



December 20, 2024

Assemblywoman Danielle Monroe-Moreno, Chair  
Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop, Vice Chair  
Legislative Counsel Bureau  
401 South Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701  
Interim Finance Committee  
[IFC@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:IFC@lcb.state.nv.us)

Subject: Interim Expenditure Report for Assembly Bill 525 [AB525] and Senate Bill 341 [SB341] from the 82nd Legislative Session 2023

Dear Chair Monroe Moreno and Vice Chair Dondero Loop,

On behalf of the Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts, I am pleased to submit to you our Interim AB525 and SB341 Expenditure Report pursuant to AB525 Section 55.1 and SB341 Section 35.1 "Prepare and transmit a report to the Interim Finance Committee on or before December 20, 2024, that describes each expenditure made from the money appropriated by this act from the date on which the money was received by the entity through December 1, 2024." The Pioneer Center received \$1,000,000.00 from AB525 and \$1,000,000.00 from SB341, for a total award of \$2,000,000.00. In the following paragraphs, I will offer some context of our nonprofit's work, break out the expenditures associated with each bill, and provide you with information about the overall renovation project that we are undertaking at the Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts.

Located in the historic heart of downtown Reno, the Pioneer Center is the premier performing arts facility in northern Nevada, operating continuously since opening for business in 1968. The facility is owned and operated by Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts, a private 501(c)3 nonprofit organization established in 1988 to preserve the theater as a home for local arts organizations. The mission of the Pioneer Center is to cultivate exceptional performing arts experiences in our historic venue and throughout the region. We envision a community that is connected, enriched, and inspired through the power of live performance. Our venue is listed on the National, Nevada State, and City of Reno Registers of Historic Places, and we are a proud member of the League of Historic American Theaters.

The Pioneer Center houses a 1,500-seat mainstage proscenium theater and additional event and support spaces. Since 1995, we have presented the *Broadway Comes to Reno* series, bringing national tours of Broadway musicals directly to our community. We also host productions by three resident companies: Reno Philharmonic Orchestra, A.V.A. Ballet Theatre, and Artown; as well as other local and



touring arts groups. We produce the annual *Dog Days of Summer Dance Festival*, a three-night, free community performance concert featuring commissioned works by local dance companies and serving as a spotlight benefit for the SPCA of Northern Nevada. We also produce educational outreach performance programs Golden Encore for seniors and Pioneer Center Youth Programs for K-5 children that spread our mission beyond our walls to other venues across 9 northern Nevada counties. Last season, we produced and/or hosted 322 performances and events that served more than 184,000 patrons. The performing arts are flourishing in northern Nevada, and the Pioneer Center is a proud leader in the field.

**Regarding the appropriated funds in AB525:**

Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts received the sum of \$1,000,000.00 via electronic transfer, designated by AB525 to be used “for a renovation project.” To date since the funds were received, the amount of \$18,932.95 has been spent and an additional \$390,626.05 has been committed. The funds in this bill were earmarked for renovations of our historic venue, one that has been steadfastly serving the needs of northern Nevada for the past 57 years and requires some significant updates. After our staff and Board members attended the League of Historic American Theatres national conference in July 2023 to learn more about historic theater renovations, we distributed a Request for Qualifications and subsequent Request for Proposals seeking a specialized architectural firm to lead us through a comprehensive master planning process for the renovation of our unique cultural asset. We organized a Facility Committee comprised of staff, Board members, and community subject matter experts who devoted 10 months to a comprehensive process of vetting and interviewing qualified firms from across the country through a series of site visits, panel interviews, and group presentations. No funds from the Legislative award were used toward this selection process.

