



April 29, 2026
Arena Theater Board of Directors
Annual Membership Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order @ 6:10pm

Present: Lisa Joakimides, Michael Beattie, Mark Vanderwoude, Paul Andersen, Tim McMurtry, Blake More, Steve McLaughlin, Fer Dumpert, Tracy DuPont

Staff: Shauna Boyd & Dagmar Moseley

Guests: Gary & Susan Levenson-Palmer;

2. Introductions

a. Board Member Introductions Each board member introduced themselves.

b. Candidate Statements

Mark Vanderwoude My wife and I are year-round Anchor Bay residents, and we have been members of Arena Theater for six years. I have had the privilege of serving on the Board of Directors as Treasurer for the past three years, and am also an active member of the Fundraising and Membership committee. As a retired Corporate President and CEO with experience on three corporate boards, as well as ten years as President of the Rio del Mar Improvement Association, I believe my professional background and dedication to the arts continue to benefit the theater's working Board. I am seeking your support and your vote to continue as an Arena Theater Board member for another three-year term.

Blake More I have been an active volunteer and community supporter of the Arena Theater since 1997. My first term on the board was in 2010, and I have been a board member many terms since then. Why? Because I love the Arena Theater!! I feel honored and grateful to do what I can for our wonderful theater as well as its staff, members and community. Currently I am active on the programming, personnel and marketing committees, as well as assisting with fundraisers, talent shows, poster design, website assistance, emceeing and other needs of the board and staff. I continue to be in awe of the kind of love and devotion this community has for our "community jewel" and want to do all I can to keep our theater thriving.

Tim McMurtry I am running for the position of Facilities Director, of which I have been for nine years. I have a broad knowledge of the building and have completed many tasks, both large and small. It is an honor to serve this theater, and the throbbing heart of our community.

All three candidates were re-elected.

3. Privilege of the Floor/Correspondence/Suggestion Box None

4. Approval of the Agenda Tracy moved approval, Steve seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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- 5. Approval of the Minutes of the February 25 and March 25 Meeting** Mark moved approval, Michael seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6. President's Report

Lisa asked all Board members to stand and introduce themselves. After, she asked the three candidates for the Board to make statements. Tim McMurtry, Blake More & Mark Vanderwoude made statements. All three candidates were reelected.

Lisa's report to the Membership Meeting. "It has been my honor & pleasure to serve with this focused & involved Board; to watch each director step up, offering their own particular gifts & talents; this has made for an effective Working Board.

Couldn't do what we do without our remarkable, dedicated Staff and our team of willing & able volunteers, all of whom rise to every occasion.

I am so pleased that Arena Theater is alive and thriving (in a world filled with financial pitfalls & challenges)

Our community is coming out to attend our events & fundraisers

Our committed membership keeps steadily bolstering our coffers

Our sponsors back us up when we stretch our programming wings, so we don't falter or lose money.

All these aspects keep our doors open, keep us going forward.

It is heartening to see families introducing their kids to the pleasures of the Big Screen, sometimes for the 1st time....

...To see our first 2 Live shows of the season sell out and pack the theater

...To see Loyal followers support our Opera program and our eclectic Film Club.

Even NT Live has come back to life, gaining new sponsors & attendees after almost going defunct.

Arena Theater was recently honored with a grant from the Community Foundation of Mendocino County to put toward a new lightboard. We received our very first bequest from a beloved community member, which has been disbursed over 3 years as an annual grant. These precious grants allow us to upgrade, replace & repair needed machinery, helping us in our goal of keeping our theater, stage & screen, excellent.

Every day, it makes me happy that the theater remains a place for our community to gather and celebrate all that is best in art and life."

- 7. Board Strategic Planning Retreat Report** - Jennifer provided a report on the March 8 planning retreat, which is attached.

8. Treasurer's Report – see attached reports.

9. Standing Committee Reports

a. Membership/Fund Development – Steve reported on the Committees efforts in the past year:

“Fundraising is an important to any nonprofit organization, and our nearly 500 members and other donors have helped the Arena Theater to not only stay open, but to expand our offerings in our historic venue.

