



January 29, 2025
Arena Theater Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes

1. **Call to Order** at 6:01pm

2. **Roll Call**

Present: Lisa Joakimides, Michael Beattie, Mark VanderWoude, Paul Andersen, Tim McMurtry, Steve McLaughlin

Via Zoom: Rod Curbelo, Tracy DuPont

Absent: Blake More

Staff: Shauna Boyd, Dagmar Mosely

Guests: None

3. **Privilege of the Floor/Correspondence**

4. **Approval of the Agenda** Mark moved approval; Michael Seconded. Motion carried 8-0.

5. **Approval of the Minutes of the November 20, 2024 Meeting** Tim moved approval; Steve seconded. Motion carried 8-0.

6. **President's Report** Lisa noted that it was nice to see Board members involved and energized.

7. **Secretary Report** None

8. **Treasurer's Report** Mark reviewed financial reports for the combined period of November and December. The total gain for November and December was \$11,064, which closely aligns with the \$11,172 total from December of the previous fiscal year. Despite covering two months, the figures remain almost exactly on track, as reflected on the right side of the ledger.

Looking at the year-to-date figures for the first nine months, Events show a positive gain of nearly \$7,500; Operations has a gain of \$6,800. The total gain stands at \$14,245, compared to \$23,714 in the previous year. The difference is largely attributed to the timing of events compared to the previous year.

There was discussion about the Operations charges to various programs. Overhead for events is \$150 generally, and \$300 for live events. It was noted that the \$300 can dissuade some smaller performers.

9. **Standing Committee Reports**

a. **Membership** Current memberships are 293 memberships with 464 individuals, up by 14 from the previous count. There have been many renewals, thanks to the successful fall fundraising letter. The Fall/Winter Fundraising letter raised \$8,995, just \$200 less than 2023. The Lapsed Membership Campaign will be starting and appears manageable in size.

ATA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 29, 2025

2024 donations are on par with 2023, with slight variations of a few hundred dollars.

There were 67 gifts in 2024 vs. 63 gifts in 2023—fewer large gifts this year, but more donors, which signals long-term potential. Shauna noted that letters are sent to donors giving \$240 or more, including partnership members contributing in increments.

- b. Fund Development** -- The Annual Spring Fundraiser is March 20 (First day of spring), starting at 4pm with jazz music and mingling. At 4:30, sommelier Diane Baccaro of Rendezvous will host a wine & food tasting for approximately 2 hours. After which, there will be additional mingling and music. It is a formal sit-down event. Ticket prices are \$200 per person, a higher price point due to event costs but aimed at ensuring a substantial return with a smaller guest list. The evening will include a wine tasting of four Anderson Valley wines, 'small bites' paired to complement the wines, catered by chef Aaron Peters, and live music from Lincoln Andrews Duo. The committee is open to any further suggestions for the spring fundraiser.

The Annual Membership Meeting is scheduled for April 30, with candidate statements due by 6 PM on March 27 (at least 30 days before the meeting). Notice of the membership meeting will be posted 20 days prior to the meeting, on April 11 via email, social media and in the newspaper.

Current Members are able to vote online, by mail or drop-off at the Theater, or in person at the event. All votes count toward the quorum, easing attendance pressure on the day of the meeting. All Voting will close at 7:30 PM on the event day.

The Babcock Foundation's \$8,000 grant will fund the replacement of the popcorn machine.

c. Programming

Cinema - Dagmar reported on the January 6 meeting, where cinema income figures were reviewed. A proposal was made to move Music on Film to Saturdays to potentially boost attendance. Discussion centered on securing funding for upcoming events. The new *Western Film Series* sought sponsorships, requesting pledges of up to \$300 to cover expenses. The first film in the series, sponsored by Elk Garage, performed well and did not require additional pledges; however, Elk Garage contributed \$300 regardless. Some confusion arose regarding the distinction between sponsorships and pledges. Dagmar recommended developing a clear policy outlining the processes and differences between the two. Shauna stated that the Theater already has a form and she would forward it to the Finance Committee for review..

