

APPROVED
AUG 09 2006

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 06-230

DATE August 9, 2006

BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS

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BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY - SCHEDULE OF RATES AND FEES -
AMENDMENT FOR OBSERVATORY EVENT USE, PLANETARIUM SHOW,
AND VISITOR ACCESS PROGRAM

J. Conlin _____
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J. Kolb _____
S. Huntley _____
H. Fujita _____
M. Shell _____

Robert H. Jensen (for)
General Manager

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve an amendment to the Schedule of Rates and Fees to establish revised policies and fees for the Griffith Observatory in preparation for reopening, as outlined in the body of this report and specified in Attachment A, and authorize staff to make the changes effective immediately;
2. Approve a moratorium on Standard Use rental of the Observatory for the remainder of the fiscal year, through June 30, 2007; and,
3. Authorize the Friends Of The Observatory (FOTO) to produce the Galactic Gala and the Official Opening Ceremonies, in collaboration with other non-profit organizations or financial sponsors, and in conformance with the special use provisions established for FOTO in the proposed amendment to the Schedule of Rates and Fees, without the two events constituting a use of the Observatory as allowed annually.

SUMMARY:

In preparation for the reopening of Griffith Observatory targeted for the beginning of November 2006, staff has undertaken a review of the use policies in place prior to the close of the Observatory in January 2002. This review involved analysis by staff internally, input from consultants in events planning and concession operations, comparisons with pricing and policies instituted by local

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institutions of similar prestige and with missions other than events use (including Museum of Contemporary Art, California Science Center, Music Center and Disney Hall, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Getty Museum), and discussion with the Observatory's non-profit partner, FOTO. The objective of the research and analysis was to both address the physical differences of the Observatory after the Renovation and Expansion, and to ensure an appropriate slate of policies and fees which prioritize the Observatory's mission of public access and public astronomy, while balancing other public and educational use and ensuring a fair financial return to contribute to the on-going operational costs of the new Griffith Observatory.

The attached policies completely replace the previous sections on event use and filming, and are organized to address five areas: (1) general policies which realign the Observatory policies more closely with other Department facilities; (2) policies relating to FOTO use and other Special Use provisions; (3) fees for rental of various areas; (4) planetarium admission fees; (5) visitor access charge.

General Information and Policies

These sections establish that the City's contracted concessionaires have exclusivity, and prohibit other sales or admission charges. Policies for holding reservations, cancellation fees, refundable deposits, insurance requirements, and assessment of additional staffing fees, if necessary, are included in alignment with other Department rental facilities and special events activities. Particularly in consideration of concerns for event use is a requirement that alcohol service at catered events conclude by 9:00 p.m., and the stipulation that parking may be only allowed off-site. Use of the Observatory name, logo, or image is also controlled.

News media continues to be exempt from fees but must coordinate with the Observatory.

All Facilities at Griffith Observatory are primarily for use of the Observatory in accomplishing its public educational mission, and use of facilities by the Observatory or Observatory-sponsored activities takes priority over other use. With express authorization of the Observatory Director, any facility or combination of facilities within the Griffith Observatory premises can be utilized exclusively for Observatory or Observatory-sponsored activities in accordance with the Observatory's mission, at any time.

FOTO and Other Special Usage

Over the years, FOTO has supported the educational mission of Griffith Observatory in public astronomy through activities such as sponsoring lecture series; they have been active participants in the master planning and project planning efforts; and they have aggressively and successfully raised funds to complete the Observatory Renovation and Expansion project. The proposed Rates and Fees