We have had good response from our whole community with our two fundraising appeals each year. Our business neighbors have been generous with in-kind donations, and sponsorships for special programs, such as our annual Arena Theater Short Film Festival, Live from the Met Opera and Blues on the Coast series.

In addition, we have held successful fundraising events, including a fall pizza party at Oz Farm, and an elegant evening of Cocktails and Casablanca at the theater earlier this month.”

Please introduce your friends to our beautiful Arena Theater and encourage them to join us as members of the Arena Theater Association.”

b. Programming

Cinema Dagmar reported:

Movies

Recently, attendance has picked up, especially for Project Hail Mary, but also for Elvis, and Hoppers had a phenomenal attendance on a Wednesday night!

Upcoming movies – Highlights

The Devil Wears Prada 2- The spirit of the original gets a sharp, timely upgrade, e.g. the decline of print media and advertising.

The Mandalorian & Grogu- Star Wars' first theatrical release in seven years, and a test of whether a streaming-born saga (The Mandalorian on Disney) can command the big screen

Disclosure Day- Spielberg returns to the alien encounter genre he helped define with Close Encounters and E.T.

Toy Story 5- "Toy meets Tech," a meditation on screen time and childhood

Supergirl- A darker, grittier take on a superhero origin.

The Odyssey- Christopher Nolan's most ambitious film yet it's the oldest story in Western literature — a man's desperate, decade-long odyssey home — reimagined through Nolan's lens

Frugal Friday

Numbers show increased Friday attendance, however not increased numbers overall. It's a great feature to offer people.

Showtimes

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Board vote: 3 showings per week currently for a year to curb losses. The number of weekly showings at Arena Theater seems to reflect the state of cinema nationwide: from 12-14 showings per week 10-12 years ago down to 3, streaming is a big factor in this reduction, also, we must wait about a month for newly released movies. The cinema committee wants to encourage everyone to give smaller, lesser-known movies a chance: you never know what gem you may find!

Special screenings

We have 3 categories: Western, Music on Film, Cult Classics. Western is on a hiatus right now; Music on Film Nite has upcoming feature: *You Got Gold: A Celebration of John Prine*; Cult Classics have 3 summer series films planned: *Ferris Bueller's Day off*, *Repo Man*, and *Goonies*. These 3 programs are always looking for underwriters to offset any losses!

Onscreen ads

All proceeds from our onscreen ads go to cinema, so it's an important way of support.

Film Festival The Third Annual Festival was last November, and it's gotten bigger and better every year. Full houses for many of our screenings, over 20 filmmakers in attendance, over 70 sponsors including in-kind, lots of fun and inspiration. We have a fantastic ATSF committee of 10 people who make this event happen. And the financials are growing as well, with almost \$12000 profit, which is a big support to the theater's bottom line. We have an encore screening of favorite shorts from the *Close to Home*, local films program on Wednesday, May 20. And festival dates are November 13-15 this year.

Live \$9000 in profit (compared to \$5000 last year): some very successful shows, like Lisa mentioned: psychic comedian, Blues on the Coast's Bella Rayne, *Burning Down the House* 18 events last year (average 1.5/month). We have a hardworking committee of 8 people, mostly volunteers, who produce these shows, and a small crew of paid staff who work the day of the show. Paul Collins from The Record has recently joined the committee. He's helping produce a few upcoming shows and has lots of ideas for more shows.

May events:

Saturday, May 9 Community Talent Show—spread the word!

Wednesday, May 13: Rose City Band—Paul Collins is producing

Saturday, May 30: Open Mic Summer Series begins!

Telecasts Met Opera is always a strong program for the Theater, with nearly 30 season subscribers. Many donate to have a seat reserved for the season. There are 8 operas each season, streamed live on Saturday mornings. We no longer use a satellite for these transmissions—the Met gave us a streaming box last year and all has gone well so far! 2 more operas in May (2nd and 30th) will conclude the season.

