



## STAFF REPORT

**Meeting Date:** August 2, 2011  
**To:** Honorable Mayor & City Council  
**From:** Teri Angel, Recreation Services Manager   
**Subject:** LA Lawyers Philharmonic

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### INTRODUCTION

Gary Greene, founder and conductor of the LA Lawyers Philharmonic, has contacted Community Services staff with interest for a no-cost weekly rehearsal space in exchange for providing two (2) complimentary orchestra performances for the community per year. Staff seeks City Council direction on the proposed offer.

Gary Greene has been a resident of Beverly Hills for over 40 years and has been affiliated with the Junior Philharmonic all of his life as his late uncle, Dr. Ernst Katz, was its founder in 1937. The City is very familiar with the Junior Philharmonic as it inaugurated the Beverly Hills Live series at Greystone Mansion and performed there many times as well as at the Civic Center Plaza, Roxbury Park and at a past City holiday lighting ceremony. All of these were volunteer performances. The Junior Philharmonic has had many Beverly Hills students and residents participate.

Two and a half years ago, Mr. Greene founded the LA Lawyers Philharmonic, an orchestra composed of attorneys, judges, law students, and legal staff. Last year, the LA Lawyers Philharmonic volunteered a performance at Greystone Mansion with all proceeds benefitting the Friends of Greystone. The LA Lawyers Philharmonic is open to members of the Beverly Hills Bar Association who are themselves strong supporters of the orchestra. The Philharmonic currently practices in a space at the Wilshire United Methodist Church. Mr. Greene has recently expanded the Philharmonic to include a chorus. The chorus and Philharmonic have been practicing at the same time and location which has become problematic. Plans are to have the chorus remain at the church location and the Philharmonic to seek a different practice location.

### DISCUSSION

The LA Lawyers Philharmonic is seeking a rehearsal space on Monday evenings from 6:30pm-9:30pm commencing September 12, 2011 through July 30, 2012. The actual rehearsal time is 7pm-9pm with a half-hour time frame before and after for set-up and breakdown. The orchestra consists of approximately seventy (70) musicians. Roxbury Park Community Center auditorium is the desired location for the rehearsal and could be

made available. In exchange for use of the rehearsal space, the Philharmonic would like to offer the City two (2) free concerts for the year. Staff has discussed the possibility of a summer concert for the community in the Civic Center Plaza and a concert at Greystone Mansion courtyard with a small admission and all proceeds donated to the Friends of Greystone or used to offset costs of other City programs. The Philharmonic also welcomes the public to come and listen to their Monday rehearsals at no cost.

It should be noted that the LA Lawyers Philharmonic has graciously agreed to be part of this summer's *Concerts on Canon* Series and will provide an ensemble to perform at no charge on Thursday, August 4<sup>th</sup>.

Other items for consideration and discussion were the Roxbury Park Master Plan Phase I and the implications this may have on space availability if the project moves forward. Albeit orchestral music, the noise level of so many musicians rehearsing in a nearby residential community was also discussed and will be closely monitored. The impact to parking at the Park and the surrounding community was also discussed. Although seventy (70) musicians comprise the Philharmonic, Mr. Greene reported an average of approximately forty (40) musicians participating at each week's rehearsal. This number, along with the other scheduled activities at the facility on Monday evenings, can be accommodated within the facility's current parking capacity. Mr. Greene understands that any of these issues could render the space unavailable should conflicts or concerns arise. Pending City Council approval, a written agreement between the City and LA Lawyers Philharmonic would outline the arranged details and expectations.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

As listed in the City's 2011-12 Fees and Charges Schedule, the cost to rent the auditorium for the three hours requested would be \$240.00 per use or, calculated annually excluding holidays and other non-rehearsal dates, would equate to \$10,320 for the requested 43 weeks of use. In the past when the City has sought orchestras to perform on Saturday nights for other concert series, the quoted price was between \$5,000 to \$10,000 based on the number of musicians and prevailing union wages. The offer by the LA Lawyers Philharmonic of two full orchestra performances is a comparable exchange of value.

The City sponsored Adult Class that had been scheduled in the Auditorium can be accommodated in another room without impact so there is no loss of revenue in relinquishing the space. Monday evenings are not highly requested rental days but if future opportunities arise staff will readdress this arrangement.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends offering the space without charge to the LA Lawyers Philharmonic group in exchange for two musical performances for the enjoyment of the community. The Recreation and Parks Commission was apprised of the request at their June meeting and voiced no concerns. A formal agreement will be required should the City Council approve this request.

Steven Zoet  
Approved By

