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>> ALEX GLASS: Hi everyone. This is Alex. I wanted to let you know that we will be starting right at 12 o'clock today. So we'll be silent online in the meeting room until then. If you have any questions feel free to type them in the chat box. Thank you.

All right, everyone. Welcome to our Balancing Programming and Space Rentals webinar with guest presenter Angie Stillitano, from the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Center. I have a few housekeeping items to cover. One of them we will be offering closed captioning for the webinar today. The closed captioning will be at the bottom of the screen where participants can change the font type size and color of the text. But what I would like to do now is just ask if a participant can confirm in the chat box that they can see the closed captioning pod at the bottom of our meeting room. Can someone just type in a quick yes or no? Perfect. Okay. Thank you everybody. Great.

So a record of the closed captioning will be sent to

participants following the webinar and made available on our website. We will be recording this session as well. So we will be sending out that link to everyone following the webinar. And we will be e-mailing out a quick survey as well with the recording. We ask you to complete the survey. So we can continue to improve our Learning Series for arts facilities across Ontario and beyond. You can hear us but we can't hear you. Your microphones have been disabled for this webinar. You can use your speakers or headphones to listen and you can adjust the sound by clicking on the speaker icon. We will have roughly five to ten minutes at the end of the presentation to answer any questions you might have. Please use the chat box in the bottom right to type in your questions and we will get to as many as possible.

So now for some introductions. My name is Alex Glass and I am the Program Manager at ArtsBuild Ontario. In case you have not heard of us, we are a non-profit organization that help make Ontario's arts facilities more sustainable. One of our programs is the Learning Series which is a series of workshops and resources that support our core programs which includes SpaceFinder in Canada, the Arts Facilities Mentoring Network, Asset Planner for the Arts and Energy Conservation. WorkInCulture have helped us develop the Learning Series. They connect and create training and tools that help arts and culture professionals develop the business skills to match their creative talents. We would like to extend a thank you for their partnership in the Learning Series as well. Our presenter today is Angie Stillitano. And she has been a member of the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre and Al Green Theater. She has held many positions including front of house, usher, theater manager and for the past three years served as the director of booking for the entire community center. Early in her career she spent a few years working as a freelance stage manager for a number of theaters, including Marquee Entertainment and commitment is to have others realize their passion and fulfill on the potential. She has spend the past four years offering services as a coach and manager. So without further ado I would like to turn things over to Angie to get us started in our webinar today on balancing programming and space rentals. Over to you.

>> ANGIE STILLITANO: Thanks. Thanks ArtsBuild for inviting me back to host another Learning Series webinar and allowing me to share some of the knowledge and experience I that got to gain in my almost 15 years at the MNjcc. So let us start with a little bit of a background on the organization for anybody who is not familiar. The makeup of our membership is a testament to the annex neighborhood that we reside in but to

Toronto's own evolution. We provide opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to be active and learn and connect and to participate in a wide range of cultural experiences. So we are rooted in Jewish values and we are home to a 3800 Member State of the art fitness center, 285 seat Al Green Theatre and we host four schools, three choirs, a wide range of arts and culture activities, Jewish Life programming and have a really robust active 55 plus programming area. We are a founding member of the Bloor Street Culture Corridor and a legal organizer of an annual annex family festival. Our mission at the MNjcc is to strive to be an inclusive after welcoming hub tore healthy and joyful community anchored in Jewish values. Great. So a background on the Al Green Theatre. As part of the major renovations to the JCC there is a vision to create a multi use cultural theater. So the Al Green Theatre is a host to a number of cultural arts events including theater, music, dance, film and literature. These events reach out to audiences of various ages, cultures and demographics. We welcome over 25,000 people in to the doors who are enjoying all the programming that we have on our stage every year. For us in the theater we have over the years we have treated it as an business within a business. We are looking a few years back to get its own focus of the Al Green Theatre providing a professional and supportive environment empowering artists who engage diverse audiences. I will give you a little bit of my history of MNjcc. We got -- we got some of it from Alex's intro. It opened in 2003 which marked the beginning of my journey here at the center. My career is a direct reflection of how the organization has grown and expanded and continues to do so. So we haven't actually mastered at the center of balance of our priorities, how we use the space. But we have come a very long way from where we started. So as the center has evolved so has our ability to juggle the multiple priorities both of our own programming and need to serve the community and the rentals that we do take. So I am going to try to outline the progress as I go through some examples for the presentation to give you a sense of where we started, and where we ended up because you may fall anywhere on that scale and just to know that, you know, you don't have to be starting where we ended which has taken at least my 15 years to get to that point. So we will have time for questions at the end as Alex mentioned but I do ask if you have any burning questions in the middle of the presentation, or if you need any clarification or just would benefit from an extra example in a certain area, please by all means either raise your hand or use the chat box and ask and I will do my best to actually like address those as we go.

