

Union Council
 August 14, 2012
Meeting Minutes
Agriculture, 3rd Floor, Union South

Members			
Ms. Sarah Mathews, Union President	X	Ms. Sarah Langer, ASM Representative	
Ms. Tara Centeno, VP - Program Administration	X	Mr. Sam Seering, ASM Representative	X
Ms. Jose Cornejo, VP - Public Relations	X	Ms. Alex Rezazadeh, ASM Representative.	
Mr. Courtney Severson, VP - Leadership Development	X	Ms. Chelcy Bowles, Faculty Rep.	X
Mr. Mark Guthier, Secretary	X	Mr. Jeff Haupt, Alumni Rep. (MUBA)	X
Mr. Hank Walter, Treasurer		Ms. Teri Venker, Alumni Rep. (MUBA)	
Mr. Ben Ferris, Interim WUD Representative	X	Ms. Lori Berquam Dean of Students, Ex-Officio	
Mr. Andrew Bulovsky ASM Chair		Ms. Susan Dibbell, Asst. Dir.-Programs, Ex-Officio	X

Staff: Ms. Heather Heggemeier, Director's Office Assistant

Guests: Ms. Wendy von Below, MUR Project Manager

Call to Order

President Mathews called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Open Forum

No one came forward.

Wisconsin Union Theater and University of Wisconsin Arts Institute Partnership and Memorial Union Reinvestment Enumeration

This was a special meeting that took place at a time during the year when many of Council's student representatives are generally unavailable to meet in person. The Union Council Chair allowed voting in absentia, and this meeting served as a discussion point and a forum to share and request information. The meeting will be taped, and the audio recording will be sent out to all Council members. The Chair asks that all members send in their votes via email no later than noon on August 21st.

President Mathews referenced the proposed Memorandum of Agreement, and then gave some background on the issue. Part of the original dream for Phase I of the Memorial Union Reinvestment was an expanded orchestra pit and a shell with rigging for the Wisconsin Union Theater. As the estimators did their job, the item was eliminated at the 35% review level of the project's budget process. Not long before this meeting, campus administration contacted the Union and noted that the venue needs of the Theater Department and the Performing Arts

Department weren't being met. They saw an opportunity for a partnership between the Union and the university to provide space to meet those needs. The university will take responsibility for raising the funds for the proposed change to the building plans, and the UW Foundation has agreed to support their efforts. In order for this to move forward, Union Council will need to approve an increased enumeration of the budget, from \$52 million to \$53.2 million. This will have no effect on segregated fees. Union Council approving the partnership as laid out in the Memorandum of Agreement will also be required for the project to move forward. The increase in enumeration will have to be approved by the Board of Regents in late August in order to then be approved by the State Building Commission. This timeframe is the cause for the irregular meeting time. The Provost has agreed to go out and raise these funds on behalf of the Union, and the UW Foundation has agreed to pay these funds if he fails to do so.

The issue was discussed earlier in the design process, but the pieces never came together for the partnership until now. The new School of Music is scheduled to be built, but their recital space is designed to be used for a performance space for chamber music, symphony, and choral, not for theater and drama, etc. There will still be a significant need for such a space, which would be filled by the proposed changes to the Wisconsin Union Theater.

Our orchestra pit currently comfortably accommodates 18 musicians, and the new configuration accommodates 40, which is in line with industry standards. Any space reductions are coming from storage space as opposed to seating, so the proposed seating numbers for the Theater would not be affected. Another major aspect of this plan change is the inclusion of a new shell. Because storage space is scarce, the shell would have to be "flown," i.e. hung from the ceiling, in order to be hoisted up when not in use.

Ms. Mathews asked the group to share their initial reactions to this potential partnership.

Mr. Ferris noted that he has had three significant experiences that would give him insight into this issue. His first was as a stage hand at the Wisconsin Union Theater. It was difficult and dangerous to move the shell into place when it needed to be used, and equally so to move it back into storage. His second was when he played in the orchestra pit as a part of Music Hall, at which time the group was cramped, uncomfortable, and worried for danger to their instruments. The third was as a part of the Performing Arts committee. He feels it would be a tremendous opportunity to be able to bring in more Broadway musical performances, which would be made possible with the new design.

Ms. Boyles echoed his thoughts, drawing on her background as a harpist. She noted that Music Hall is not a suitable space for the programs it currently holds, and that if those programs are intended to grow, a new and/or improved space will absolutely be required.

Mr. Haupt stated that any improvement to Wisconsin Union facilities should be pursued, but he would like to be sure to have a discussion of priorities for programming in the Wisconsin Union Theater. He wants to make sure that everyone is aware of if and how this partnership would change what is done in the theater.

Ms. Severson thought that the proposal is a good idea, but she is concerned for student workers. She feels that the student workers should come from the Wisconsin Union. If necessary, there could be an agreement reached between the other campus partners.

Mr. Seering noted that it is a really good idea, but he has concerns about the structure/wording of the MOA.

Mr. Cornejo is also concerned about implications for programming, etc., but he feels that this is why Council is establishing the committee in the first place.

Mr. Guthier is anxious to ensure that the MOA process creates a win-win for everyone. He feels that this is creating an opportunity for student organizations at large, but he wants to be sure that this opportunity does not come at a cost for WUD's traditional programming.

Mr. Guthier gave an overview of the MOA. He noted that it describes the process for the proposed committee to come to an agreement, and also gives a timeline. The MOA notes that Union Council and the Arts Institute would have to agree to the final version. He wanted to make sure that the proposal protected the Union, and did not send Council down a path that they didn't want to end up down.