By July 2024, we awarded our master planning project to DLR Group, a national firm with extensive experience in a wide range of cultural and educational disciplines, including historic theater restorations and renovations. DLR Group’s portfolio includes many successful projects nationwide that began with a master plan and ended with a renovated, reinvigorated, and reimagined cultural center. DLR Group also has relevant experience working in northern Nevada, where they designed and built the recent University Arts Building on the University of Nevada, Reno campus. The firm’s approach to aligning theater venue renovations with the economic goals of local municipalities and desires of user groups has proven results that ultimately spurred revitalization in urban cores across the country. Stakeholders from various disciplines within our community are being invited to contribute their ideas as a part of this master planning process for the Pioneer Center. It is important to us that Nevadans participate in the process of envisioning the next chapter for our historic theater and that they feel connected to our renovation project from the very beginning.



The master plan will assess our current facility and infrastructure conditions, identify key areas for renovation, engage stakeholders and community members, recommend phases for the work to ensure that our critically important cultural facility is able to maintain operations, provide concept design imagery, and provide estimated orders of magnitude for the total scope of the project cost, which will in turn help our nonprofit organization identify funding sources for the full renovation.

We officially kicked off the master planning process in October 2024, and the \$18,932.95 spent thus far from AB525 have comprised the first payments to DLR Group. The master planning process is scheduled to conclude in April 2025 at an estimated total expense of \$409,559.00. The full amount of the master planning fees will be allocated from the AB525 funds that were awarded to the Pioneer Center. **We have committed the remaining balance of \$590,441.00 from AB525 to the first phased projects that are identified in the finished master plan.**

#### **Regarding the appropriated funds in SB341:**

Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts received the sum of \$1,000,000.00 via electronic transfer, designated by SB341 to be used “for a capital improvement project.” To date since the funds were received, the amount of \$337,159.94 has been spent. Simultaneous to our process of seeking a qualified architecture firm to lead our master planning and subsequent major renovation project, we identified several capital improvements that the funds from SB341 could address immediately. Capital improvements made thus far include:

- **Building Upgrades:** stage door safety and security improvements, passenger elevator comfort and safety improvements, additional office infrastructure for our expanding staff, leak detection sensors in sensitive mechanical areas of our facility, and Wi-Fi system upgrades
- **Property Upgrades:** new artist-designed sculptural bike racks for patron and staff use, surface repairs to our front plaza for improved safety of the general public, and upgraded landscaping for enhanced exterior aesthetic and water usage
- **Auditorium and Performance Equipment Upgrades:** repairs to auditorium seating, upgrades to auditorium speaker system, 3 new state-of-the-art theatrical spotlights, new stage curtains for LED color-changing backdrop and projection scrim backdrop, refurbishment of stage moving lights, new ADA assisted listening devices, and extensions for stage risers



- Infrastructure Equipment Repairs: HVAC system, sump pump, plumbing, and dome ventilation fans all received necessary repairs to improve efficiency
- Building Repairs: backstage hallway drywall and lower lobby wallpaper were repaired

The expenditures listed above leave a remaining balance of \$662,840.06 in funds allocated to the Pioneer Center from SB341. **The forthcoming master plan will identify, and the remaining funds will be committed to the most impactful components of the project, which will be spent in accordance with the specified timeline.**

The attached spreadsheet includes an itemized breakdown of all costs thus far, how we utilized the funds provided through AB525 and SB341, and any in-kind or additional sources of income that were applied to the project.

The Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts deeply appreciates the funding allotted to us through AB525 and SB341. The arts are a catalyst for economic growth, and we aim to be a leading player in the revitalization of downtown Reno. This seed money provided us with the ability to acquire the services of a top-rated specialized architecture firm as our partner in the vision for renovation. The funds from AB525 and SB341 are transformative for our nonprofit organization but also a true investment in the future of our region. As stewards of this cultural treasure, we take very seriously our duty to the people of northern Nevada to utilize these funds with strategic care. This comprehensive master planning process assures us that decisions will be made with the highest level of integrity.

Thank you again for your support of the Pioneer Center.

Sincerely,

Dennyse Sewell  
CEO



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