

**CLARK PLANETARIUM ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

**Location: Virtual and In-Person Meeting**

**Thursday, November 16, 2023**

**Board attendance:**

Ahsan Iqbal-Chair  
Jim Brass-Vice Chair  
Rod Parker  
Bianca Lyon  
Andrea Garavito-Martinez  
Jim Karner  
Emily Lenhardt  
Jordan Hansen  
Jonathan Ebbeler  
Michelle Love-Day  
Laurie Stringham

**Board absent:**

Madelaine Anderson  
Olga Siggins  
Tanasia Valdez  
Marisol Perez Gonzalez

**Others Present:**

Duke Johnson  
Jason Sills  
Richard Cox  
Maureen Ford  
Mike Sheehan  
Joe Stohel  
Kunbi Adekunle  
Andrea Doubek  
Jayceen Craven Walker

- I. **CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME** at 12:40 p.m. by Ahsan Iqbal.
- a. Ahsan asked each of the attendees who were present what Thanksgiving tradition with their families they liked the best. People responded with a wide variety of activities.
  - b. Ahsan asked if there were any public attendees or guests present. There were none.
  - c. Ahsan asked the Board members if any of them had received public written or verbal comments to be presented to the Board. None were brought forth.



## II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- a. Ahsan asked for a motion to approve the minutes for October. Rod Parker made the motion to approve them, and Bianca Lyon seconded it. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- b. Ahsan then brought up Board recruitment. He noted that with the number of people falling off, it would soon be hard to achieve a quorum. He asked the Board to forward any recommendations to Duke. Duke said that starting January, there will be three vacancies, with more to roll off by the first of July. We will have seven slots to fill.
- c. Ahsan stated that there will not be a December Board meeting.

## III. PLANETARIUM REPORT

- a. Financials. Kunbi said that the total October cash register revenue was \$256,823. Attendance was 196,455 from the beginning of the year. Earnings from the beginning of the year are about 2.3 million.

Dome science shows are doing well, and we expect that trend to continue until the end of the year. Entertainment shows include the new Taylor Swift show which has just opened, so we expect those numbers to be good. Bianca mentioned that she had seen the show, and it was just fun. It was great to see



the Planetarium so creative. Richard mentioned that we bought the show cheap from a company back east and we made our investment back in the first showing. Kunbi said the IMAX shows are also trending higher than budgeted. We recently opened "Dark Skies," and another new show is opening, "Train Time." Good things are happening.

Memberships took a slight dip. The store is trending higher this time than last year and we expect this trend to continue. The revenue was less than projected due to fewer eclipse glasses being sold than expected, but we did make our money back on their purchase. Duke said that, even if you took the eclipse glasses out, we're still up. Concessions are up and we've been trying a lot of new, fun stuff to sell. Rentals are beginning to increase, so we believe we'll meet our targets for the rest of the year.

- b. Hiring has been completed, and there are no full-time positions left to fill.

Jayceen mentioned that she has moved from development into education. Duke noted that during the County budgeting process, the Planetarium was tasked with eliminating a position, so her old position will not be filled. This means that no one will have to be laid off.

- c. Duke said that the Community Services budget (of which the Planetarium is a part) has been presented to the County Council and its review is underway. We should know our final budget on December 6 when the announcement is made public. Due to rising staffing and indirect costs from the County, we realize the need to diversify fundraising for 2024. He asked the Board to help identify possible donations and grants.
- d. Richard talked about the new Taylor Swift laser show. Five of the first six shows sold out. Overall occupancy for the six shows was 66.86 percent, which is phenomenal. He said that the show's popularity may help increase memberships. He also said that, since the investment cost of this traditional type of show is so low, we're looking into pursuing others like it. We could then rotate entertainment shows on a more frequent basis. Bianca mentioned that the free shows that come with memberships may be a good way to market them.

Richard said that the next IMAX show is "Jane Goodall, Reasons for Hope," which will be a partnership with the Natural History Museum and Salt Lake Community College. It was scheduled for January but will now open the first week of December. Jason said that the Museum of Natural History is opening an exhibit on Jane Goodall, so we're opening the show early to coincide with it. There will be a two-dollar reciprocal. We'll also be partnering with Salt Lake Community



College on the show. We will open a small exhibit here, where professors will work on different environmental sciences showcasing what they do and presenting the College as an opportunity for students to start their science journey. We will also have a speaker series January through April, with April culminating in Earth Day where we will showcase all the environmental sciences. We're really trying to build more of a relationship with the University of Utah and Salt Lake Community College. Jayceen mentioned that we will have a member event on December 6. Utah Hogle Zoo will be participating in that.

Richard said we are also opening "Train Time," which opens this weekend. We also just opened "Deep Sky."

Laurie Stringham said that we have the opportunity to partner with Union Pacific in 2024 as they tour Big Boy No. 4014 across the United States. She has contact information and once they have a date set, it would be ideal to work with them and coordinate something. Richard said it sounds like a good opportunity.

Richard said that by the end of the year, we will have opened fifteen new shows between both theaters. It's been a wild ride this year. Marketing has done a wonderful job helping us through this. It's been a great year for the Planetarium with programming opportunities, especially with collaborations. He then went

over the licensing costs of the films. Rod asked how long a show plays for.

Richard said the length of show run depends on attendance, but we try to have a show play on some level for about six months. A lot of the shows are then put in the school library, and we can have them available for years. He said that programming is something that has to be constantly managed.

- e. Jason said that we just submitted a grant for \$150,000 with matching funds which will extend over three years. It's for a collaboration program with the Salt Lake County Libraries which we're calling "Space for All." Some of the offerings will be having some our exhibits traveling to different libraries for about two months at each branch over the three years. We are also planning star parties and classes to train people, first to observe with the naked eye and then moving on up to some basic astrophotography. We would also be training librarians and offer some stem programming. We submitted a grant to IMLS for some cost sharing on both the equipment and personnel sides. We should hear back in about ten months.

Jayceen said that we were successful in receiving a grant for \$70,000 from the Utah Division of Arts and Museums. This is contingent on the Division having the funding available, so we need Board members to contact their legislators and

make sure that money is in their budget. Legislator Family Night will be on February 5.

- f. Richard said that we are thinking of opening a show called "Mesmerica" to run in the IMAX Theatre on Friday and Saturday nights since the theatre is currently dark and quiet during those times. It's an opportunity to explore some alternative content and some additional revenue.
- g. Jason said we will be launching the new website in January. We've been working with the County Web IT. It will be similar to how it is now, but with an upgrade.
- h. Duke went over other things that are in the works: invitations will be coming out for 2024 Board meetings, the roof is currently being replaced (half right now and half sometime in the spring), we have new digital signage inside and out, a bid is about to go out for our 400 West space, our dashboard project is making strides, and nine volunteers will attend our first-ever training on Friday.
- i. Mike then showcased some of the products that will be available for purchase in the store. He also announced his retirement in January and was given hearty congratulations and sincere thanks for the work he has done.



IV. CLOSING REMARKS

- a. Ahsan adjourned the meeting at 1:56 p.m.

DRAFT