Publicity Dagmar reported that publicity works closely with all programs to advertise/promote all programs/events day-to-day as follows:

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- Featured in our weekly email (1200 subscribers) for 3–4 weeks in advance, with a short blurb
 - Press coverage in the ICO (twice before the event) and display ad Mark Your Calendar entries
 - Flyers posted in our theater window and around our local communities, some all the way to Fort Bragg
 - Onscreen ads include all events/per month
 - Listing on our website
 - Social media posts
 - Assorted online calendars
- Also maintains current and well-stocked lobby materials and creates signage for the kiosk and snack bar.

Film Club Steve reported that “in April, we completed another six-month season of the Arena Theater Film Club. It’s a twice-a-month series of moviegoing nights with film quizzes and conversation, where we rescue great films from home video, and present them actual size for our theater audience, the way they were intended to be enjoyed. Our new series begins in October. Our website, arenatheaterfilmclub.org will have more information this summer.”

- c. **Personnel** Blake reported the Theater has 7 part-time staff members. “We instituted a Paid Time Off (PTO) policy last year for all staff. This can be used for anything, is paid out at the end of each year, and is in addition to sick pay requirements. We are scheduling a personnel meeting in mid May. We are doing our best to take care of the staff that takes such good care of us!”
- d. **Facilities** Tim reported: “It’s been pretty quiet this year on the facilities front. No major drama or large projects performed. Many small things to report. We added more exterior night lights. We now have seven solar powered lights outside. Three on the backstairs , one outside the side door at the dance floor, one up on the upper office side door so when people step outside they can see the step, and two up on each back wall. We have motion detection lights on the balcony to announce the stairs, and more motion detector lights at the stage entrance to indicate the step and to illuminate the rows of light switches. And we have the big parking lot light which is on all night, installed by Guy and Ellen Kibbe.

We had to switch out some light sockets in the marquee due to corrosion, which requires removing the panels to gain access to the wiring and socket. We upgraded the internet inside the theater, adding a modem for concessions and the snack bar and kiosk, and one in the auditorium for hearing assist, microphones etc. We identified and corrected a leak that has been bothering us for many years.

The solar system continues to save us money, especially now that it’s paid off. The sump pump on the basement continues to save us from flooding.

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We did some mouse proofing and painting of the back stairs. Other than that, it's all maintenance-monthly weed eating, bulb replacement, occasional cob webbing, and frequent checks on anything that has water to or from it.

This coming year we will continue with termite treatment, complete painting the stairs and look into getting the under-stair closets drier for storage. We are also getting a new lightboard which Mark can tell us all about

I have been blessed with the help of others when things get worrisome, and that's why I say we- if it takes a village, we qualify!"

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 pm

Next meeting is May 27, 2026 at 6:00pm.

Daylong Theater Retreat

- March 8, Coast Guard House in Point Arena, board and some staff
- Clarify long-term vision, identify strategic priorities for next 1-3 years, 10 years
- Centered on Theater's **mission statement**:

Preserving our historic Arena Theater as a community resource and providing diverse entertainment, education, and performing arts.

Via facilitated discussion, we addressed key issues and possible ways to address those issues, focusing on a few major (inter-related) areas:

Understanding Audiences

- Issues:
 - Hard to pin down our key demographics
 - Theater audience encompasses TSR, Annapolis, Gualala, Anchor Bay, Point Arena, Manchester, among other areas
 - That's a very wide range of age, background, cultural interests
 - Also, we'd love to reach people beyond these areas
- Possible solutions
 - Broaden social media to leverage local influencers and explore how to reach alternative audiences
 - Expand other forms of public outreach to engage new communities
 - conduct surveys and user research to get a better sense of not only who lives the areas served by the theater but also what they would want to see in terms of programming
 - Increase diversity (age, ethnicity, cultural background) among board and staff to better inform programming

Programming:

- Issues:
 - How to appeal to this widely diverse community
 - Streaming is killing big screen movies everywhere
 - In addition to changing how people watch movies, streaming affects how films are distributed; first-run films are getting harder for the theater to book
- Possible solutions
 - Diversify programming to try and suit a wider audience: more family friendly films, sports telecasts, live music, film events, expanded repertory cinema, programming options that appeal to more varied cultural and community interests
 - Leverage the success of the film festival
 - As part of research to learn more about who fills our seats, assess community interests

Financial Health

- Issues:
 - A percentage of our traditional audience is aging out so we need to re-focus programming to reach younger markets
 - The theater is a non-profit. Getting grants and other funding is becoming more competitive in the current political and economic climate.
- Possible solutions
 - Actively seek more donors and higher median donations
 - Focus energy on grant writing, potentially leveraging AI
 - Conduct fundraisers, such as Have a Seat
 - Forge Stronger connections with other theaters to share financial and other strategies (Art House Convergence, etc.)

