

**APPROVED**  
APR 02 2008

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 08-84

DATE April 2, 2008

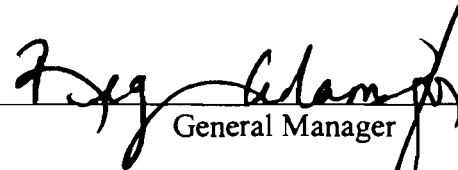
**BOARD OF RECREATION  
and PARK COMMISSIONERS**

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BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY – AMENDMENT TO THE SCHEDULE OF RATES AND FEES

R. Adams _____	J. Kolb _____
H. Fujita _____	F. Mok _____
S. Huntley _____	K. Regan _____
*V. Israel _____	M. Shull _____

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
General Manager

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

Withdrawn \_\_\_\_\_

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve the proposed amendment to the Griffith Observatory section of the Schedule of Rates and Fees, as outlined in the body of this report; and,
2. Authorize staff to amend the schedule of Rates and Fees to incorporate these changes effective immediately.

SUMMARY:

A review of the use policies and rates, approved on June 20, 2007 (Board Report No. 07-145) for events held at the Observatory has been completed. Staff assessed the performance of renters and film companies based on staff's experience in operating the facility during public operations, and knowledge of the requirements to handle rental and other special use events during the previous year. As a result, staff recommends amending the current rates and fees by clarifying language to make the policies more effective and by altering the rate structure for rental uses as follows:

Rental Use

Language has been added to require advance payment of fees, to prohibit fee waivers or reductions without Board action, and to require permittees to carry insurance and agree in advance to pay for repair of any damage caused to the Observatory by their event.

Rental Uses Fees

This new section defines and clarifies the rental fee structure and includes changes to the fee rates for areas of the building other than the Classroom/Conference Room.

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The Standard Use rental fees depend on the rental area requested. The rental period has been extended from 10 to 12 hours. The fee range of \$4,000 - \$25,000 has been reduced to \$3,000 - \$12,500. The Special Use rental fee range of \$12,500- \$50,000 has been reduced to \$6,000 - \$25,000. The roof has been removed as a unique event venue, owing to both logistical difficulties in using the roof in such a fashion and in remediating possible damage.

### Staffing and Security Charges

Based on staff's observation during the first year of the reopening, the fees for security, maintenance, parking, use of technical and interpretive staff, or other Observatory services tend to be related to either the size of the event, or whether the event include the service of alcohol. A range of fixed staffing fees from \$2,500 to \$6,500 is proposed to recoup these costs.

A provision has also been added which requires all prospective renters to carry insurance for the event. Though this requirement has been levied on all renters to date, it was not included in the current version of the rates and fees document.

A detailed breakdown of the proposed rental fee categories and requirements is attached.

### Filming Use Program

Provisions have been added detailing the criteria by which the Observatory may be scheduled for filming. This includes notice that the Observatory's public schedule makes consecutive filming days unlikely. There are also changes to the language for site visits and monitors, reflecting the Observatory's experience since reopening.

### Filming Rental Use Fees

The fee rates charged for Observatory filming use has been significantly reduced. This reflects concerns expressed by FilmLA, other public officials, and commercial production companies. The new Standard Use rates are \$10,000 for exterior only (previously \$25,000) and \$15,000 for the entire building and grounds (previously \$35,000). Special Use rates are \$20,000 for exterior only (previously \$40,000) and \$30,000 for the entire building and grounds (previously \$60,000). The rental period for film use (16 hours) has also been more formally defined (7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.), as well as adding an overnight preparation option for an additional fee.

### Filming Staffing and Security Charges

As with rental use, staffing and security charges have been codified to reflect that such fees tend to be related to the size of the film crew (and, thus, the extent of the production needing to be overseen) and the length of the shoot. A range of fixed staffing fees from \$1,500 to \$6,000 is proposed.

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Finally, a section has been added which establishes the liability of film companies in relation to their use of the Observatory. This includes the requirement to carry insurance, as well as the need to secure a bond to pay for any damages caused by the production.

### Photography Use Program

This new section distinguishes still photography from filming. It establishes policies and procedures for both personal and commercial photography. The four-hour fee for commercial photography remains at \$2,000.

### General Use Provisions and Booking Fees

#### 1. Catering and Alcohol

A provision has been added to end alcohol service one-half hour prior to the end of an event, to limit where alcohol may be served and consumed, and to ensure that alcohol is not served to underage guests.

### Booking and Cancellation Policies and Fees

The policies for booking and cancellation fees are amended to specify the disposition of revenue to the Observatory Surcharge account.

### Leonard Nimoy Event Horizon Admission

This new section has been added to permit the Observatory to charge admission for unique events in the Leonard Nimoy Event Horizon theater. While the vast majority of programming in the theater is free, this provision enables the Observatory to charge for unique programming as needed.

### Shuttle Bus and Timed Reservation Cost Recovery

This system ended on November 3, 2007, and this section is deleted as it no longer applies.

### Griffith Observer

Language has been added to clarify when sales tax must be paid. Also added is clarification on the disposition of funds from magazine subscriptions and sales.

### Special Subscription Rates

This heading has been added to indicate such rates.

### Certified Astronomical Letters

Language has been added clarifying the disposition of funds from preparation of these letters.

### Guideline Procedures for Rentals and Special Events

This section remains substantively unchanged except for these provisions:

A. 3. Include filming application form to documents required to be completed.

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- A. 3.
  - d. Add provision to stop the serving of alcohol one-half hour prior to the end of an event, and limit where alcohol may be served, and ensure alcohol is not served to underage guests.
  - g. Add Certification requirement in order for rental use proposals must certify they will follow the Observatory's rental guidelines (which are provided for review). This includes paying and complete repair of any damage caused by the event or filming in a timely manner.
- B. 2.
  - i. Add requirement of a fire permit to be provided to the Observatory five days prior to the event.

### FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

Most of the Observatory's rental and filming fees have been reduced by an average of 50 percent. This will result in less funding each year for the Observatory Surcharge account. If an average of 12 major events or filming activities occurs per year, the change in the average fee from \$25,000 to \$12,500 would result in an annual loss of revenue of \$150,000. This could result in either deferred maintenance and repair or the need for general fund revenues to pay for the repairs. The change from variable to fixed rates for staffing and security fees is not expected to result in a change in the amount of collected revenue for the Department's General Fund. Most of the procedural and related changes proposed in the document are unlikely to have any revenue effect.

This report was prepared by Vicki Israel, Assistant General Manager; Dr. Ed Krupp, Observatory Director; and Mark Pine, Observatory Deputy Director.