Awesome. So for the purposes of this presentation I got to

draw examples from both the MNjcc and Al Green Theatre. Same entity we kind of operate a little bit differently when it comes to all our programming. So as you can see the space we use in the MNjcc we are looking at 70% being our own internal programming. 25% of that includes our rentals. Within that 25% I have also included we have a couple of anchor tenants in the facility. Downtown Jewish community school which runs Wednesday evenings and Sundays throughout the school year. And it is a supplemental Jewish school. So similar to Sunday school would be. And then we have the downtown Jewish day school which is a Monday to Friday fall Jewish day school that runs from September to June each year. And then 5% of what the space use is in the main part of the community center is as partners. The Al Green Theatre is a bit of a flip to that. About 20% of what we use the space for is our own internal programming within the community center. And about 70% of what we do is rentals. And about 10% partners. I would say that the majority of that 10% of partners is actually kind of stringing directly from our rentals. I will talk more about that shortly.

So as you can see these are obviously weighted very differently. Give you some access to processes and tools that we focus on for internal programming and revenue generation in rentals. So knowing that these numbers are here not as a formula. These aren't targets. They are not sales targets. It is actually just kind of what is happening for us right now in reality. So just to kind of give a sense. Okay. Great. So I'm going to poll the audience. So let's take a few minutes and see where the balance is currently for your organization. So you take a minute and type in the chat box approximately what percentage of your overall space is being taken up by rentals? This is going to totally be a guess I am sure. You didn't get the numbers ahead of time like I did. But if you guys can give me a sense of roughly what you are doing now.

So Diane says 0, Nicholas is about 80%. Fast and furious and 10%, 80%. 50/50. Still under construction. 60%, 30%. Great all across the board here. 20%. I see a couple more coming in. 5%. Small venue 60%. Great. No space yet. 0%. 85%. 80%. Great. So you guys have a really -- about a mix from like similar -- split kind of similar to what we are sort of dealing with here. You have gone from nothing really low to a really high percentage of what you guys are doing in terms of rentals which is great to know. Okay. So then I am going to move on to the next question. And so based on what those numbers are, so do you think you are doing too many rentals, not enough rentals or just the right balance for your organization of rentals to programming?

So again if you can type in the chat box. Not enough. Not

enough. Not enough. Too many. Not enough. More rentals. Tough balance to reach. We want both to thrive. I can relate to that one. Revenue expectations make me not want rentals. Been there before. Varies from year to year. Not enough. Not enough. Yeah. Not enough for board of directors directive. Yes. Great. A couple more coming in, too. Inconsistent but we need too keep the doors open. Hmmm.

