

## Meydenbauer Theatre Policy Updates

At this meeting, Brittan Drake, the Theatre Manager at Meydenbauer Center, will provide an update on theatre activity as well as discuss recent amendments to two existing theatre policies: the *Theatre Schedule Policy* and the *Theatre Rental, Labor Rates and Contracting Policy*. These policies were last revised on 11/17/17. The intent of the amendments is to provide structural changes in our booking policy which will support our existing theatre clients booking patterns as well as provide improved access for new clients. The changes also include market rate increases to rental rates, labor, and equipment.

### BACKGROUND

The updated policy and procedures documents provide for an established process for clients to reserve dates of use, sets the rates for theatre rental and labor charges, and defines the contracting and deposit policy.

Proposed changes to the policies relate to these areas:

1. Move from a “Seasonal” booking calendar to a “Prioritized” booking policy.
2. Revised contracting and deposit process that increases access for all groups and should increase the amount of performing arts performances and revenue annually.
3. Market Rate Adjustments
4. Inclusion of language from Convention Center for event spacing to prevent competing events from scheduling around each other in such a manner that one or both events could negatively impact the attendance and admission of each other.

### SCHEDULING POLICY CHANGES

Our previous booking policy was based on a September to August, seasonal performing arts calendar. This policy no longer reflects the booking pattern and performance schedule for most of our client base. Our growing client base of cultural arts groups schedule their events based on travel schedules of “featured” artists and their development of artistic content.

Revisions to the existing policy give priority based on frequency of usage and no longer relying on a prescribe seasonal calendar. The new policy would reflect the following booking priority:

- *Resident Artists* – Are defined as performing arts groups that have held two or more multiday performances at Meydenbauer Theatre with the past 12 months. *Resident Artists* can hold dates 18 months in advance and must sign contract(s) 12 months in advance with a non-refundable deposit
- *Recurring Artists* – Are defined as performing arts groups that have held one multiday performances in the past 12 months. *Recurring Artists* can hold dates 14 months in advance and must sign contract(s) 10 months in advance with a non-refundable deposit
- Art groups that don’t meet the preferred qualifications can hold and book dates for individual and multiday performances inside 12 months. They must contract and pay a non-refundable deposit within 30 days of their hold.

- Any qualifying performing arts group can challenge the “hold” of an existing group inside of 14 months. The existing group must decide within 5 business days to book or release the dates. If the existing group decides to book, a signed contract and non-refundable deposit must be received within 30 days.
- Event spacing will apply to scheduling and booking policy to prevent competing events from scheduling around each other in such a manner that one or both events could negatively impact the attendance and admission of each other.

Staff has done extensive modeling of this new policy and have determined that new policy supports the needs and protects the priority of our current client base regardless of whether they book their performances on a traditional “seasonal calendar” model or not. This new policy also allows emerging and new artist groups increased access to our venue in a manner that is clear and consistent.

The new policy allows us to eliminate the historical clause addressing holiday or “magic season” bookings. The intent of the prior “Magic Season” policy was to provide access to multiple art groups during the traditional holiday season. The actual result was restricting performances for one or more of our “Partners”, now “Resident Artists”, while providing high demand dates for performing arts group(s) that use our Theatre less frequently.

Another key change in our booking policy is that all Fridays and Saturday will be booked at the performance rate and never at our rehearsal rate. Fridays and Saturdays are our highest demand dates for performances.

The Theatre Scheduling policy retains booking priority for room night producing Conventions that require the use of the Theater to support their event.

## CONTRACTING PROCESS CHANGES

Our previous policy allows all clients to wait until 5 months in advance of their date to execute their contract and pay a 50% non-refundable deposit. This allowed performing arts groups to reserve dates up to 14 months in advance with no penalty if they decided to cancel and allowed groups that met booking priority to overbook desirable weekend dates while subsequently releasing those dates restricting bookings and access for performing arts group with lower priority. The intent of this policy was to limit the financial burden to performing arts group, however the result was reducing access for new clients and reducing the number of annual bookings.

Our new contracting process requires “Resident Artists” to sign a contract and pay a 25% non-refundable deposit at 12 months out. “Recurring Artists” would contract and pay a 25% non-refundable deposit at 10 months out. All other groups must sign a contract and pay a non-refundable deposit within 30 days. Non-refundable deposits are based on performing arts rental rates and are scheduled in a manner that balances financial impacts to performing arts group while protecting the financial interests of the BCCA.

## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: 2023 Theatre Scheduling Policy

Attachment B: 2023 Theatre Rental Labor Rates Contracting Policy

## CONTACT

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