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November 9, 1999

City Council
Sacramento, CA

Honorable Members in Session

**SUBJECT: RESTORATION AND RENAMING OF MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM
LITTLE THEATER, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO MEMORIAL
HALL**

LOCATION AND DISTRICT: Sacramento Memorial Auditorium, Council District 1

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council, by Resolution, approve funding for the Memorial Auditorium Little Theater and Memorial Hall as follows:

- (1) Public/Private funding for the Little Theater and Memorial Auditorium totaling \$962,644.
 - a. \$685,717 privately funded (including \$13,500 for interest)
 - b. \$276,927 Community Center Fund
- (2) Approve privately-funded restoration of the Little Theater Project in the amount of \$685,717
 - a. \$199,812 in-kind donations of labor and materials and \$485,905 from private donations
- (3) Authorize the City Manager to advance \$180,430 from the Community Center Fund to the Sacramento Regional Foundation.
 - a. Funding of the Advance is subject to an agreement with the Sacramento Regional Foundation for accepting funds and an agreement with Bank of the West for guaranteed repayment of the \$180,430.
 - b. Advance to be repaid at an interest rate of 6 percent.
- (4) Establish and Amend the following Capital Improvement Projects within the Community Center Fund:

- a. Establish a new Capital Improvement Project for \$223,427 for heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) work in Memorial Hall.
 - b. Increase CIP MA26 (Memorial Auditorium Renovation) by \$53,500 for lead abatement work at the Little Theater and Memorial Hall
- (5) Approve naming the Little Theater the *Jean Runyon Little Theater*.

CONTACT PERSON: Michael Ross, Convention Center Manager, 264-5297
Duane Wray, Technical Services Manager, 264-8279

FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF: November 16, 1999

SUMMARY:

It is recommended that the City Council approve a privately funded project to restore the Little Theater located in the Sacramento Memorial Auditorium. The restoration would allow the Little Theater to reopen as a theatrical and related venue. It is also recommended that the Little Theater be renamed the *Jean Runyon Little Theater* in honor of the Sacramento civic and business leader.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION ACTION:

None

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Little Theater in Sacramento's Memorial Auditorium was opened in 1927. Over the years, the 295-seat facility has served as a community meeting place, as a stage for many recitals, children's plays and puppet shows, and as an extra room when the entire Memorial Auditorium was rented for a convention or trade show. The Little Theater is designed to be used and rented separately from the rest of the building, although it shares box offices and outside entrances and exits with the rest of the Auditorium. The Little Theater has its own lobby, restrooms, staircase and balcony.

During the recent renovation of the Memorial Auditorium, seismic reinforcements and fire sprinklers were added to the Little Theater. However, the facility is currently unusable and overall rehabilitation of its building systems and interior is required to meet several needs including:

- Lack of heating or air conditioning system
- Deterioration of stage riggings and drapes
- Lack of safely functioning electrical systems
- Lead paint in need of abatement
- Main floor in need of resurfacing
- Theater does not meet ADA requirements

In 1997, the Jean Runyon Little Theater Committee began a fundraising campaign to raise money for the Little Theater restoration and to name it in honor of Sacramento business executive and civic leader Jean Runyon for her many years of outstanding service to the community. *The Jean Runyon Little Theater Restoration Fund* was established through the Sacramento Regional Foundation to collect private individual and corporate donations for the project.

The fundraising campaign will also include a Donor Recognition Wall at the Little Theater to acknowledge donations of \$2,500 or more as well as a seat recognition program which will place a brass plaque on a Little Theater seat for a donation of \$1,000. Design of the Donor Recognition Wall, the brass seat plaques and Little Theater signage will be subject to the approval of the Convention Center General Manager. These acknowledgements are made possible by the generous donations of the Committee.

The Little Theater restoration project has a total cost of \$685,717. In-kind donations of labor and materials are \$199,812 for an estimated net project cost of \$485,905. To date, private donations totaling \$305,475 have been received or pledged for 1999, leaving an additional cash flow requirement of \$180,430 for this year.

The Committee is requesting an advance from the City for \$180,430 to complete the project's financing. Funding of the advance would be made from the Community Center Fund. The advance would be repaid, with interest at the City's 'Pool A' rate, no later than December 31, 2001, and come from cash and pledge payments as they are received by the Foundation. The Foundation reports that it has additional cash and pledges-to-date of \$122,794 (payable in 2000), all of which would be used to repay the City's advance, and \$107,510 (payable in 2001), of which \$57,636 would be dedicated to repaying the remainder of the City's advance. Among the list of pledges are Mc Clatchy Company, Pacific Coast Building Products, Sacramento Rotary, Sutter Health and Raley's.

