

MINUTES
Clark Planetarium Advisory Board Meeting
October 17, 2019

Clark Planetarium Third Floor Classroom

Board members present

Jim Karner
Michael Hanson
Allison Thompson
Rees Petersen
CiCi Compton
Jonathan Barnes
Ahsan Iqbal
Dr. Ulrich Rassner
Kim Wilson
Sam Klemm for Councilmember Richard Snelgrove

Absent

Thomas Beckett
Weston Clark
Jake Garn
Jordan Hansen
Bianca Lyon
Olga Siggins

Others present

Nick Hoffman
Rob Morris
Lindsie Smith
Duke Johnson
John Zierow
Anna Marie Tueller
Holly Yocom

Rees called the meeting to order at 12:40; he asked if there were any comments, corrections or additions to the August minutes. Upon hearing no comments, corrections or additions to the October minutes Allison made a motion to approve; this was seconded by CiCi. Rees then opened the floor to public comments, upon receiving no comments he opened the floor to pre-determined business.

Planetarium Updates

Holly gave an update on the selection process for the new director. She said they have narrowed it down to five candidates and are planning a second round of interviews for the last week of October or the first week in November. They may also do a third round of interviews the following day.

Anna Marie Discussed the budget. Expenses: 56% percent of the budget supports salaries for our "32 merit employees and approximately 70 plus temporary employees." Thirty percent is allocated to building upkeep, our fleet of four vehicles, utilities, royalties for our theaters, leasing shows for our dome theater, office supplies, travel, the marketing budget, educational supplies, and other operational activities. Seven percent is allocated to inventory for the items

in the store and the food in concessions. We also budget for county overhead to support services such as County attorneys and this comprises 7% of our budget.

Revenue: 47% of our revenue comes from general property tax revenue. Thirty percent comes from in-house revenue, which includes tickets to shows, items in the store, concessions and facility rentals. Sixteen percent comes from grants, with the largest grant from the Utah State Board of Education at about \$955,000 annually. Two percent comes from our gala and sustainer memberships. Three percent from in house star shows and exhibits sales. We are budgeted to have \$6.5 million in revenue and \$6.5 million in expenditures for next year, It is a balanced budget.

Duke continued to discuss the budget: During the process of putting together the budget we evaluated the costs and benefits of our programs, particularly dome show production. There was a time when Clark Planetarium was the leader in that field and one of the things we have been known for in the industry; however, we realized that this fact is changing. There are a lot of other companies entering this field that are releasing good content. The cost of creating the shows in-house is high and the revenue generated is low and continues to decrease year over year. We can purchase quality dome show content for a fraction of what it costs for us to create the shows in-house. We made the decision to discontinue the making of star shows.

Holly added that the County “asks everybody to evaluate their budgets and determine where they can do stress cuts to see where they would be. This is where the idea came from.” This was a very hard decision for the leadership team to make. They proposed the idea and then started really looking at it and realized that this cut is something is in the best interest of the Planetarium.

Duke then discussed the realignment of positions, noting that the staff affected by this decision will be offered new positions. One of the new positions will be a Community Outreach Coordinator. The Community Outreach Coordinator will be responsible for planning events and programs in our facility as well as coordinating volunteers to help run these programs. The other position will be a Database Analyst. And the third is still being determined.

Lindsie discussed the Database Analyst position. “Managing our data is really important. We want to know where our customers are coming from and what they are buying.” This position is going to be responsible for managing the data and the interface so that it positively affects our customers. This will be helpful to ensure that all frontline staff can understand our interface and help customers with whatever they need. We have been in maintenance mode since 2003 and this will help us understand where the issues are so that we can resolve them.

Lindsie added that the cost for us to make a show is \$500,000-\$600,000 a year and there have been some shows that we have created for which we never recoup that cost. We can buy good content for \$20,000-\$30,000.

Duke clarified that this change does not impact the production of exhibits or games.

Anna Marie continued discussing the budget. In September we had a building closure and during this time we have companies come in to do deep cleaning of the seats in the theaters and the carpets. Even with the closure we still had the highest sales in six years, and revenue was \$10,000 over what we brought in from the same time last year. Year-to-date we have brought in an additional \$35,000 over last year.

Lindsie noted that last year we had \$500 in contributions but that it has increased to \$1900. "This is mostly sustainers so thank you, board members, for bringing in new sustainer members." Anna Marie also added that this number goes up the closer to the Gala we get.

Lindsie added that we will be opening a new movie in November called *Back from the Brink*. Then in February 2020, we will be showing a film about dinosaurs that correlates with a new exhibit at the Natural History Museum.

Education Update

Nick Hoffman talked about school outreach. He presented three projects that he has been involved in this last year.

The first was a project with the county Office of Data and Innovation to display delivery of services in the County. He showed the associated dashboard screens that display our school data.

The second was an overview of the number of student experiences we provided. This is based on outreach, field trips, and resources. The resources are kits of materials that we loan or give out to teachers for them to use when teaching their students. Overall feedback from the teachers has been positive.

Finally, Nick talked about the new 6th to 8th-grade science standards. These new science standards involve students having more active hands-on engagement with science and engineering. This last year the state Board of Education developed a new set of science standards for kindergarten through 5th grade and then high school (9th through 12th grade) and we supported them in that project. There is now going to be an astronomy standard in the 4th-grade science curriculum, this is a rough adaptation from the third-grade curriculum. With this change, we will be developing tools to help teachers with the new information they will be teaching next year. We are developing a new 4th-grade dome show that adapts and adds some information from our third-grade show. We are also working on a new teacher workshop that will help explain the new content to the 4th grade.

Gala Update

Lindsie discussed the *Moon to Mars Gala*. We had a revenue goal of \$80,000 but we fell short by about \$8,000, mainly due to sponsorships. Sponsorships totaled \$31,000 this year, which is down from last when we brought in \$78,000. Night of revenue was the best ever and we

brought in \$35,000 this year whereas last year was only \$28,000. Total revenue was \$72,000 this year.

Lindsie thanked Ahsan because his donation generated the most revenue of any of the auction items.

Lindsie sent out a survey for the board to fill out and send some feedback about the Gala.

Rees asked the board to share something impactful that you saw at the gala. CiCi said that the stilt walkers and the photo booth made it a fun atmosphere. But said that the hour and a half for the silent auction, socializing and eating was not long enough; Jon said that the stilt walkers creped him out. He said it felt very Clark Planetarium, it fit right into the brand; Ashan said that the stilt walkers were cool and set it up for the Instagram crowd; Ulrich said it was playful, and that Dr. Hoffman was exceptional; Kim said that it seemed crowded and that he didn't have time to bid on anything. He also said that the sound in the Imax was great; Jim said that he had a great time. He and his guests enjoyed the adult night out. He suggested that we have a pitch for memberships; Weston said he was unable to make the speaker portion but that he liked the fun elements of the stilt walkers; Allison added that she liked the visuals. Especially the thermometer for the Fund-A-Field trip. She suggested that we continue the silent auction as people are sitting down for the lecture. She liked the text reminders and the names on the thermometer; Rees said that the food was great. He suggested that we not have tables again. It was amazing to have a standing ovation; CiCi added that we need to do some more experience-based auction items.

Lindsie thanked the staff for their hard work.

Rees closed the meeting at 1:40.

The next board meeting will be held on
Thursday November 21, 2019
at 12:30 PM in the Clark Planetarium classroom.