Development Authority Board and Avalon Theatre Foundation Board appointed candidates.

Item 10: Adjourn

Harold Stalf moved to adjourn. Ed Lipton seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 a.m. by acclamation.

Unanimously Approved:

Yes 5

No 0

Respectfully submitted,

Dina Jones

Sales and Planning Assistant, Two Rivers Convention Center and the Avalon Theatre