That's often the case I think for most people getting in to the rentals. Yeah. Managing the rentals is not enough time for program development. Absolutely which is why here we are very, very fortunate that we have to have our completely separate bookings department that actually manages the space, having space be booked for all of our internal programs and taking all the rentals. So directly people managing that stuff. So we are actually one of the fortunate few organizations. Need to balance income with programming. For sure. Okay. Great. So now that we have sense of what you guys are doing and where you kind of want to be, we can take a look at how to find that right balance for your organization. So find the right balance. So bad news for those of you who are looking for a magic formula to come up with that thing, there is no formula. Good news for those who don't really like rules and don't like to get stuck in too much structure because there is no formula. So instead of giving a bunch rules we are going to follow -I am going to give you some guidelines that you can work within and some tools that you can pick and choose from to kind of work through yourself and figure for yourself what is going to work for your organization. Okay. So balancing programming with rental space. There are three main topics that we will look at this afternoon. The first one is how to use your mission as an anchor for balancing and assessing what rentals to take on and which ones not to.

And the second one is we are going to create policies and guidelines. For you have to provide structure. And then implementing process for managing rentals and ensuring that you don't rent yourself out of your space, that you would like to be programming in. I'm sorry.

>> ALEX GLASS: Great and I was -- I interrupted before you started the slides but Mary Ann just mentioned curious how you manage two departments in allocating time to the programming of so I think you are going to go deeper in to that later in the presentation but I will let you respond.

>> ANGIE STILLITANO: I won't go too too deeply in that. How we are structured here, so my department doesn't deal with the actual programming. So we are not creating the programs. We are a not coming up -- we are not like hiring people to lead the programs or facilitators any of that stuff. We have a whole

programming department and various areas that manages all of that themselves. My department is -- so my department consists of myself as director of booking operations. Sort of the theater side of it in terms of like permanent full-time staff we have a bookings coordinator dedicated to the theater itself who takes all rental inquiries and takes in any booking requests from internal programmers and plops that in to the booking system and takes all the information, works with them to help realize their event but we are not actually doing the programming. And also for the theater we have a technical director who is responsible for managing the space and also working with both internal programmers and our clients coming in to help meet their technical needs. For the rest the community center there is a number of cultural arts programmers. So programmers who are dealing with a variety of different adult programming. We have got active 55 programs. We do a bunch of Jewish Life programming. There is children's programming, if you name it, we do it. And within our fitness center there a number of people who do programming within that. So they kind of do all the -- all that fun work in the background. And then we as a department just help them realize, realize what they actually want to with their programs. We manage the space. So we manage making sure we have the space that they need. That they get the setups that they need to all of that stuff. So I don't know if that answers your question Mary Ann but hopefully it does.

So the programming department has to book time and so if so, is there a set percentage of dates times that they have. Yes, they have to book times and I will get in to that a little further in to the presentation and talk about what our process is for that. Thanks, Mary Ann. Yeah. So looking at these three areas. So looking at mission, policy and process as some ways to kind of help find that balance from you, really the main key that we always look at is communication, how that gets communicated across the board. It is kind of make or break to have any of these three things work for you. And probably anything that you are doing in your operations to be honest. But communication is key.

Okay. Great. So take a bit of a look at mission now. So knowing your mission and making sure your staff knows your mission is really important in the process. For running your organization period. So your mission can be used as an anchor. What you do as an organization it can really easily -- really easily come up in the operations and lose sight of what that mission is and what you are doing. What about with rentals or your own programming? So generally speaking as an arts organization your programming is going to be aligned or help

fulfill on your mission. You can have your rentals do the same. They don't have to be separate and we spent a long time here really drawing a hard line in the sand of "this is our programming and these are our rentals". To the point where we didn't even -- we used to struggle with our marketing department many years ago. That we wouldn't be able to help market some of our rental clients in the theater to put the word out there because they want ours. Regardless of who is putting -- producing the event we treat it as our audience. So we have come a long way there. But I really want to go back to, you know, fitting that in to your mission and, you know, I'll tell you something this is an area that we always excel at here. From an internal programming perspective we sometimes suffer from mission creep. So the expanding of project or mission beyond your goals, you take the big step and go back to your mission, you are like this maybe is a little bit aligned but it is a bit of a stretch. So that for us we are starting to take a hard look at that. We are running out of space. We have -- but we do so much here and really kind of have probably the equivalent of about six businesses within a business that we are trying to run. And so we are working right now with your strategic plan to break down those silos and go back to some common goals so that everyone's pulling back to what's the mission, what's the purpose. Why are we here as an organization. And what are we doing and I think when we get there and what we are working on is evaluation tools for ourselves that will make a huge difference for us in the volume of programming that we are doing.

