

## CLARK PLANETARIUM ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Location: Virtual and In-Person Meeting

Thursday, August 20, 2026

### Board attendance:

Mike Maxwell, Vice Chair

Joe Bauman

Ken Gritton

Bob Moore

Priscilla Hansen Neve

Patrick Neville

Shawn O’Kane

Michelle Schmitt

Tanasia Valdez

Gina McBride

Natalie Pinkney, Council member

### Others Present:

Justin Anderson

Maureen Ford

Duke Johnson

Tera Nicolo-Smith

Scott Sherrick

Jason Sills

Anna Swenson

Jason Trump

Jayceen Craven Walker

Summer Wells

### Board, absent:

Rod Parker, Chair

Andrea Garavito-Martinez

Emily Lehnardt

### I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME at 12:36 p.m. by Mike Maxwell.

- a. Mike Maxwell asked the Board members if any of them had received public written or verbal comments to be presented to the Board. Bob Moore shared positive comments received from a 4 – 6-year-old kids group how much they love the Clark Planetarium exhibits.

### II. REVIEW OF MINUTES & CURRENT BUSINESS

- a. Mike asked if there were any questions or comments about the June 2026 minutes.
  - i. Joe Bauman motioned for approval of the minutes and Bob Moore seconded.

The June minutes were approved.



- b. Mike asked the Board for votes to confirm the nominations of Rod Parker for Chair and himself for Vice Chair.
  - i. All votes unanimously confirmed those positions
- c. Duke Johnson shared information with the Board that was from conversations had with Rod Parker. These were plans to focus on both diversifying revenue and philanthropy. One way to diversify revenue will be through continuing with the Strategic Planning over the next year; the report will be sent to the Planetarium at the end of August. Another way will be to have the Board support the philanthropy efforts through a committee that will assist the Development department. Additionally, there is talk about having an entrance fee in the future.

### **III. PLANETARIUM BUSINESS & DISCUSSION**

- a. Duke Johnson shared the July financials. Overall, July was successful across numerous areas. Of note was how well the IMAX® performed, along with associated areas like concessions. Duke pointed out that any improvements in numbers are due to solid staff efforts and a willingness to jump in to take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves.
- b. Duke mentioned the following dates as they relate to any of the proposed changes put forth to the County. These dates include the Revenue Committee that happened on August 14, the Mayors Budget Meeting on August 26, The Mayor's budget proposal on October 20, the Council recommended budget on November 24, and the Public hearing and County Council budget adoption on December 15, 2026

- c. Scott Sherrick talked to the Board about theatre attendance and ticket trends.  
  
June (about 4% guest and 11% ticket decrease in June) and July (6% in guests 9% increase in tickets). The Planetarium also saw a 2% increase in guests over this time last year. If this 2% increase continues throughout the year, it's projected to put the 2026 attendance at 675,000.
- d. Jason Sills shared theatre updates and discussed the efforts that have been made to provide new and unique offerings to the public. He mentioned the SciFi films that began earlier this year along with the first-run films like *The Odyssey*. There have also been other opportunities that the Planetarium has taken advantage of, like the recent Phoebe Bridgers album release show that happened in the Hasen Dome Theatre. These events and shows have helped balance out some of the lower ticket sales to the regular film offerings.
  - i. Duke added that these types of events are made possible because of the enormous amount of work and willingness of staff to try new things and pivoting as needed.
- e. Justin Anderson talked to the Board about recent Development plans and campaigns and how much work he and Tera Nicolo-Smith are doing to build an infrastructure for philanthropy at Clark Planetarium.
- f. Duke Johnson informed the Board that there will be 5 positions that need to be filled in September. He asked if they knew of anyone who would be a good fit, to have them apply for the Board.

- g. Summer Wells shared her experience at an IT conference that she and Scott Sherrick attended. Summer explained numerous newer technologies that could benefit the Planetarium and options that the IT department are investigating.

#### IV. COMMUNITY PROGRAMS UPDATE

- a. Anna Swenson shared numerous photos and events that happened over June and July. These include an adult-only rocket building workshop, a star party at Silver Lake and an upcoming cell phone astrophotography class. Participation numbers in June programs were 4,220 and July was 3,189.

#### V. CLOSING REMARKS

- a. Mike adjourned the meeting at 1:57 p.m.