We then used an exercise common in UX officially called affinity mapping but usually called Sticky Note Sorting to discuss our top priorities for the next 2 – 3 years, working toward our ten-year goals

We identified our top five priorities as:

1. Maintain and grow ticket sales (butts in seats)
2. Expand and deepen donor base
3. Cultivate diverse board and committees
4. Stay solvent—continue to operate in the black
5. Uphold our core values

We also conducted focus area discussions to formulate strategies in specific interest areas:

- Programming
 - Cinema
 - Telecasts/Film Club/Special Movies
 - Live Events
 - Film Festival
- Membership and Donor Development
- Facilities and Operations
- Personnel

This exercise took up the majority of the time, since it addressed specific actions to take in each of these areas to work toward our ten-year goal. I won't go into these, since they get pretty granular and involve lists of actions to take, but here's an example:

Expand Live Events

- Court bigger-name performers who merit higher ticket prices
- Approach bands with more youth appeal, electronica, dance, etc
- Explore Special interest events, such as surf music, world music
- Expand offerings, e.g. comedy, magic, talent shows

We also discussed specific ways to undertake these actions

At the close of the retreat we discussed strategies for taking responsibility and for measuring success at both short- and long-term goals. These included:

- Identifying and compiling reports that show a “before” state that can periodically be compared with later reports that show the “after”, e.g. donor base and amount of regular contributions
- Assign various committees to tackle the practical strategies identified in the sticky note sorting, e.g. reviewing industry trends in national cinema and trends in successful films at the PA theater to help in first run film selection
- Devote time in ongoing board meetings to check on the status of this work.

Board Report

Financial Report Fiscal Year

YTD thru Mar 26

YTD thru

Mar 25

CATEGORY	INCOME	EXPENSES	NET	NET
EVENTS	\$197,780	-\$188,975	\$8,805	\$1,894
OPERATIONS	\$70,880	-\$70,341	\$539	\$2,022
TOTAL	\$268,660	-\$259,316	\$9,344	\$3,916

Included in Events: 2026

Cinema = -\$21,574

Nite/Cult = \$2,380

Film Club = \$1,496

Opera = \$4,214

Produced = \$9,041

Exhibits on Film = 0

NT Live = \$96

Rentals = \$1,420

Film Festival = \$11,648

Totals = \$8,721

Included in Events: 2025

Cinema = -\$14,793

Nite/Cult = \$428

Film Club = -\$312

Opera = \$2,936

Produced = \$5,099

Exhibits on Film = -\$537

NT Live = -\$242

Rentals = \$571

Film Festival = \$8,822

Totals = \$1,972

Board Report

Financial Report Fiscal Year

Mar 26

Mar 25

CATEGORY	INCOME	EXPENSES	NET	NET
EVENTS	\$21,847	-\$19,981	\$1,866	-\$904
OPERATIONS	\$4,262	-\$5,929	-\$1,667	\$6,153
TOTAL	\$26,109	-\$25,910	\$199	\$5,249

Included in Events: 2026

Cinema = -\$2,240

Nite/Cult = \$368

Film Club = \$529

Opera = \$695

Produced = -\$2,566

Exhibits on Screen = 0

NT Live = -\$54

Rentals = \$0

Film Festival = 0

Total = \$1,864

Included in Events: 2025

Cinema = -\$2,683

Nite/Cult = \$521

Film Club = -\$84

Opera = \$746

Produced = \$722

Exhibits on Screen = -\$104

NT Live = -\$23

Rentals = 0

Film Festival = 0

Total = -\$905