Because a lot of programming doesn't necessarily mean that you are further moving your objectives forward. There is some stuff that we are doing that really doesn't have the results that we want. So we are diving in to evaluation tools that is totally different and something that I am not an expert in.

But yeah, so basically from -- that's one of the ways that we are -- we can anchor that as we constantly look back and ask "does this serve a mission." If there is not room for it or two things competing against each other, whether a rental or internal programming we try to use the mission to see what's fulfilling on this or maybe we should set aside. I can look to have your rentals do the same and push that mission forward. So most organizations when they are starting out don't look at oh, great we had this space and we can rent it out to outside groups. It is usually not part of the mission. So the Al Green Theatre is a great example of this. The theater didn't exist within the community center until major renovations that happened and we opened in 2003. The vision for the theater before it opened was to do nothing but internal programming.

Nobody really thought much about it as a -- I think they found a little bit of what we could maybe make a little bit of money but the thought would have been probably, you know, enough to back programs and this amazing space to do it and then reality set in before the theater opened. How many costs were associated with, you know at the time, a state of the art facility that had decent operating costs and overhead and that kind of thing. So we were also seeing that there is a need in the community. A need for space. There are venues that people were dying for and this could be brought in to the community center. Community center right downtown. So it is really sought after. That started to shift and we realized that fulfilling on the mission and paying for the theater to be in existence we needed to take on some rentals. It wasn't top of mind for sure. Great. So when considering taking on space rentals or assessing whether or not you should take on certain rentals you can use your mission as that tool as a guide. So you got to be asking yourself a couple of things. One of them how can rentals enhance your mission. So perhaps on part of what your mission is, and for us opening up outside rentals really helps to support what our mission is, right? We strive to be inclusive hub. We are all downtown Toronto. Really opening up the doors even wider than they already are here is one way to do it. So how -- and a question you want to ask yourself how can rentals support your mission. So having additional sources of income obviously often helps that. Many of you guys know that because there a lot of you who are doing 70, 80% time is being booked outside the rentals. Write important programming that you are doing and support that.

This is probably one of the best things we did and I will bring this back in to the communication, we struggled up until a few years ago with feeling like it was a competition. So, you know, Mary Ann asked the question oh, you have to book space. Yes. Our own programs have to book space because the only way that we know what to put in when. Our booking calendar looks a little bit ridiculous if you look at any given day. There is probably four or five things that are happening. The theater is excluded. So we need to manage that. And sometimes it was feeling like, you know, our renters were actually working further ahead than our programmers were many moons ago. So they felt like for sure they were competing for space. So what we did is we were trying to figure out how do we break down that barrier and how for myself running the department saying I have -- I have got numbers to write. Somebody on here said that you are not doing, was it Katherine, that you are not doing enough for the board of directors, enough rentals. I have a certain amount that I need to bring in to the bottom line

running this department where we are seen as a revenue-generating department. Or our fitness center. When we were seeing breakdowns across the board either sibling rivalry where this programmer is saying how come fitness gets all the marketing attention and we don't get as much. And, you know, there was not understanding what our fitness center actually was taxed with bringing in and how come you are booking all of this stuff this far ahead for rentals when I need the space. Not really seeing what as a bookings department, we were responsible for bringing in. We brought all the programmers and support departments together and we presented a high-level budget to everyone. So they actually understand what everyone's contribution was to the bottom line and everyone's reality. As support departments, we could see what it was that the programmers were actually trying to cause. And how much of the mission they were really looking to push forward. And so the programmers could actually see ha, well, my program really either breaks even or doesn't make much money or in some cases loses money. And if the impact is there that's completely fine but it has to get paid for somehow. We have overall operating expenses as an organization. So really they started to see oh, I see, oh, okay. I see what the rentals can bring in and they started to look at oh, this is a really great audience to be tapping in to. These are people that we can be partnering with or reaching out to. We are bringing in people who normally wouldn't walk through the center. It changed the conversation. When we had to go to a programmer and ask a question of like do you have any flexibility to actually move this program to a different time or different room, we have X opportunity that's going to bring in this much money. The answer used to be like no way. And now it is like oh, yeah, that's great actually. Can we try to promote to them that kind of thing. So we are -- leaps and bounds but with that level of communication we had to really really sweat for that. Excellent