Under the terms of a separate proposed repayment agreement, if the donations received by the Foundation by December 31, 2001 were insufficient to repay the loan, the Bank of the West would extend a line of credit to guarantee repayment.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Total funding for the Little Theater and Memorial Hall projects is \$962,644. Of that amount, \$685,717 would be spent on the Little Theater Restoration Project and include \$199,812 in in-kind donations of labor and materials and \$305,475 from private cash donations and pledges. The remaining \$180,430 is being requested by the Foundation as an advance.

The remaining projects would include establishment of a new Capital Improvement Project for \$223,427 for heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) work in Memorial Hall and to increase the existing CIP MA26 (Memorial Auditorium Renovation) by \$53,500 for lead abatement work at the Little Theater.

Funding of the Advance and the Capital Improvement Projects will be made by the Community Center Fund. Year-end adjustments will be made consistent with prior City Council action to use the Risk Management Fund to keep the Community Center Fund in a positive balance.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines which exempts minor alteration of existing public or private structures and facilities.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

The recommended action is consistent with City policy to support activities that improve City property and which enrich the community through the cultural and entertainment activities provided hereon. It is also consistent with the City's policy of recognizing those individuals who have made a significant and beneficial contribution to the community.

ESBD CONSIDERATIONS:

All purchases and contract requirements will fall under the City's ESBD requirements.

Respectfully submitted,


Michael Ross
Convention Center Manager

Approved By:


Thomas V. Lee, Deputy City Manager
Economic Development and
Regional Enterprises Agency

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:


Robert P. Thomas
City Manager



LITTLE THEATER HISTORY

Memorial Auditorium's charming Little Theater opened March 7, 1927, two weeks after the grand opening of the rest of the auditorium and the day after Jean was born. The first play was called "Why Marry?" The auditorium and Little Theater enjoyed a happy marriage for 55 years, with the theater serving as the meeting place for the local police union, as a stage for many recitals, children's plays and puppet shows, and as an extra room when the entire auditorium was rented for a convention or trade show.

Now, 70 years later, the union has been broken. The Memorial Auditorium has undergone an extensive and beautiful restoration while the Little Theater remains unusable.

The Little Theater was championed by Mrs. W.A. Brandenburger, and encouraging local citizens to develop their talents was its primary mission. There was a Little Theater movement in the United States in the 1920s. Often called "tributary" theaters, these little theaters were intended as "laboratories" for writers and actors who would, presumably, work their way up to larger venues and bigger productions.

"It is believed that the Little Theater will give new impetus to the community play movement here," reported The Sacramento Bee in a front-page story on Feb. 21, 1927, the day before Memorial Auditorium's grand opening.

The Little Theater, which seats 295, was designed to be used and rented separately from the rest of the building, though it shares box offices and outside entrances and exits with the rest of the auditorium. The Little Theater has its own lobby, its own restrooms and its own staircase and balcony.

Even though many Sacramentans didn't even know it existed, the Little Theater was home to a few historic events. For example, in 1971, presidential candidate George McGovern held a press conference in the Little Theater during the California Democratic Party's annual convention in the auditorium.

During the recent renovation, seismic reinforcements and fire sprinklers were added to the Little Theater. However, many things remain to be done before the Little Theater can be used. The floor is considered too steep for wheelchairs, and the stage and dressing rooms are not accessible. Fire codes make it impossible to use the balcony until another exit can be provided.



Jean in the title role of Miss McThing.

Jean Runyon has more than 45 years of experience in advertising and public relations. She is widely recognized by business leaders, government officials and clients for her many years of public service and her exemplary efforts in business communication.

She was the first woman to be named "PR Man of the Year" by the Sacramento Public Relations Roundtable, is nationally recognized through listings in Who's Who of American Women, and has been named "Woman of the Year" by numerous organizations. In 1986, she was inducted into the Sacramento Junior Achievement Business Hall of Fame and was also named "Sacramentan of the Year" by the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. In 1987, she received the American Advertising Federation Silver Medalist

Award. In addition, she was named "Woman of the Decade" by the YWCA in 1991, received the 1993 "Humanitarian of the Year" award from United Cerebral Palsy, and was named "Philanthropist of the Year" by a national fund-raising organization in 1995.

