Ojai Art Center

Theater Branch

07 July 2026 / 7:00 PM / Raymund Room

ATTENDEES

- Anna Kotula - Chair
- Jill Dolan - Vice Chair
- Herb Hemming - Treasurer
- Christina Fabbro - Secretary
- evan austin, Steve Grumette - Members at Large
- Tracey Williams Sutton - Artistic Director
- Laura Light - Technical Director
- Other Attendees: James B, Robin, Andrew, Lenny

AGENDA

Call to Order

- Approval of Previous Minutes - Anna
- Motion: Approve previous meeting minutes.
- Moved by: Jill
- Seconded by: Herb
- Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Treasure's Report - Herb

- Checking Account Balance: $26,731.55
- Previous month-end balance was approximately $40,000.
- June Income: $2,145.38
- June Expenses: $12,978.45

Major expenses included:

- Partial payment for Company
- Performance rights
- Artistic Director expenses
- Website costs
- Graphic design
- Technical Director expenses
- Costumes

- Batteries and repairs
- Software subscriptions
- Miscellaneous production expenses

The Treasurer noted that:
- Several Company ticket deposits had not yet been received.
- Payment to the Arts Center for The Cemetery Club remains outstanding.
- Cash flow fluctuates significantly throughout production cycles, but finances remain manageable with careful monitoring.

Technical/Facility Report

- Audience Curtain Installation
    - The audience-side curtain installation has been completed.
- Discussion included:
    - Ease of audience entry
    - Curtain functionality
    - Recommendation to split the curtain into two sections for easier access
    - Possibility of securing open curtains with simple hardware

  Action Items
    - Complete installation on the opposite side before next month's meeting.

  Stage Curtains
- Discussion centered on:
    - Proper hanging methods
    - Replacing temporary installations
    - Assisting with installation of new burgundy curtains.

  Sound System
- Technical improvements include:
    - Two new auditorium speakers have been built.
    - Installation is scheduled shortly.
    - Dimmer packs are being repaired or replaced as necessary.

  Board members expressed appreciation for the continued volunteer work improving theater infrastructure.

  Projector Wiring
    - Concern was raised that temporary projector wiring has remained in place for an extended period.
    - Technical staff confirmed permanent improvements are planned.

Artistic Director Report

Planning for the upcoming season is progressing well.

Highlights include:

- Expansion from five productions to six productions.
- Musical moved back to its traditional summer slot.
- Youth production moved earlier in the season.
- Additional flexibility created for future productions and readings.
- Rights acquisition is still pending for several productions before the season announcement.
- No official season announcement was made.
    - Time slots were presented for the 2027 season
        - Show 1: Jan 29-Feb 14
        - Show 2: Mar 12-April 4
        - Show 3: May 7-May 23
        - June 25-July 3 (Youth Branch Production)
        - Show 4: July 23-Aug 15
        - Show 5: Sept 24-Oct 17
        - Show 6: Dec 3-Dec 19

Production Updates

Company

- The production continues successfully.
- Strike Planning
- Discussion included:
    - Final performance weekend
    - Positive attendance for weekend performances
    - Friday ticket sales remain lower than desired
    - Positive reviews and media coverage received
    - Additional publicity continues through online outlets.
    - Strike Planning
        - Strike will begin immediately after the final show.
        - Plans include:
            - Meeting with the next production team to determine reusable scenery.
            - Removing unnecessary set pieces.
            - Painting the stage for the next production
            - Assigning cast members specific strike responsibilities.
            - Board members volunteered assistance where available

Seussical Jr

- Projected income: $16,230
- Expenses: $10,874

- Net: $5,355.75
- External funding secured ($2,000)
- Budget considered reasonable

Our Town

- Director and production team reported:
    - Marketing efforts include:
        - Added a social media manager to the production team.
        - Strong interest anticipated for auditions.
        - Auditions scheduled for July 18 & 19.
        - Production meetings are underway.
    - Marketing efforts include:
        - Press releases
        - Advertising
        - Publicity expenses
        - Program printing
        - Social media promotion
        - Photography
    - Production Budget
        - The proposed production budget was reviewed.
            - Several members noted that costume costs appeared high, while others explained the large cast size and historical period require additional expense. There was a proposal to increase the budget from $300.00 to $700.00
                - Motion made to approve the production budget by Christina.
                - Motion seconded by Jill.
                - Motion carried unanimously.

Audience Development Initiative

A proposal was presented to encourage first-time theater attendance by offering complimentary tickets (subject to availability) to individuals who have never attended/or have not attended in many years.

- Goals include:
    - Growing new audiences
    - Collecting attendee feedback
    - Building long-term patron relationships

Scheduling

A shared production calendar has now been implemented.

- Current schedule includes:
    - Company
    - Our Town

    - Theater Branch activities

Future improvements discussed:

- Public online Arts Center calendar
- Easier public access to performances and events
- Better coordination among Arts Center branches

Marketing Report

- Marketing updates included:
    - Positive publicity for Company
    - New social media assistance
    - Continued coordination with publicity volunteers
    - Discussion included transferring social media account administration to ensure continuity.

Play Readings and Community Programming

- Recent meet and greet/play reading attracted approximately ten participants.
- Future ideas discussed included:
    - Additional play readings
    - Halloween dramatic readings
    - Short play festivals

Parking Lot Operations

Extensive discussion focused on parking lot management.
Concerns included:

- Gate security
- Liability
- Locked gates
- Volunteer responsibilities
- Vehicle safety

Recommendations included:

- Assign dedicated parking attendants
- Consider modest compensation
- Clarify producer responsibilities
- Develop consistent front-of-house procedures

Front of House Operations

Discussion highlighted the need for:

- A designated Front of House Coordinator
- Standard responsibilities for each production
- Better continuity between productions
- Clear volunteer assignments

Adjournment

The meeting concluded with informal discussion and the Theater Branch entertainment presentation, and birthday recognition.