Trying to figure out where I am. So yeah, you want to -- you can take your mission but your mission -- you use that as your measuring stick of, you know, is this a rental that I want to be doing or not. Does it fulfill it. Support it. And also can it increase your exposure. So having that new audience come in to your facility can make a difference, right? It actually can increase how many people are participating in what you are doing as well.

Okay. Moving on to policy. So in addition to mission, a well thought out and communicated policy really can provide directions structure and decreasing risks of rentals overshadowing all of your own programming. I am going to give you a couple of examples of some key policies around rentals

that we have here that help support us in making sure that we don't let rentals take right over. So the first one is conflict of interest. Having a policy around conflict of interest is super important. You don't want to be bringing things in that are going to directly compete with what you are doing. So we don't accept any rentals that are considered in competition with anything that we do as a program.

So, for instance, if we had a rental inquiry come in that somebody wanted to run a preschool music program, the response would be thank you so much for your inquiry. We actually have a program very similar to this and are unable to rent space to offer this. But if you have any other programming that falls outside of what we do that you would like space for, by all means please reach out to us again. We would like to host you. We are not shutting the door on the organization but it is clear. Most people who are renting space are probably doing a Google search and saying rental space in downtown Toronto. We come up. They don't want to come in to a space and compete in the actual location they are trying to run their programs. That's a key one. Provides good service to your renters anyway and make sure that you are not pulling away from your own programming. Another good policy would be rentals that we would consider high risk or against mission or values. We -- we just don't. I will give you an example because it is not really a set clear-cut written policy this one. But we don't -- we don't regularly rent to groups who are looking to conduct like regularly weekly or monthly religious services that are non-Jewish services. It is a blanket policy but created to ensure that we are not having groups come in whose their mission is to convert people to their religion. It is a sensitive topic in the Jewish community. So we are really making sure that we are not pulling away from our membership and making sure that everyone feels they belong. We don't allow for those kinds of bookings. Luckily for us we don't have the space to do that on a regular basis. Often that answers the question anyway. But our staff who are doing the bookings know that's not possible. We have churches and different things that will come in and want to do a Christmas pageant for, for instance. So they can kindly come in and rent the theater. We make sure that we have the communication with them and that they understand what the boundaries are. So we share the lobby for the theater and the rest of the community center. So that group comes in at Christmas time and wants to do a Christmas pageant. Not a problem. If their set a nativity scene that can be on the stage and continue in to the theater for your audience but you can't put it in the lobby. So that's another one that we kind of do.

And the other kind of policy around rentals that we have is we

don't really take rentals that will interrupt our day-to-day business. We have getting a ton of inquiries. People wanting to take over our locker rooms or our fitness center. And it is like I mean it is a huge part of our business and really what we do as an organization and, you know, it particularly can bring in a bunch of money in fell swoop but they take right over. We consider things that can be done afterhours and we are limited but we turn away a ton of rental opportunity that way because it actually just conflicts way too much with our programming. So really knowing when to say no to things and making sure you have that line in the sand at like this is actually our priority here. And go from there.

