

To: City of Ashland
From: Rogue Valley Symphony
Joelle Graves – Interim Executive Director

Final Report – 2017-2018 Grant Cycle

October 1, 2018

City of Ashland
Natalie Thomason, Administrative Analyst
20 East Main Street
Ashland, OR 97520

Dear Ms. Thomason,

The City of Ashland granted the Rogue Valley Symphony \$7,107 in support of our programming for the 2017-2018 season. This represented .04% of our budgeted grant revenue, against a budget of \$1,024,051 for the year.

The 2017-2018 50th anniversary season was a highly successful year for our organization due to the continued strong artistic leadership of our Music Director Martin Majkut; the fundraising and fiscal management by the new executive director Joelle Graves and the board of director's dedication to raising endowment funds. The season experienced sold out performances with record number of new ticket buyers.

The Rogue Valley Symphony contributed culturally to the citizens of Ashland and the surrounding communities by performing five out of six classical Masterworks Concerts in the Recital Hall on the SOU campus between September 2017 and April 2018. Masterworks programs in Ashland were all sold out. The Recital Hall in Ashland is well known as one of the premiere acoustic spaces in the Rogue Valley, and our concerts there are attended by an audience predominately from Ashland and Northern California.

We are closely tied to the Department of Performing Arts at the Southern Oregon University. All Symphony rehearsals are held on campus. Our production staff are seasonal hires and many reside in Ashland and hold other positions with other organizations in Ashland. Over the course of year, we spend upwards of \$100,000 renting facilities in and around Ashland and on the campus of SOU and presenting events and concerts.

Music education is a top priority of our organization. The Symphony offered three education programs in 2017-2018:

- Connecting with the Classics, is our free student ticket program that allows a student and an accompanying adult to attend our classical series concerts at the Performing Arts Center in Grants Pass. This program provides complimentary admission for 100-150 students and parents to each of our six Masterworks programs;
- Classical Coaches, which sends members of the orchestra into schools to work one-on-one with middle school and high school musicians. We have a deep relationship with the Ashland High School music program, coaching many times throughout the year.
- Link Up, our newest education program, in which Symphony musicians teach elementary music in the Phoenix/Talent elementary schools once a week.

Economically, we provided full-time salaries to several administrative staff and part-time salaries to more than 65 orchestra musicians (including music professors and teachers from SOU, Ashland Middle School and Ashland High School) -- half of whom live in the City of Ashland. In addition, of course, many of our concert-going patrons, dine at Ashland restaurants prior to attending our performances and hired over 20 teaching musicians to teach in our education programs. The median range of salaries provided to administration staff is \$45,000/year and our musicians are paid by the service from \$67 - \$125.

We have seen an increase in attendance from Northern California since we began Facebook advertising and have seen an 12% increase in ticket sales in Ashland alone. 3,496 patrons attend our concerts in Ashland each year. Of that 279 are traveling 50 miles or more. Another 70 are first time ticket buyers who are already in Ashland, traveling to see OSF and other events in town. This year we did target advertising during our off season to entice patrons to visit Ashland, partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to advertise city wide events.

We advertise our concerts on radio and TV (\$10,000 a year respectively) that reach out to Klamath Falls, the Oregon Coast and Roseburg and all points in between.

We use local Ashland businesses for most of our printing, production, catering and other business needs. We purchased advertising on JPR and in the local paper and local magazines. We attracted concert-goers from Brookings, Klamath Falls, Yreka, Redding and Davis, most of whom dined and stayed in Ashland establishments. We have begun a collaboration with Ashland Hills Inn and Suites, and as part of our agreement with them, broadcast Facebook Advertising on a regular basis encouraging concert goers to make a “weekend of it”. The Ashland Hills Inn and Suites reported to us that they had a “remarkable” number of takers when we offered a “Stay for the Holiday’s” special to our orchestra

members and ticket buyers. We sent out invitations to 2,500 patrons each time we advertised an event in Ashland.

During the 2017-2018 season we experienced tremendous growth in development with our unearned income increasing, creating a \$110,000 surplus with we apply to reserves in case the Symphony experiences an emergency.

We received national attention with the World Premiere of Ashland native, Ethan Gans Morse's composition, How Do I Own the Sky, which premiered to sold out audiences in April. We were invited to attend the American League of Orchestra's National Conference in Chicago, where conductor Martin Majkut was asked to speak about the unprecedented move we undertook to premiere 5 new works last season. Two of those new compositions were composed by Ashland residents! No symphony in the United States had premiered 5 new works in one year!! 3,000 attendees at the Chicago conference were interested in everything going on with the Rogue Valley Symphony, especially in Ashland. We were thrilled to share with them what it is like to be a non-profit in this wonderful valley.

As the only professional symphony orchestra performing in the communities of Southern Oregon, the Rogue Valley Symphony provides a unique cultural contribution to the area. Our partner arts organizations reach out to the Oregon Coast; northern Oregon and northern California cooperatively, to encourage off-season tourism. We advertise outside of the area intentionally to draw out of town patrons. We appreciate that the City of Ashland recognizes this value by providing operating grant support.

Sincerely,

P. Joelle Graves
Executive Director