

Cheyenne Theater Meeting Minutes



January 17, 2022

Attending: Board Members Larry Barnes, Pat Cress, Robert Grace; Manager Jessica Lee; Assistant Manager Emily Mullins; and City Representative Dara Carmichael.

Lila left us a financial report.

Meeting is held at 6:00 PM, in the *Cheyenne Theater* lobby.

We do have a quorum attending.

The last month's **minutes and treasurer's report are approved with a motion by Pat, second by Larry, and unanimous vote.**

Jessica reported that on Friday night the projector blew a fuse, which caused the movie to be canceled. Terence Lamb, local electrician, came by and replaced the fuse, and gave us some spares. The staff **gave passes to everyone who didn't see the movie** because of the projector failure.

We have a bat in the theater. Jessica talked to Wildlife Office Hopper, who recommends that we find the outside entry hole, then get ready to fill it, but not do that until an evening in the spring when the bat is outside, so that we don't trap the creature inside. We could construct a closable grate, too, Hopper said. We will do this in the spring. It is against the law to kill the bat.

We had a long **discussion about advertising.** There are reportedly people who want to advertise in the theater, but the Board has previously ruled against it. This is an ongoing discussion which surfaces repeatedly.

This current Theater Board prohibition against advertising is for at least two reasons:

The first reason is that people who pay for the movie tickets can resent being subjected to ads. They paid for a premium experience, similar to Netflix, not "free" TV, which is advertising-subsidized. Robert said that he personally finds it objectionable in theaters where they run ads, but he admitted that it is done in some theaters. The Board doesn't know what percentage of theaters do this, however. (Later, one internet search showed that in 2019, advertising revenue was about 2.5% of total theater revenue.)

The second reason is that the **ads' content will almost always irritate a portion of the audience:** this is especially true if the ads are political or religious in nature, but even if they aren't in those two categories there can be adverse effects. Dara noted that BankWest does not allow political or religious ads on their big outside community billboard sign.

Robert also gave the example of a business owner seeing a company advertised which competes with the owner. Or perhaps a business patron who has a bad experience with a business viewing an ad for that same business extolling its virtues.

Robert said that while people who want to advertise have a hard time understanding this, because they can't imagine that their content would be offensive, it is a real issue.

So the final financial equation is not just the **income derived from the ads themselves, but the loss of income from people who stop coming to the movie** because of the above objections. Those people might not return to the theater, even if the ads in question are no longer playing and no longer generating theater revenue.

The Board **decided not to change the existing prohibition against taking ads.**

Jessica says that *Coke* is now delivering to Super Foods, and the *Coke* delivery problem seems to be solved.

The Theater employees worked the *Thrift Store* again, and raised another \$243 for the Theater. The **Board again applauds this "above and beyond" effort by the staff.** It helps the community and raises money for the theater, and is a completely volunteer effort by the staff.

Jessica reported that we have an **issue getting popcorn containers because of supply chain issues.** The problem is with the larger sizes, and the ones that we can get aren't big enough. There was discussion, and we tried checking other sources, but this is a tough problem right now. We expect it to sort out over time, but right now there are no obvious solutions offered. We hope to have a report at the next meeting on this issue.

We are going to have a **donation jar on the counter** for patrons who want to donate to the theater. This is both to raise money and to create awareness that the Theater is a non-profit organization.

We decided to run an ad to **try and fill the empty Board seat.** Robert will write it and send it to Jessica for the *Herald* and *Facebook*.

Discussion about the meeting Robert has with the renovation-plan architects, including John Hathaway. Many avenues are discussed. We want JR to look at the plans and give us input.

The issue of **new versus renovating is a difficult one,** and the Board seems split on the best way to go. This is the first decision that needs to be made.

The **planned renovation will make the theater much better and safer** and provide more ADA compliant bathrooms, but the **building will still not be energy efficient, and the remodeled bathrooms, lobby, and concessions area will still be smaller than is optimal.**

In addition, we will be heating and cooling large areas behind the screen that have no functional value, and we will be heating and cooling a facility with **about 90 more seats than it needs for the size of the current audience.** This inefficient heating and cooling represents both economic loss and environmental damage.

A new building would solve virtually all of the above-mentioned shortcomings, and **would provide the community with a safe, well ventilated, economical building for decades.** Building new, while possibly **less expensive over the long term, would cost more initially,** and there would be the real issue of what to do with the old building.

Additionally, there are almost certainly some community emotional ties to the old building, since it has such a long history in the community.

The Board directed Robert to try and **obtain more information about funding avenues for both methods,** and the Board wants to discuss this issue more, possibly with the City Council and maybe even getting community input. It is a major decision, and it needs to be considered carefully and in detail.

Adjourn 7:15 PM