Dagmar noted confusion regarding senior discounts, as some members were applying both the membership and senior discounts to the same ticket. To address this, Dagmar proposed a new ticket tier system: General (\$12), Member (\$10), Senior (\$11), Youth (\$8). Also it is a simple way to bring in much needed funding to Cinema as Seniors are our most frequent attendees. Special movies or series (Music on Film, Westerns, Cult Classics, etc.) will remain at \$15 general admission and \$12 for members.

Michael moved approval of the new price schedule; Mark seconded. Motion carried 8-0.

**ATA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 29, 2025**

Dagmar reviewed pricing at four other theaters, noting differences between nonprofit and for-profit models, which can make direct comparisons challenging. Most theaters offer three pricing tiers, typically combining senior and youth pricing. General admission prices at other theaters are generally higher than ours. For example, the Rialto in Sebastopol charges \$15.25 for adults and \$13.25 for seniors and children. Another theater charged \$13 for adults and \$9 for seniors and children. The Theater's \$12 general admission price remains lower than comparable theaters. Notably, many theaters set senior and youth pricing at the same rate.

Live – Shauna noted that the Nth Power show was an amazing show but the Theater lost a good amount of money/Shauna noted that the Nth power was an amazing show even though we lost \$1,160 mainly because only 70 people came out. She has noticed bigger monetary swings, where live acts either bring in or lose more than in the past because of low attendance. Tracy stated that all five Blues on the Coast shows for 2025 have been finalized, with Ronnie Baker Brooks as the first performer on March 2. The Polyrhythmics show is on March 15. A community talent show is scheduled for May 3, the first in-person version since the pandemic.

Telecasts include Met opera, NT Live, and Exhibition on Screen or Great Art on Screen. They aren't on hiatus, but sometimes we don't have one in the upcoming month so there is nothing to report. We did have a Great Art on Screen on Feb 9.

Great Art on Screen – a showing featuring Munch scheduled for February 9.

Met Opera – No report.

NT Live – No report.

Publicity – No report.

Film Club – The most recent screening was Baghdad Café, which had a good turnout and was well-received by attendees. The previous screening, held earlier in January, was The Tale of King Crab. Although fewer people had seen this film, it led to a great discussion afterward. Discussion ensued about issues with licensing by the studios.

- d. **Personnel** The committee had no business and did not meet.
- e. **Facilities** -- Tim reported that the new popcorn machine has been delivered to Santa Rosa and hopes to have it installed on the upcoming weekend. There will be a Theater cleaning day on February 8 at 10am. He noted the solar array has an app that provides reports on our carbon impact on the environment. One particularly optimistic and encouraging update is that, from 2021 to 2024, the Theater saved a total of 316,502 lbs. of CO2 emissions. This is equivalent to planting 2,391 trees.

10. Old Business

Cutting Movie Screening -- There was ongoing discussion about the possibility of reducing movie screenings from four to three per week. This topic remains open for further consideration. At the

ATA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 29, 2025

last Board meeting, it was agreed to include this item on the January agenda and to provide a comprehensive movie analysis to offer more context.

Lisa inquired whether the Board believes it's imperative to cut a screening, or if we might continue with the current schedule for about a year to see how things progress. Concerns about balancing operational costs with attendance were discussed. The Theater has periods of lower attendance and there's tension between saving money by reducing screenings and having the theater remain dark. However, based on Dagmar's recent report, it appears Cinema is currently performing well. While there's no guarantee this trend will continue, there has been a strong run of successful films in recent months.

Lisa recommended tabling the discussion for now and revisiting it when ticket pricing is reviewed. Adjusting ticket prices could be a logical point to consider reorganizing the schedule, potentially aligning both changes for greater impact. There was discussion about studio fees and their impact on Cinema.

11. New Business

Board Retreat – There has been no response from facilitators to Tracy's inquiries, but she will continue working on scheduling the retreat.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:01 pm

Next meeting is February 26 at 6:00pm.