So we don't publicly post these policies like we would print our code of conduct on our website, but our bookings staff knows what that stuff is when it comes out so that they can clearly communicate that in a way that the potential renter understands and, you know, we can communicate that with the rest of the staff here and all the programmers. So they kind of know that we really have their back and we are not trying to like rent them out of their home to do all the programming. Half of the stuff we understand both of those -- like the mission we talked about earlier and why policies are important is because we can kind of listen in-between and know what you are up to, and see when they can make a suggestion or that when you want to look at making an exception to one of the policies. So a great example that we had relatively recently about a year ago, we had an inquiry from Canada Council for The Blind as part of White Cane Week. They want us to do an expo. Took over a gym anyway and set it up like a trade show. Reception in the theater. Big thing. Big thing. On a Saturday, one of busiest days in the gymnasium. Normally we say no. But we have a really huge focus on accessibility in the center. So the staff that took the inquiry said I know we don't do this, but I wanted to bring to your attention. Took that and brought to the director on access and inclusion. And we -- this is like too good to pass up. The opportunity is huge and for one-day event, what we might lose is a little bit of programming, but the center itself is going to gain. So we took it on and we didn't do it as a partnership. We offered the -- so we had -- we had some rental revenue coming in. We got amazing training from their staff on how to actually do an event that has I mean any never mind a large number of people with various vision abilities. So we got trained on how to walk somebody through a tour, you know. Okay. Great we are all going to start on the same wall and put our backs here. This is the direction that you are facing and to your right is this and left is this. My staff got trained from taking that on and we -- we got offered the -- they were so thrilled with us

being able to bend over backwards and make that work in that case we were offered a table. We were able to promote our variabilities to the Toronto Film Festival. It is like the target market. One of them. It really worked to our benefit to actually know, really know what the goals are and objectives are and knowing when to make an exception to those policies. Okay. We'll move on to progress. So one of the most valuable tools that we have at the MNjcc around balance in our programming and our rentals is the process in which we take our bookings. So like I said before we are an organization that has about six businesses within a business and so we are almost maxed out on space. The amount that gets done here in a day just blows my mind sometimes. Any kind of program that is competing with other internal programming, so we really want to make sure that we are best utilizing all of our resources and maximizing the impact that we have and making sure that we can get enough rental revenue and have enough impact that we are balancing both. So this process for managing all of that stuff is really key. So I just want to outline that our current process that I will take you through looks nothing like it did when I first started here. Because there was no process, I don't think if I first started here. That might sound familiar to some of you. Especially when looking at question of like oh, do you actually book space like for your internal stuff. 100% that we do. That's the only way that we can kind of keep track of it. So the way things worked here years ago for programming perspective we made work a couple of months ahead of time. It was like very knee jerk reaction to the programming. It was somebody came up with an idea that let's just do this now. Or an opportunity came up to partner with somebody if somebody brought something to us and we need to do this. It is next week. Let's go. So that's kind of what it was looking like. Everything was done last minute. We had a quarterly program guide that came out. So to some degree we did kind of programming on a quarterly basis and then realizing this became a problem for the theater. The theater was mostly doing rentals at the time and the people coming in wanting to rent were looking to rent like six months or more out. And we were leaving them hanging and losing a lot of revenue potential for a space that was sitting empty for programmers who couldn't decide what they wanted to do. Just in case they needed to keep it empty and that might be sounding familiar to some of you guys. Okay. We need to find a balance here for this. How can we manage all of it. So we then started to think we need to put -- we need to ahead six months. So we have been releasing the calendar for six months and what are you going to do between this month and this month. Speak now or forever hold your peace the date that you want might not be

there. People would put their stuff in and then open it up and then we could kind of release more, release more but we got busier and more and more popular and it was no longer a process that was actually serving. So we had to look to tweak that again. Just going to pause for a second because we have got a comment or a question from Alan. So we adopted a policy of declining rentals with less than four weeks notice. Experience has taught us that clients don't have enough time to promote their shows in less than four weeks. Yep. That's for sure. We consider in the theater we consider anything less than four weeks to be a last minute booking. So like in another space we consider a last minute booking like one or two days ahead of time. We very rarely get anything less than that. But, you know, less rentals and more internal programs that we were grappling with at the time. Luckily that's not the case anymore.

