
TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: THEATRE CONTRACTS

WARD: ALL

PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT: O. GROVES, MANAGER OF CULTURE, EXT. 4794

SUBMITTED BY: K. DUBEAU, DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE ECONOMY

GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: Z. LIFSHIZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INVEST BARRIE

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the Director of Creative Economy or Manager of Culture (or her/his designate) be authorized to enter into contracts with organizations seeking to rent the Mady and Georgian Theatres, and with external presenters commissioned by the City of Barrie to diversify the array of theatre programs offered and to be within the limits of the Council approved Business Plan.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

Report Overview

2. The purpose of this Staff Report is to ensure that appropriate administrative procedures are in place to enable Staff in the Creative Economy Department to sign contracts with external organizations that want to rent either the Georgian or the Mady Theatres, and to negotiate and sign contracts with external organizations that offer theatrical and musical productions.
3. In 2009 the City of Barrie entered into a new lease agreement with Georgian College for the operation of the Georgian Theatre. Motion: 09-G-277 noted that the management of the Georgian Theatre become the responsibility of the City of Barrie's Department of Culture.
4. When the operation of the Georgian Theatre was transferred to the City of Barrie it coincided with the dissolution of the Gryphon Theatre Company. The Artistic Director for the Gryphon Theatre Company, Barbara Aoki became a City of Barrie employee and she is currently employed at the Mady and the Georgian Theatres. The City of Barrie has utilized the programming expertise that came with Ms. Aoki and her current role includes researching and recommending theatrical and musical programs for both theatres.
5. In 2010, the City of Barrie opened the Mady Centre for the Performing Arts at #1 Dunlop Street West with the intention of providing a home for two local professional theatre companies, Talk is Free and Theatre by the Bay. The theatre was to provide an incubator space for small community theatre organizations such as OnStage and Kempenfelt Community Players. Although the Mady Centre is currently utilized around 150 days per year, and the Georgian Theatre is used 135 days per year, there are opportunities at both theatres to increase the level of programming.

6. City Council has commented that they would like to see the use of the space increased. In the spring of 2016 Onalee Groves, Manager of Culture presented to Finance Committee a proposal for increasing the use of the Mady Centre. She outlined a list of presentations and performances that would both animate the Mady Centre and increase the days of use. The array of programming was designed to provide a wider selection of programming for City of Barrie residents and tourists to enjoy without competing with local groups offerings. It was through this presentation that staff became aware that there was no delegated authority for Creative Economy Department or Culture Branch Staff to sign contracts with external organizations for theatre productions.

ANALYSIS

7. With the creation of the new Creative Economy Department, there is a focus on reviewing and strengthening best practices of the Culture branch. This new authority to sign theatre contracts and bind the Corporation to agreements of this nature would be a step in aligning good administrative practices, and in alignment with current practices in Facilities and Recreation departments.
8. As the City of Barrie is committed to providing equal opportunities to all arts organizations, both not-for-profit and commercial, this authority will allow staff to seek out opportunities to increase the variety of programming offered at the two theatres and research additional opportunities for space utilization, within the financial limits of the Council approved business plan and budget.
9. The Creative Economy would like to take this opportunity to capitalize on the knowledge of the programming staff and explore innovative programming options within the financial limits of the current business plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

10. There are no environmental matters related to the recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES

11. The following alternative is available for consideration by General Committee:

Alternative #1

General Committee could maintain the existing policy/procedure with respect to signing authority.

This alternative is not recommended as it will maintain multiple levels of review for theatre rental contracts. From a process perspective, this is less efficient and may be burdensome for existing approvers given the current and anticipated contract volumes. This suggested change will also align with the broader effort to be "Open for Business", and to deliver high quality, responsive service to the organizations that rent City facilities.

FINANCIAL

12. There are no financial implications for the Corporation resulting from the proposed recommendation.

LINKAGE TO 2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN

13. The recommendation included in this Staff Report support the following goals identified in the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan:
 - Vibrant Business Environment

14. The ability to sign contracts with presenting theatre companies, musical production companies, and local dance organizations etc. will increase the profile of the City of Barrie theatres, as the staff will have more ability to reach out and engage new arts and business partners. This authority will provide staff with the opportunity to explore innovative ways to utilize the theatre spaces and increase the lines of business, thus creating a more vibrant business community. This authority will allow staff to connect with the multi-cultural community and encourage them to utilize the 2 theatres for their various programs.