

Murray Arts Advisory Board
Minutes for July 19, 2016

Attendance: Scott Mooy, Carolyn Milne, Lori Steadman, Deborah Daines, Alisa Brousseau, Kevin Westenskow, Becca Spjute, Mary Ann Kirk (staff)
Excused: Wendy Richhart, Bonnie Tollefson

1. Minutes for June 21, 2016 were approved with a few minor corrections.
2. Attendance for 1776 was 1436 with a very good house on the last night. Total revenue was \$9600 which almost covered the full cost of the production less the royalty and our tech. We did have one complaint about the language and Mary Ann gave them some comp tickets for a future show. We actually toned down the language significantly but they wouldn't allow us to change the lyrics in a song that used the word "God" frequently. The symphony concert was almost completely full with 680 patrons, 35 cannoneers, and 80 musicians. The ballet had about 600 between the two nights. Mary Ann is going to suggest they start at 8 pm in the future, especially when the second act is geared towards kids. Starting at 8:30 pm is too late. The show didn't end until after 10:30 pm. The free daytime concerts were small for the week of July 4th but picked back up to the average between 100-150. We had more attend when we were participating with the brag tag program. The family night concert was excellent with about 120 attending. Becca wondered if we need to vary the times for families with children. Programs seem to be in the day and later at night. Mary Ann thought we did have a variety of times. The daytime concerts are at noon and 2 pm. The family night series is at 7 pm. We can't start the evening shows in the amphitheater until 8 pm because of the sun on the stage. Alisa agreed that some people think the family night concert is for seniors since it is held at the senior center. Mary Ann would like to see more families attend this event but at least the senior center location assures we have an audience.

Mary Ann noted that proceeds from the upcoming jazz concert on August 27 will go to the Murray High band program. Band students will operate the gate. The organizers have asked the Murray High jazz band to provide a 20 minute preshow. Mary Ann doesn't know if they will be ready to do something like that or not. It will be up to the band teacher.

3. Our facebook page numbers have increased significantly. We are up to 600 "likes." Our administrator posts about 2 a day. Board members noted they don't see many posts. Mary Ann explained patrons have to interact with the post itself to receive more of them. Apparently a small number of people who have "liked" the page actually get all the feeds. She said she goes directly to the facebook page to see what she has missed and then tries to share various posts.

The Tribune social media project is doing very well. Response has been 7 times higher than the industry standard. The email listing produced over 2000 addresses of people who clicked on the image which took them directly to our Arts in the Park website with an order form. She has asked them to link our facebook page going forward with their facebook posts since our facebook page has more detail and up-to-date information. Mary Ann asked what she should do with the addresses that include Murray and the surrounding communities. Should we mail a brochure next year to all these patrons? That could cost over \$1000. Becca said she likes a hard copy of the brochure. Scott wondered if we could identify how long the people spent on

the site or if we can tell if they clicked on the site more than once to identify more committed patrons. Some wondered if we should just focus on Murray addresses. Mary Ann noted that most Murray residents typically get the Murray Journal which has all the information. Deborah said she used to get it, but not anymore. After discussion, board members concluded that most of these people are probably ones who utilize social media, so we should focus our funding on additional social media posts. We still direct mail to patrons who have not provided email addresses which are typically the seniors.

Kevin asked if the city has considered a marquee. Mary Ann said it has been discussed but it is expensive and some people don't like the commercial element of it around the park. Kevin said Sandy Amphitheater has a big marquee. Mary Ann mentioned that we can use the Murray Theater marquee. Kevin feels like Murray has so many activities going on and the public doesn't know about them. Mary Ann noted that we have distributed information through many different avenues including direct mail, social media/facebook, brochures through schools, banners on the overpass, and monthly sections in the Murray Journal. In the past, we have done radio and major newspaper ads that are very expensive with little return. We also tried direct mail coupons with little return. She didn't know what else we can do to get the information out there. Scott wondered if we know who our audience is. Do we know the demographics of our community? Mary Ann said we have that and it does include a high percentage of seniors. But we do have a broad range of programming for all different ages. We also have focused on featuring local art groups, not big names groups like the Sandy Amphitheater. Scott suggested we talk about this more in the future. Mary Ann said it is a challenge to catch the attention of everyone. When people come in to buy tickets in advance, they have the option of giving us their email. A suggestion was made to have a prompt on our website to ask for email information when patrons sign up for a class.

A question was asked about credit cards. We do lose money when we use them. Mary Ann wondered if we should charge to use a credit card. To this point, the city has chosen to include this cost in the advertised price of the ticket itself. When we have better access to credit card machines in the new amphitheater, most will use that form of payment.