Great. So I'm going to -- I see that Alan is still typing. I'm going to start to slide over because I'm going to start to get in to what our process looks like now. So we -- so we now have a bit of an idea of how our process or lack thereof looked. So I'm going to walk through the basic steps of what our submission process looks now current date. It is mostly the same for the theater as it is for the rest of the building. But I'm going to actually walk through this because -- this is more building, for building wide. The theater has a couple slight variances to this. So this will allow us to see how we juggle all the internal needs and fit our renters and maximize the potential for both. We put together a calendar of programming departments that are outlining all the holidays, Jewish holidays, any facility closures. There are -- we are not closed very often. We close for two days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. We close all other use of the facility. We only did this year did a pilot to close on Christmas day. We have always been open on Christmas day. It was quieter and quieter and costs were going up and up. We looked at that and wanted to see what happened if we closed for the day. And we outline registration dates for the coming year. Intercessional dates, when is the spring session going to be held and start date and end date of that and we put all of that together.

It would be hard -- the Jewish holidays are a moving target every year. So the template really has to get looked at. So we put that together. We send it to the programmers well in advance so they know when they need to start thinking about this stuff and are not to be caught off guard in the day-to-day of current programming and they know what we need to kind of do. So that we can -- We then communicate to all repeat renters well in advance. So that is the process for us -- I would love to

send them out sooner than it does. We send that out probably around January so that the calendar gets finalized and sent for initial submissions -- we start taking in about end of February, beginning of March. We also drop hints that this is coming. It is coming. It is coming. So they are working away and we start taking that stuff. So end of February, beginning of March we are taking things for the following September to August. So just finished. Kind of let you know where we are in the process. But that's where we are looking. So we then calendar days out and programmers are looking at ways of getting your submissions ready, figuring out what they need and what they are going to be doing for the year and then we communicate with our repeat annual renter. So we have bunch of renters that come in and they have been with us for years and they come in and book once a week or once a month. They have a really regular schedule. We communicate we are getting ready to take all of our internal stuff. Are you interested in coming back next year. That's a good way to touch base. How are things going now. Are you planning on doing more of the same next year. Is the room sufficient for what you are using. We do not confirm it with anybody. We put it. So we are aware that we would ultimately like to make this happen. Do you have a process for evaluating renter satisfaction with the space. I am going to table that right now. Save that one for the end. And so -- so we send the calendar out and programmers work away and we communicate with our repeat renters to see if they are interested in coming back and then we pencil those bookings again. Nothing is confirmed. The client knows we want to put them on hold because we want to try to give you your first option if we can. And they know that our internal programming takes priority.

So penciling in the dates and then we take our -- we take our special events that happen in the building. For us many of these fall around holiday celebrations. These are events like family day programming that takes over most of the building. We do a big Hanukah event that takes over the gym and a bunch of programming spaces of these are things that are not done regularly throughout the year. They are scattered and we put those in first because they actually have a big impact on newest dates for regularly scheduled programs. So anything that we do weekly is going to be interrupted by one of these special events that are going to take priority. So we like to get those in first. So we have a deadline for that and that stuff all comes in and we put it in the booking system. Then we have to fast forward-- about a week or so later we then take the internal programs and we get those booked again. So all of the regularly scheduled stuff. So the -- the Karate class is happening every

