

Council Questions/Comments and Staff Responses Report for June 23, 2014

as of June 23, 2014 at 4:55 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Alderman: Scott Black

Item 6N: Advertisements for the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA) in The Pantagraph. (Recommend that formal bid process be waived, the advertising contract with The Pantagraph be approved, in the amount of \$38,000, and the City Manager and City Clerk be authorized to execute the necessary documents, and the Resolution be adopted.)

Question/Comment: The staff information mentions patrons finding out information regarding the events via the Pantagraph. Could you tell me more about this study? How was the data collected? Was Demographic information captured? If so, what is the main demographic which sites the Pantagraph as their primary reason for knowing about shows?

2) I'm unclear about how much of this money will be spent towards online advertising.

3) Is there data to suggest that print ads are more effective than online marketing?

Overall, I'm wondering if the \$38,000 could be spent in other marketing ventures that would be more effective at building a diverse audience for the BCPA. I may be pulling this item for further discussion on Monday. I look forward to these answers and any insight you may be able to provide.

Staff Response:

QUESTION 1:

Information regarding how patrons hear about show is collected in two ways; at time of ticket purchase and through post-show surveys.

At Time of Ticket Purchase

At time of ticket purchase, the box office staff ask patrons "Where did you hear about the show?" and then record answers in CHOICE, our ticketing database.

To understand the primary source of information reported for last year's season, data was pulled from CHOICE for all shows. The data shows that the Season Brochure was the most mentioned source of how patrons heard about the show and the newspaper (Pantagraph) was the second most mentioned source of how patron's heard about the show.

Post-Show Surveys

Approximately 24 hours after main-stage shows, post show surveys are sent out to ticket buyers email addresses via eblast. The survey is administered through survey monkey, and is approximately nine multiple choice questions with options for open ended answers. One question included is "How did you hear about the show?"

Below are top two answers given in response to "How did you hear about the show?" for the majority of shows in the 13-14 season. Ad source 1 is the most mentioned source. Ad Source two is the second most mentioned source. This is out of approximately 6 source choices plus an open ended option.

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Data shows the season brochure is the most commonly mentioned source of information to patrons at a 90% mention rate. The Pantagraph is second most commonly source at a 60% mention rate.

Show	Ad Source 1	Ad Source 2
Wayne Brady	Season Brochure	Pantagraph
Spank!	Pantagraph	Radio
Taj Mahal Trio	Season Brochure	Radio
Gaelic Storm	Season Brochure	Direct Mail
The Second City	Season Brochure	Pantagraph
Disney's Beauty and the Beast	Pantagraph/Season Brochure	Artsblooming.org
Iris DeMent	Season Brochure	Radio
David Sedaris	Season Brochure	Direct Mail/Email/Radio
Dr. John and the Nite Trippers	Season Brochure	Email
Doc Severinsen	Season Brochure	Pantagraph
Herman's Hermits	Season Brochure	Pantagraph
Buddy Holly	Season Brochure	Pantagraph
Hello Dolly	Season Brochure	Pantagraph/Direct Mail/Email
Dirty Dozen Brass Band	Season Brochure	Artsblooming.org/Direct Mail
Hubbard Street 2	Season Brochure	Pantagraph/Email
Blues Brothers	Season Brochure	Pantagraph
Celtic Nights	Season Brochure	Direct Mail
Church Basement Ladies	Season Brochure	Direct Mail
Fancy Nancy	Season Brochure	Pantagraph/Direct Mail
Whose Live?	Pantagraph	Email

Demographic Information

Demographic information was not collected in either data collection method, as to not be intrusive to our customer. However, last fall we completed a BCPA patron survey sent via email to the entire BCPA database to learn more about our customer and their interest in shows. Through this study we found that the majority of our engaged ticket buyers were 45 years old or older.

We know from our own experience advertising in the Bloomington-Normal area, as well as leveraging resources such as the Newspaper Association of America that many adults 45 or older still read print newspaper (especially in a small community, where the local paper is one of the only sources for local news). We do also want to continue to reach new audiences, beyond this 45+ age group, which is why we are beginning to explore effectiveness of online advertising.

QUESTION 2:

The amount of the \$38,000 that will be spent through online advertising is to be determined. Our agreement leaves us the opportunity to choose print or online advertising for each show, as the season progresses. This was crafted to allow for more flexibility in targeting different demographics for each show, to begin efforts moving more of our marketing into the digital space to engage new audiences, as well as to gage the effectiveness and adjust as needed as the season progresses. As we developed targeted advertising strategies for each show, we will determine if the main ticket buying audience will get their news online versus in print format.