4. The Murray amphitheater latest design was reviewed. It has addressed the main points we discussed last month except the pit which would add too much additional expense. The amphitheater tech director wanted to put grass in at the top but it is too steep. It would require a tiered seating and would be very expensive. It could be done later if needed. It now includes a cover over the ticket booth and concession area. We are losing seating capacity with the handicapped seating and aisle. But chairs could be brought in if needed. The consultants are doing another cost estimate to see if the cost has substantially increased. Then we will formally put it out to bid. If it is too far over budget, we will need to find additional funding sources or ask the city if they want us to cut back on design elements.
5. Mary Ann described an endowment fund that was established in the name of the Murray Arts Advisory Board through the Utah Arts Council many years ago. We provided funds along with the Murray Ballet Center which was matched by the state. It was designed to grow over time and support local budgets from interest and additional donations for each group. It was also designed to allow any local art group to participate with us. But no additional money was going in and the annual interest amount was very small which has been accruing in the fund. Most groups have pulled out of the program which was difficult for the state to administer for very little benefit to the local groups. Murray's finance manager has suggested we do the

same. If we have a large donation in the future, the finance director said we could set up an endowment fund easily. Other art organizations could do the same and he felt they should be administering their own endowment fund. The initial donation was \$2500 with an additional \$3300 provided by the state as a cash match. It has grown to about \$11,000. The state's initial contribution of \$3330 will stay with the state and the remaining amount will come back to the city which will be prorated and distributed between the ballet and the arts budget. Board members felt that decision made sense.

6. The music specialist contract is still in negotiation with the school district. It included a requirement to include 30 minutes of instruction per week per student/classroom (with exceptions for holidays and other occasional conflicts) and regular professional training for teachers. Wording was added to involve the school board and city council coordinating meetings if we disagreed about the service provided. The superintendent didn't like this wording so Doug is trying to work through his concerns. But Mary Ann has stressed that the 30 minute requirement is the core of the contract since that is the whole point of the funding. Becca thought the service varied between schools depending on the principal. Some get 45 minutes and much less in others. Some board members still expressed concern about the quality of instruction. Several parents complained last year and one parent said that one school instructor was just playing music videos. Becca noted that no one visits the music classrooms and since teachers don't come with the students, no one knows what instruction is being provided. She also noted that they did not have regular training last year. About three schools are strong, but most of the others are questionable quality. MaryAnn said they are hiring someone to coordinate this and she will talk to them about these issues including accountability of what is actually being taught.
7. The school year schedule was reviewed. Projects and dates were confirmed for Plein Air, Missoula Children's Theater, Halloween History Storytelling, Haunted Tales, Juried Art Show, Arts Power, Storytelling residency/city festival, Dance Festival, and Secondary Art Show.
 - We will combine the plein air event followed by an exhibit at city hall with museum day on September 24. This will bring in more patrons.
 - Board members preferred Monday but since UEA weekend went through Monday, we will host it on Thursday, October 27. Board members preferred the library instead of Wheeler Farm.
 - The Halloween storytelling project will be a true story from the 1920s about a mother who poisoned her family. The funeral for two children was held at the Murray 2nd Ward with Jenkins Soffe Mortuary handling the services. Wendy DeMann is writing a script that involves a courtroom scene. The Alano Club (AA) agreed to let us use the building on either October 21 or 22. The history board will finalize that date.
 - Board members discussed the music competition. It has little participation. Becca liked this program and suggested we utilize the PTA Reflections program to inform students of other competition opportunities. The board decided to sponsor the music competition again this year.
 - Board members liked setting up the art show inside the library – not the auditorium.
 - Arts Power will be at Murray High and Mary Ann plans to ask surrounding school districts if they would like to share the costs of a 2nd show for their students. Some teachers didn't like the balcony situation at Cottonwood High.
 - The community art pass tentatively has a large number of concerts. Cottonwood High and AISU have asked to include more of their theater programs. Some of the programs are similar (Shakespeare and Broadway review) and dates overlap other dates. Board members felt it allowed options. Patrons

don't need to attend everything. Scott said it should be included only if we have a confirmed date and title. Mary Ann wasn't sure if the AISU request is coming from their administration or just a parent who wants to advertise the school itself. Mary Ann noted that it is a public charter school and it has a fair number of Murray residents who attend the school. Board members suggested we talk to the administration to determine if they really need additional patrons and verify if they will accept the art pass. We don't share the revenue for the pass. Each group is basically receiving advertising for their program. We typically average around 70 passes which are largely seniors who want something close to home. Board members wanted to leave the price the same for this year. A few suggestions were made for the opening paragraph of the season flyer and the formatting to make it easier to read.