



MEMORANDUM

TO: Parks, Center, Libraries, and Equity Committee

FROM: Ned Dunn, Seattle Center

DATE: May 14, 2014

RE: Theatre Puget Sound Agreement

This legislation authorizes a five-year renewal agreement with Theatre Puget Sound (TPS) for TPS to operate and manage rehearsal and theatre spaces in the Seattle Center Armory for use by non-profit arts organizations and individual artists. This agreement provides for the continuation of a very successful program and partnership with TPS that dates back to 1999.

In 1998, the Seattle Symphony moved from their office spaces on the fourth floor of the Armory (then "Center House") to Benaroya Hall. In response to a growing trend of smaller arts groups losing their homes and rehearsal spaces due to rising real estate costs, Seattle Center and TPS formed a partnership to use the former Symphony spaces as rehearsal spaces for non-profit arts organizations and individual artists. Response from the arts community was overwhelming. After an initial one-year agreement, the City Council approved multi-year agreements with TPS in 2000, 2004, and 2009.

Under this agreement, TPS manages and rents spaces to non-profit arts organizations and individual artists. The spaces consist of six rehearsal rooms and a small black box theatre on the 4th floor of the Armory and the Center Theatre on the 1st floor. As in the previous agreements, rent revenue is split 50/50 between Seattle Center and TPS. Rents are set at below market rates to make these facilities accessible and available to the local, non-profit arts community. The spaces managed by TPS are in heavy demand. In 2013, over 500 arts organizations and individual artists used these spaces, with Seattle Center and TPS each receiving \$110,000 in rent revenue.

Seattle Center provides heat, electricity, waste removal and limited cleaning. TPS is responsible for all other services, including the booking of the spaces and collecting the rent. A portion of the rental fees for the two theatre spaces go into a fund for the maintenance or replacement of theatre equipment. This agreement establishes a new fee of \$0.50 for every ticket sold for Seattle Shakespeare Company and Book-It Repertory Theatre performances in the Center Theatre, with the proceeds going into a separate maintenance fund for Center Theatre. This fee is expected to generate approximately \$4,500 a year. Seattle Center retains use of certain rehearsal and theatre spaces for the Bumbershoot and Folklife festivals and for a specified number of additional dates. The term of this agreement is five years, from 2014 through 2018.

TPS is a non-profit trade and service organization founded in 1997 to promote the cultural and economic necessity of theatre to the public, and to unify and strengthen the theatre community through programs, resources, and services. TPS is a member-driven organization with the goals of nurturing a healthy and vibrant theatre community, developing strong ties among the region's theatre professionals, raising the visibility of the region's theatre scene on national and international levels, and finding ways to develop new and diverse audiences.

Seattle Center is pleased to continue our partnership with Theatre Puget Sound for the benefit of the local arts community.

cc: Robert Nellams, Director, Seattle Center
John Merner, Seattle Center
Ann Gorman, City Budget Office
Adam Schaefer, City Budget Office
Sara Belz, City Council Central Staff