

**SPECIAL WORK SESSION
BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND PARK BOARD**

October 28, 2008

The Board of Aldermen and Park Board, City of Kearney, Missouri, met in a special work session with the Amphitheater Subcommittee at Kearney City Hall, 100 East Washington, October 28, 2008 at 6:30 P.M. with Molly McGovern presiding.

ATTENDANCE Board of Aldermen present were Alderman Holt, Alderman Couchman and Alderwoman Hayes. City Staff present were Mayor Dane, Molly McGovern, Jim Eldridge, Shirley Zimmerman, Brian Hall, Eric Marshall and Ryan Marcotte. Park Board present were Kelly Peitzman, Mike Miller, Beverly Poynter and Ed Haney. Amphitheater Subcommittee and Knights of Columbus present were Nathan Meinert, Ken Meinert, Larry Pratt, Mark Yehle, Chad Coffelt, Cathy Ibarra, Steve McDonald, Jeff Vineyard and Rod Will.

INTRODUCTION Mayor Dane said this is a debriefing for the 2008 season and planning for the 2009 season. He said he has asked Molly McGovern to lead the discussion.

Molly McGovern said she will go through a series of questions and it will be open format for responses. She said she wanted everyone to be thinking of what their first impression of their first visit to a concert at the Amphitheater was and she will ask for that at the end of the meeting.

What was your favorite event this season? What made it a success?

- Head East/Shooting Star – Local connections in bands really helped advance ticket sales.
- Adult Comedy night
- Hotel California
- Hillary Duff/Hannah Montana – Really neat to see families there and the kids rush the stage.
- Fourth of July – Live music at the Amphitheater helped the atmosphere.
- Outlaw Junkies/Bellamy Brothers – Amazed at size of crowd considering it was raining the entire time.
- Blues Fest – Would be more successful if for a shorter period of time or had vendors set up.

What area(s) do we need to improve the most? Why and suggestions?

- Advertising level - It was decided that we have to spread the word through advertising and we need to evaluate all avenues of advertising. Radio advertising seemed to work the best.
- Increase event offering
- Advance ticket sales locations – Have some place such as Big V to sell tickets. Should be the same place all the time. Maybe have season tickets or family passes.
- Online payment – Be able to buy tickets on line and use credit cards
- Directional signs – Have signage in town showing way to Amphitheater
- Security – More lighting in parking lot and maybe an ATV patrolling the parking lot

- Concession Stand – Must shorten lines even if it means simplifying menu to get faster. Must have all four windows open on larger events in particular. No complaints on prices or quality of food. Should add a vendor for BBQ if event is a good match for that type of food. Knights of Columbus said they will look at prewrapping sandwiches next year. They used 57 different individuals for the 17 events out there and put in 1020 volunteer hours. They said if they open all four windows they may need more signage

What physical improvements should we make for next season?

- Sound System – Purchase the rest of the sound system so we aren't setting up and taking down all the time. Also will save on cost of individual events.
- Port-a-Potty – Waterless hand sanitizer or hand washing stations
- Senior Citizens – Cement sidewalk area for them to access lawn area
- Trail Utilization
- Lighting in parking areas and identify rows so people can find cars easier
- Add large shelter house along top terrace for corporate sponsors and a shelter in event of rain, etc.
- Build rental gazebos to add to event and for tailgating
- Concrete pad from dance portion to the sound system in lawn area
- Widen drive to Amphitheater
- Gate – Separate lines for advance tickets and cash. Will need additional signage. Maybe move gate further into the park. Hand out flyers to promote next event and maybe have a refrigerator magnet with schedule at beginning of season.

Comments/suggestions regarding current ticket pricing/sale of tickets and what ways can we increase awareness/interest in our events?

- Sell for more than one event at a time. Consider a season ticket-Make it a punch card so it can't be used more than once for an event.
- Contact list could be obtained from online shopping and credit card use. Email addresses would be good. Have them fill out a card when purchasing tickets (which would slow down ticket sales) or have them put email address on back of tickets and we would collect that at gate.
- Web site is being used by out of town people. Should try to have links to the band sites of groups coming.
- Take flyers to other towns. Maybe form an Ambassador Group who would go out to businesses and other towns.
- Group idea – Encourage people to make it a business or family outing as a group.
- Radio usage – Go to radio station and do interview. Maybe have band be interviewed on radio.
- Freeway advertising – See if someone would allow us to use space on their billboard to advertise events.
- Advertise in Missouri Tourism magazine. Contact Cheryl Thorp at PCEC to help develop a solid marketing plan.
- Reach out for a bigger name for at least one event. Maybe get a large Corporate Sponsor for that event.
- Go from \$5 to \$10 for tickets. May want to match ticket prices to level of event. If you raise prices and quality of shows it will be a win-win situation.

What type of entertainment do you think we should host next season?

- Will have same amount of money for funding. Can do 7 or 8 same and one big show or do 9 shows and stay the same.
- Want to keep schedule to where it can be used by some non profit also. Want to keep family theme as much as possible.
- Have at least one kid event and maybe try to schedule it to where it can be marketed to the schools. Maybe do something for the teens as well as smaller children.
- Like formula of a mix of type of events.
- Encourage people to come early and tailgate or eat at local restaurants. Bands do dictate time can open gates.
- All day event not good for Blues or Irish Fest. Maybe start at 5:00 P.M. rather than 1:00 P.M. Need Barbecue for Blues and Irish Fest needed vendors.

What three things can we do to make next year even more successful?

- Keep the quality of groups
- Have one or two large name groups
- Raise ticket prices and have another place to purchase besides City Hall

What was your first impression at your first event at the Amphitheater?

- Knock out and gorgeous setting
- We have the best
- Well kept secret
- Wow factor
- Hearing groups of people say “This is out of sight.”

Mayor Dane thanked everyone for participating and he said he would like to do some form of summary now.

How to market

- Tourism such as Missouri Tourism magazine and contact Cheryl Thorp at PCEC
- Radio
- Billboard usage if possible
- Use system similar to Ambassador system – Maybe give people buying tickets ten cards with schedule on it to mail to people or something along that line

Name four big groups

- Emerson Drive
- Joe Diffey
- Kentucky Headhunters
- Doobie Brothers

It was the general consensus of the group to bring back Shooting Star and Outlaw Junkies from last year. It would also be fine to do a shorter version of the Blues Fest and have back the two better groups at that event.

Everyone felt we had the right number of events. If you schedule too many events you wear out your volunteers.

Mayor Dane said Staff will go over the notes from this meeting and start working on a temporary schedule. There will be another meeting after the first of the year.