She has been an active supporter of, and participant in, the arts in Sacramento: Among her roles, Jean starred in "Miss McThing" during the Sacramento Theatre Company's 1954-55 season. She has also been the narrator for numerous music and other performances.



Jean in her early years as a puppeteer.

JEAN RUNYON'S CREDITS

Shakespeare said, "All the world's a stage." The same could be said of Jean Runyon's life.

Here are just a few of her performances that Sacramento audiences will never forget:

Witchie on the Roof: Talk about tradition — for about 25 years, Jean dressed up as a witch and scared the Dickens out of miniature trick-or-treaters from her roof.



Jean in her annual role as a witch.

Sweet Charity: Jean is involved in so many philanthropic pursuits that one former employee comments, "Runyon is the only non-profit organization I've ever worked for."

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Meeting: Jean calls on her car phone to get directions because she's lost. The funny thing is, she's just trying to get to the office.

Les Miserables: Jean ValRunyon is constantly pursued and harassed by "Les Miserables," which, translated, means "the meter maids" or "those Javerts in skirts."

Jean and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat: Jean's passion for fashion makes her the envy around town.

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying: Jean's business has flourished, but it all seems to come naturally, by Jean just being Jean.

The Unsinkable Jean Runyon: Neither rain nor sleet nor the most calloused journalist can stop Jean from achieving her goals.

Hello, Jeannie: Carol Channing makes a career out of looking and acting like our own "Funny Girl."



Honorary Chair

Jean Runyon

Chairs

Ralph Andersen

Estelle Saltzman

Cynthia Adamson

Warren Anapolsky

Stan Atkinson

Norb Bartosik

Ruth Blank

Steve Boutin

Matthew Campbell

Jack Diepenbrock

Jane Einhorn

Gregory Favre

Bob Finke

Hank Fisher

Rick Frey

John Frisch

Daphne Gawthrop

Tony Giannoni

Ron Green

Jane Hagedorn

Tom Hammer

Dave Higgins, Sr.

Muriel Johnson

Van Johnson

Margaret Kane

Cyndi Kettmann

Sotiris Kolokotronis

Rose Lester

Darlene Mathis

Ruth Messersmith

Burnett Miller

Diane Mizell

Dave Murphy

Jack Murphy

Roger Niello

Barbara O'Connor

Tom O'Neil, Sr.

Kristan Otto

Marilyn Park

Forrest Plant, Sr.

Don Poole

Peter Raffetto

Carolyn Reid

Anne Rudin

Jan Scully

Mayor Joe Serna

Louise Shroder

Tad Simard

Kathleen Smith

John Taylor

Gregory D. Thatch

Angelo Tsakopoulos

Malcolm Weintraub

Frank Whittaker

Mike Winn

All contributions to "The Jean Runyon Little Theater Restoration Fund" are tax deductible, and are being held by The Sacramento Regional Foundation, 555 Capitol Mall, Suite 747, Sacramento, CA 95814

RESOLUTION NO. 99-647

ADOPTED BY THE SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL

ON DATE OF _____



RESOLUTION APPROVING A PRIVATELY FUNDED RESTORATION PROJECT FOR THE MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM LITTLE THEATER

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO THAT:

- (1) Approval is given for a privately-funded restoration project at the Sacramento Memorial Auditorium Little Theater for \$685,717.
- (2) The City Manager is authorized to enter into an agreement with the Sacramento Regional Foundation to advance \$180,430 from the Community Center Fund to the Sacramento Regional Foundation for the Little Theater Restoration Project and an agreement with Bank of the West for guaranteed repayment of the advance.
- (3) Establish a new Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for \$223,427 for heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) work in Memorial Hall.
- (4) Increase CIP MA26 (Memorial Auditorium Renovation) by \$53,500 for lead abatement work at the Little Theater and Memorial Hall
- (5) Funding of the Advance and the Capital Improvement Projects will be made by the Community Center Fund. Year-end adjustments will be made consistent with prior City Council action to use the Risk Management Fund to keep the Community Center Fund in a positive balance.

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RESOLUTION NO: _____

DATE ADOPTED: _____

- (6) Approval is given to name the Little Theater the "Jean Runyon Little Theater", and to establish a "Donor Recognition Wall" and "Seat Plaque Recognition Program" for major donors. The design and placement of the donor wall and signage will be subject to the discretion of the General Manager.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

FOR CITY CLERK USE ONLY

RESOLUTION NO: _____

DATE ADOPTED: _____

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