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It is important to state that advertising through The Pantagraph is not our only source of advertising. Staff utilizes many other mediums, social media, flyers, e-mail blasts, radio advertising, radio programming, out of home and others. Choices are made which media to use based on expected target markets per performance/event.

QUESTION 3:

We have not completed a study on the effectiveness of print advertisements versus online advertisements, therefore we do not have data on which is more effective in our market. However, we can reference past experience, as well as studies completed by other research groups. From past experience we have found that print advertising in combination with other mediums (digital advertising, social media, radio, direct mail, etc.) has been the most effective form of advertising for us within our budget.

Alderman: Rob Fazzini

Item 60: A Resolution Establishing Prevailing Wages to be Paid to Laborers, Workers and Mechanics Engaged in Public Works with the City of Bloomington. (Recommend that the Resolution be adopted.)

Question/Comment: What are specific reasons that attendance in an apprenticeship program is in the best interests of the city? It seems that this is in the best interests of the unions rather than the city.

Staff Response: Based on a review of previous council memos, it appears this requirement first appeared in the City's prevailing wage resolution at an amount of \$25,000 in (or around) 1997. It was raised to \$100,000 in 2007 and has been at that level since that time to mirror the Town of Normal. Arguments have been made in the past that this helps increase the quality of work and is not a hindrance on bidding. Advocates of such language also argue it helps promote objective and standardized training throughout the industry.

Alderman: Karen Schmidt

Item 60: A Resolution Establishing Prevailing Wages to be Paid to Laborers, Workers and Mechanics Engaged in Public Works with the City of Bloomington. (Recommend that the Resolution be adopted.)

Question/Comment: I have the same question that Rob has. It is my recollection that the Council removed the apprenticeship program from our contracts some years ago.

Regarding the presentation on high speed rail, I sent the power point slides on this topic out on my e-mail list after we were not able to meet last Monday. I received some questions from citizens, and am sharing them here to give Jim and others time to respond:

What will be the determining factor for the fencing types? They say commercial/industrial areas will have chain link fencing. So would that stretch through downtown and westward be considered residential or commercial?

Staff Response: Generally, if the area is more residential in nature the fencing choice will be wrought iron. Commercial or rural areas will more likely be chain link. For example, both directions around the Washington Street crossing is wrought iron. Another example is north of the Market Street crossing in the rail yard area which is chain link fence. The majority of the fencing is 6 foot.

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What about the Hamilton Road extension to Hershey? Wasn't part of the holdup related to the railway crossing that would be needed?

Staff Response: Both the Hamilton - Bunn to Commerce improvement and the Hershey Road extension are in relation to Norfolk Southern Railroad and do not deal with the high speed rail improvement which is the Union Pacific railroad.

High speed trains such as the Bullet Train in Japan need to ride on a track system that is smooth which the system to Chicago is far from being smooth. This is a major concern of mine a rough rail system is an accident waiting to happen with high speed trains. Making the improvements other than Market St. bridge is simply getting the cart ahead of the horse.

Staff Response: Bullet trains travel over 200 mph whereas the high speed rail that we are discussing is 110 mph. These are different conditions.

Are we having to re-route traffic through town when the Market St bridge work is being done? If so, what is the alternate route and how will the city communicate with the residents about this and its potential impact.

Staff Response: There is an anticipated detour for this project. The detour route is included in the presentation and will be posted on the City website. In general, the detour route follows the IDOT state route along Hinshaw, Locust and Lee. The railroad will be responsible for posting and maintaining the detour. The City plans on having a public information meeting along with the Illinois Department of Transportation. A date has not been set yet for this public meeting. In addition, the City will use our social media outlets, press releases and the City website to update citizens on the project. The railroad will also be publicizing this work through their media channels.

Is there any way to save the painting on the Market Street under-pass? It has great meaning to residents who painted it.

Staff Response: Staff is not aware of any way to save the painting along the underpass. Staff is open to suggestions on how this would be done. There currently aren't any funds budgeted for this work to be completed. There will be a retaining wall on the north side of the intersection which could be used in the future for a mural.

REGULAR AGENDA

Alderman: Rob Fazzini

Item 7C: Nicor Natural Gas Utility Tax Audit

Question/Comment: The results of this test of NICOR appear to me to be unsatisfactory. Therefore, I would like to see some comparison data to better make the judgment of satisfactory or not. Further, based on these results I would like to see the test administered in one year rather than wait three years.

Staff Response: N/A

Prepared by: Tracey Covert, City Clerk