

From: domadmin@juneau.org
To: [MD FD Options](#)
Subject: New submission from EPW - Middleschool Usage
Date: Monday, May 20, 2024 11:01:33 AM

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Proposal Name
The Marie Drake Planetarium
Which schools are you proposing to use?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marie Drake Middle School
If you chose more than one school, which is your first choice and which is second?
n/a
Are you proposing to rent or buy the building(s)?
Rent
Proposed Use
<p>We, the Friends of the Marie Drake Planetarium, as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, would continue to operate the planetarium in the Marie Drake Building. The physical facility is owned and maintained by CBJ or by a compatible organization and would house the Digitalium Lambda projection system owned and operated by our nonprofit. In return, we provide free and inexpensive access to shows for the public, community groups, and school groups. Our decades-long tradition has been to provide free shows run by our volunteers and to collaborate with other community groups using the facility.</p> <p>The planetarium with its 30' dome is unique. Our modern projection system enables computer-delivered programming of the night or daytime sky from any time and place on the Earth and places beyond. In "flight mode," we can take an audience to planets in our solar system, to space through and beyond our</p>

galaxy, and along the surface of the Earth, Moon, and Mars using terrain models for both elevation and appearance. The planetarium dome and our projector together offer the only immersive public facility in Juneau and can show some of the fulldome movies seen when visiting larger planetariums in more metropolitan areas. The planetarium can offer science beyond astronomy and space science, including earth science and climate. We can present content, either purchased or locally created, for the cultures and interests of Southeast Alaska. We can operate the planetarium as an intimate space for musical performances such as the recent Juneau Jazz and Classics event. Such events have been an infrequent use of the planetarium. If such requests were to become more frequent, then some additional, external support may be required.

Please state which Assembly priority/goal this proposal fills -OR- what benefit your proposed use would bring to the community

Our proposal supports the high-level Assembly Goals of economic development and sustainable community. Both involve preparing students for future jobs in Juneau and align with our efforts to educate, inform, and inspire all age groups and education levels with free and inexpensive programming. Modern planetariums offer a vibrant and creative space for more than just astronomy and space science programs. Space and astronomy are often gateway topics for getting young people first interested in STEM related studies and careers. Regardless of the specific topic, students and adults may come to the planetarium for entertainment and yet leave knowing a bit more than when they arrived.

What impact would your proposal have on the CBJ budget?

Our proposal would have minimal impact on the CBJ budget. We propose to continue under an arrangement similar to that which we have had with the Juneau School District. They provided basic utilities, internet, janitorial services, and projector insurance. The planetarium is a relatively old facility. If the planetarium were to have additional community use, some additional cleaning and relatively inexpensive upgrades to the room and dome would greatly enhance its appearance.

We are a 100% volunteer organization and operate off of donations from the public with occasional small grants going to specific projects like bus transportation for school field trips, media purchases, and our current Planet/Bird Walk project for Twin Lakes. With no steady revenue source, we find it extremely difficult to pay a formal rent. Instead, we are uniquely positioned to continue to offer free and inexpensive programming to the public and school groups using the planetarium dome and our \$100K projection system. Last year 2300 people of all ages came to our free planetarium events. This year during April through May, our three most popular months for school field trips, we hosted 35 separate field trips at no cost and provided bus transportation for six.

Would you be willing to pay fair market value for rent/lease?

No

How much space are you proposing to use?

The planetarium room with access to the main lobby, restrooms and a water fountain.

What level of retrofit would be needed for your proposal? Who would pay for that work?

We currently use the planetarium as it is.

As stated above, the planetarium is a relatively old facility. If the planetarium were to have additional community use or be able to offer an enhanced experience, some additional cleaning and relatively inexpensive upgrades to the room, such as new carpet, would greatly enhance both its appeal and comfort of use.

How long do you anticipate you would occupy the building(s)?

We plan to stay for many years presenting informative and entertaining science programming to the Juneau public and school groups and for assisting or training others for additional use.

Describe parking needs associated with your proposed use.

Our traditional times for public events are during the off-peak times of evenings and weekends. Events typically last about an hour. Our current seating capacity is 40, so the number of parking spaces needed is easily accommodated by the existing parking. During other times, we would need a couple of parking spaces for our volunteers involved in training, program development, and custom content creation. Buses bringing daytime school groups do not require parking.

Will you be requesting CBJ operating funds for your use?

Yes

If your organization already receives CBJ operating funds, will you be requesting an increase to support this proposal? If so, by how much?

In the past, we worked independently of financial obligations from JSD with the exception of approximately \$2000 for projector insurance and providing building services such as utilities, internet access, security, and janitorial services. We propose to operate under a similar arrangement with CBJ. If the planetarium use were to grow as more of a community resource, additional operating funds would be part of that conversation.

What other uses would be compatible with your proposed use?

We have always sought for the planetarium to be a community resource and welcome a discussion of ideas which would support such use.

What other uses would not be compatible with your proposed use?

The planetarium is right off the main entrance. Normal comings and goings do not disturb an event inside the planetarium, but excessively loud noises and voices, during times of planetarium use, would not be desirable.