Mr. Guthier also said that a large part of the agreement formulation will include discussion of the following items, as well as others.

- *Space Use and Rental – priorities, amount of access, costs, etc.* The Union Theater right now has about 300 uses per year, and we would want to know the expected number for the future.
- *Staffing – sharing, collaborating, substituting, etc.* What does this mean for student employees, both of the Union and otherwise?
- *Student Internship Potentials*
- *Co-Production Opportunities* Mr. Guthier gave the Rocky Mountain Horror Show as an example of co-production that was very successful and created a lot of excitement on campus. This partnership would be geared towards making that possible on a more frequent basis.
- *Inventory – sharing, collaborating, etc.*

Wording could be included in the Memorandum of Agreement to lay out what would happen if an agreement isn't reached by December 31st. Mr. Guthier suggested that it be simply that the committee comes back to Union Council and the Arts Institute and ask for an extension.

Mr. Haupt asked for clarification regarding the stakeholders in this agreement. The Arts Institute includes all of the arts presenters on campus, including the School of Music, Theater and Drama, Dance, Textile and Design in SOHE, the Art School, and the Wisconsin Union is even part of the Arts Institute. The MOA indicates that the Executive Director of the Arts Institute and Mr. Ralph Russo, Director of the Wisconsin Union Theater, would be co-chairs of this committee.

The question was raised of what events and performances, because of these groups' involvement, would be assumed to be included in the Wisconsin Union Theater annual usage. In other words, who would be a part of the negotiations for usage and to what extent? Ms. Dibbell and Mr. Guthier noted that they didn't feel these usage negotiations would be difficult, but that they would collect as much information on the traditional programming of these groups as possible, and would distribute that to the group. The idea of the Wisconsin Union creating partnerships with these groups has been discussed for some time, but this proposed committee and increased enumeration would give the ~~impotence-impetus~~ for it to actually happen. Part of this partnership will mean that we now have access to these groups' spaces as well, which we hope will mean that we can match student organizations with venues that better match their needs. Ms. Mathews would like to amend this Memorandum of Agreement to include that this proposed committee is responsible for soliciting input from student organizations that regularly use the Union Theater and other performance spaces. Others agreed, and Mr. Ferris noted that it would be of great advantage to student groups to have an increased number of options for venues and seating capacities.

Mr. Seering said that from what he's hearing, this seems like more of a simple negotiation rather than a need to establish a committee. He questioned whether a committee would be necessary and whether it would be more efficient for the two directors to sit down together and work out the details. He also recommended having the staff representatives appointed by the faculty senate and the academic staff assembly.

Mr. Cornejo asked if Ms. Mathews planned to find student appointees that were already engaged with the Union Theater. Ms. Mathews noted that if the current proposal were to be approved, she would plan to look for one student who does have experience in the space, and one student who represents the shared governance philosophy, perhaps even someone who sits on Union Council. She noted that this also would depend on who would step forward to volunteer. Ms. Mathews said that the committee structure is intended to get a variety of opinions from all stakeholders, while allowing the group to be nimble and meet regularly. Mr. Seering also recommended including the director of CFLI or their appointee as part of the committee structure.

Mr. Haupt requested information on the calendars of all of these groups, to see how much overlap the calendars had. If there is only a little overlap, these might be a very simple negotiation, and he agrees with Mr. Seering in suggesting a simpler negotiation. If there is a lot of overlap, it would indicate a more complex negotiation, in which case Mr. Haupt is all for a carefully structured committee and in depth considerations.

Mr. Haupt said that any changes to the Union Theater's usage this could mean an impact on revenue.

The increase in enumeration will have to be approved by Union Council by Tuesday, August 21, in order to be approved by the Board of Regents and then the State Building Commission~~er~~. It would be vastly preferable to have the Memorandum of Agreement approved at the same time, but if necessary it could be approved soon after. If Council were to approve the enumeration, it could go through the Board of Regents and then be pulled from the State Commission~~er~~'s agenda. Even if it were to be approved by the State Commission~~er~~, it wouldn't necessarily have to be built. Ms. Dibbell, Mr. Guthier, and Ms. Mathews felt confident that any requested information could be disseminated before the deadline to vote on Tuesday, allowing Union Council to make an informed decision. Mr. Haupt noted that if the group decides it cannot vote by Tuesday, one possibility, instead of expanding the timeframe to the September 4 meeting, would be to request input from general Council, and have Council Exec finalize the committee composition.

Ms. Severson suggested that the co-chairs draft a proposal and bringing it to the committee to save time.

Ms. Mathews asked the group to comment on who they felt the President's student appointees should be. The group agreed with her earlier statements, and also noted that it would be important to include students who are knowledgeable about the arts on campus.

A summary of the discussion:

Changes suggested:

- Note what is to happen if the committee fails to reach a decision by December 31.
- Designate the faculty senate and the academic staff assembly to appoint the faculty members and academic staff, respectively.
- Add a CFLI representative.
- Include solicitation of input from RSO's that frequent the theater in the duties.
- Include consideration of the future growth of programs throughout negotiations.

Information that will be disseminated and/or questions to be answered:

- Summarize the overlap between these groups' calendars.
- Specify what rationale will be behind the Union President student appointments.
- How complex and/or large does the committee need to be?
- If a large committee is needed, what will be its composition?

Adjournment

President Mathews adjourned the meeting at 7:35pm.