



THE BOX UPDATE AND DIRECTION

Community & Economic
Development Department

City Council
February 26, 2019

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BACKGROUND

1. Opened May 2013
2. Research and community meetings regarding the facility fees
3. 3-tier rate
 - Commercial
 - Non-profit
 - Performance-based



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BACKGROUND

On April, 19, 2018, the Development Committee met and a motion was made by Chair Gardner and seconded by Vice Chair Perry directing staff to:

1. Prepare an analysis of what would be required to make The Box at the Fox Entertainment Plaza successful as a community theater;
2. Reach out to members of the community theater groups and discuss feasible rates; and
3. Look for alternative locations for a comedy club and return to the City Council and Development Committee.



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BACKGROUND (CONT.)

On November 29, 2018 the Development Committee met and voted unanimously to recommend that City Council:

1. Approve an 18-month trial period for reducing the facility rental rates and service pricing fees by 35% for The Box;
2. Recommend maintaining the existing facility maintenance fee of \$1 for 1-299 attendees and an increase to \$2 for 300-599 attendees and \$2.50 for 600-899 attendees per production;
3. Approve The Box Committee's recommendation to increase overall funding for The Box and authorize a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$25,000 to The Box Professional Services Account for development and implementation of a marketing plan;



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BACKGROUND (CONT.)

4. Direct staff to research, provide cost estimates and direction for implementing a unified ticketing system for use by participating performing organizations and return to the Development Committee with costs and options;
5. Request the Box Committee to continue to meet to address and evaluate the overall performance of The Box; and
6. Request the Community & Economic Development Department to return to the Development Committee and City Council at 6 months and 18 months of the trial period to provide progress updates.



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DISCUSSION (CONT.)

What has worked well and what needs to be improved:

1. Lack of comprehensive marketing (knowledge of The Box, signage, etc.);
2. Cost of The Box is too high;
3. Good resources, staff and technical assistance;



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DISCUSSION (CONT.)

4. Good that we have a black box;
5. Flexibility is good; and
6. Mixed direction on use to staff over last two and a half years led to missed opportunities.



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MODELS

1. Co-op
2. Co-presenting
3. City sponsorship
4. Outside non-profit to lease/manage
5. Models from other city run theaters/black boxes
6. Current model with modifications



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SITE VISITS

1. Old Town Temecula Community Theater/Merc;
2. Lewis Family Playhouse at Victoria Gardens Cultural Center in Rancho Cucamonga; and
3. Pasadena Playhouse.



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PROPOSED REDUCED FEES

Non-profit Facility Fee	Type of Days	Cost	General Fund Gain/(Loss)
Current	3 Techs & 3 Performances	\$3,200	\$200
Current	2 Techs & 1 Performance	\$940	\$260
Proposed @ 35% Reduced	3 Techs & 3 Performances	\$2,080	(\$920)
Proposed @ 35% Reduced	2 Techs & 1 Performance	\$611	(\$69)



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RECOMMENDATIONS

That City Council:

1. Approve an 18-month trial period for reducing the facility rental rates and service pricing fees by 35% for The Box;
2. Approve maintaining the facility maintenance fees of \$1 for up to 1-299 attendees and an increase to \$2 for 300-599 attendees and \$2.50 for 600-899 attendees per production;
3. Authorize a supplemental appropriation from General Fund reserves in the amount of \$25,000 to The Box Professional Services Account No. 2880200-421000 for development of a marketing plan and implementation;



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RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT.)

4. Direct staff to research, provide cost estimates and direction for implementing a unified ticketing system for use by participating performing organizations and return to the Development Committee with costs and options;
5. Request the Box Committee to continue to meet to address and evaluate the overall performance of The Box; and
6. Request the Community & Economic Development Department to return to the Development Committee and City Council at 6 months and 18 months of the trial period to provide updates.



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