

Sedona Performing Arts Center ~ A Community Involvement Forum

The Dialogue Begins: A Report From March 5, 2015 / 5:30-7:30 PM

Facilitated by: Dave Lykins, SOCUSD Superintendent
Russell Fox, Conductor, Arts Advocate

First, a sincere “Thank You!” to all the concerned and engaged arts administrators, performers, patrons, donors, school district and city officials, and interested citizens who so willingly shared their visions for SPAC and its potential full integration into Sedona’s cultural fabric. This has begun a rare opportunity for all forward thinking viewpoints to be aired and considered. We encourage your continued engagement and dialogue.

If you wish to make a difference, please become informed and vocal by actively supporting the arts for Sedona’s future now. To receive periodic ‘SPAC Today E-News’ updates: www.SPACToday.org. Downloadable PDF updates are available at:

<http://www.sedona.k12.az.us/sedona-performing-arts-center.html>

I. Welcome & Background – Superintendent Dave Lykins

- A. SPAC has yet to fulfill its mission as a performing arts center serving Sedona and the surrounding communities. The High School and District needs are being filled, but the greater community remains underserved.
- B. Though bookings have slowly increased, SPAC remains unused for 250 (+/-) nights and weekend days per year.
- C. If developed, SRRHS and SPAC could support a magnet school/academy for the performing arts. Working with Yavapai College could allow college credits to be earned for magnet school studies.

II. Identified Performing Arts Issues – Russell Fox

- A. **Scheduling:** Season planning & negotiated contracts require a minimum lead time of at least one full year.

Suggestions:

- Consult with other HS/PAC combos for suggestions/options.
- Managing Director oversight responsibility. Student needs always under consideration while integrating a full community & professional schedule of performances, appearances, meetings & multi-day rentals for Summer/Vacation time conferences.

B. Fee Structure: Current fee structure severely limits local accessibility and resulting SOCUSD revenue.

Suggestions:

- Institute a local-friendly, non-profit, professional multi-tier rental fee structure. A professional Managing Director plus local input responsibility.
- With lower fees, revenues will rise due to increased usage.
- Community perceptions of prohibitive expenses is damaging PR.
- Changing to flat rates (not determined on week day or weekend).
- Use 'Commercial Rates' for conventions.
- Explore 'Incubating' funds for lower rental prices.
- Possible City arts allocation/grant support?

C. SPAC Facilities Needing Completion: Basic acoustic and stage rigging necessities required for a fully functioning Performing Arts Center.

- Acoustic Shell
- Functional Pit
- Rigging, Lighting & Curtains
- Ceiling-mounted Acoustic Reflectors for improved natural acoustics.

Suggestions:

- Initiate 'Buy A Seat' campaign to raise funds for improvements.
\$100 per seat x 750 seats = \$75,000. Higher amounts for several front rows could significantly raise the total. Much higher options for 'Buy A Chandelier' donations.
- 'Crowd Fund' facilities maintenance @ \$1/person fee for each show.
- Block off ½ of the theatre for smaller audiences (acoustic curtain).

D. School District Policies for Review:

- **Current SRRHS 'Closed Campus' Policy** prevents production load-in until after 3:30 pm on school days. In Arizona, no other performing arts center attached to a high school is bound by this restrictive, albeit well-intentioned, load-in limitation. [Location specifics, policies and contacts will be presented to the school board.]

Suggestions:

- Refine the closed campus regulations to allow production access.
- There must be 'loading allowed' prior to 3:30PM on school days for desired evening events and performances to even be possible.

- **Review Current Non-School Alcohol Policy:** Permit for evening and weekend non-school fundraising events and intermission sales of alcoholic beverages could be allowed as is done at other Arizona HS/PAC combos. [Location specifics, policies and contacts will be presented to the school board.]

Suggestions:

- Allow alcohol sales to increase revenue opportunities.
- Consider 'Limited Access Permit' as with new park regulations.

III. Needs, Opportunities & New Directions

A. Staffing: Paid, Professional, Non-school personnel

- Managing/Programming Director
 - Scheduling (Community, School and Professional)
 - Booking (Contracting non-local appearances)
 - PR & Advertising (Work with Chamber of Commerce)
 - Ticketing and Subscription Series Options
 - Community Relations: District, City and beyond)
- Technical Director
 - Development, Care and Upkeep of Physical Resources
 - Production Load In/Out oversight.

B. Community Involvement, Support and Usage Options

- -Next Steps after community input asked? Superintendent answered:
 - 1) School board presentation
 - 2) City council meeting
- Write/Develop a solid SPAC mission statement to secure a forward vision, purpose and community benefits.
- Possible 501(c)(3) [*'Friends of SPAC'*] for capital improvements & community support funding to balance/interface with City and SOCUSD involvement.
- Community turn out/support and Community Volunteers need to step up.

- Full community participation must include Citizens, School Board and City government.
- Product (SPAC) development through Chamber of Commerce
- Media expansion and marketing techniques for greater exposure
- Marketing to further communities (Flagstaff, Prescott, etc.)
- Maximize marketing and advertising with social media and internet.
- Provide a 'destination performance location' for all types of artists/genres.
- Creating more performance opportunities for local youth of Sedona & area.
- Youth & adult community-based theatre for local arts involvement, community relations and audience development.
- Charge a nominal \$1-\$3 fee for weekly shows by local artists. As local venues diminish (sound ordinance) performer availability rises.
- Aim for weekly performances with larger (full house) audiences.
- Broadcast shows from SPAC online.
- Rent stage and wing space for smaller performances/events.
- Summer movie nights for community > Free to nominal cost.
- Develop Performing Arts Magnet School for fuller SPAC usage.
- Develop partnerships with nearby cities-Flagstaff in particular with possible bus system to and from.
- Branch out to potential conference hosting.

You are encouraged to continue the dialogue. Please respond with your additional suggestions and insights at: info@spactoday.org

Thank you.

'Together We Can'
(Dave Lykins)