week. The Hebrew classes that are like eight sessions long, that serve for this session. All of that stuff gets submitted in. That leaves our booking coordinators super duper busy. They start plugging that stuff in to the calendar for the fiscal/programming here. And once that deadline hits we have had to get really solid that deadline is a deadline. So if anybody is late, they know ahead of time they are going to be later internal programmers. We can communicate and negotiate it. And waiting on this is there any way to get this two days later. We kind of assess the process. If it is possible is it going to have an impact on it. No problem. We will do it. Otherwise the deadline is the deadline. So once that deadline hits if there is anything that comes in internally late, we say thank you. We are going to take this but we are going to have to put this aside until we have done the process because our process in that work back schedule is so tight. We actually will work it back some registration dates. And when our biannual program guides come out. If we know our guide has to be on doorsteps by such and such a date in advance of like in August registration date for the fall, we move backwards from there. We don't have much space. Otherwise the search will encroach on marketing deadlines and those guys are pushing it around here. So that's -- so we set that stuff aside and we had push back when we first started do that. Everyone will accommodate me and it is going to be late. You are going to end up missing out because we have a process that works now and you are going to actually start impacting and affecting everyone else. So we set those aside. Okay. Great. And then we move in to probably actually the meatiest part of the process which is resolving conflicts for us. So our booking coordinators put everything in the system and they see what's overlapping and start to look at, you know, is this a priority program. Because some of them can't be -- so we run afterschool program that's licensed. So anything that's conflicting with that unless it is supplemental programming that they do, if it is the key spaces that they have to run, licensed space, sorry no, we can't do that then and they go from there. They start to have the conversations with the programmers. So they will take stuff to them and say okay great. So this isn't possible. But this is. Or asking the questions, do you have flexibility in the work space that you are in or can your time shift to it. Anything they can address at that stage, then they kind of look down to two different competing programs, and internal stuff at this point. Then they look and say okay, great. You need this and you need this. Sometimes they need somebody to make a judgment call. That's really great. That's when the mandate comes back in real well. What's having the most impact, that kind of thing

and we kind of go from there. So we kind of hash that stuff out. All the while there are these external placeholders in the system. So now that we have had the conversations particularly around what differences that revenue makes, we start to ask the questions. Do you have flexibility. Could you shift this to accommodate this. So we do our best to preserve that time and we do pretty good job. I don't know how my stuff juggles. They are the experts at this and we somehow manage to make that all work. So communication at this stage of the game is like the most important. So once all those conflicts are sorted out. We have a date where we look at internal programming. We send out the confirmation sheets and these guys know that they can start putting the marketing materials together because those are the dates and times they have and they go from there. So then we go back to all those external rentals that had placeholders. And we then start to have the conversations this is now what's available. Are you ready to confirm. We lock in their schedules. We start adding in anything else. We contract them all that stuff is wonderful and good. The calendar is basically then open. Once the internal programmers have got their confirmations that part of the process is done, it is open for business. Now we can have more internal programs come in and that's when we go back to the late in the game submissions. And we start to see what space we do have for them and putting in all external renters and locking that stuff in. Figure alternative dates and we get them all in and we basically go from there. Yep. And so yes, opening up the calendar for all the other bookings. So before I move on from this, I'll ask if there is any specific questions to the process or anything like that. Mary Ann: we hosted a wedding that wants to book the space two years ahead and in your process I do not see how you can fit it in. Great. In our booking system we have a status called unconfirmed holds. We will take those as far out as possible and we always communicate. We had this with a bar mitzvah. You have not hosted a bar mitzvah before if you think that weddings are high maintenance. So it is being confident and not being afraid to have to turn things away. We are not in our mission and are not that kind of facility. If we were a banquet hall, our focus would be very, very different. So we say to people we can absolutely place a hold for you. And this is the date by which we can get back to you to tell you whether or not we can confirm it. If that works for them, leave the hold and if it doesn't they will start to work elsewhere. But we don't string them along. We don't not tell them and it is just bad customer service. They can then choose. If it works for them to wait they will and if it doesn't they won't. I hope that answers your question. Mary Ann says they have a limit to

certain weekends. That's absolutely the way you can do that, too. You can say these are the busy times for this. We are not going to take any programming and we are going to dedicate it to that and fill it.

Okay. Alan, we will only take weddings during the spring and summer where performing arts activities are low. We determine that we have difficult meeting expectations and priority to serve the performing arts. Yeah. All of the stuff is really valid. You want to look at kinds of things you are doing when. It is a bit of a tangent. But we do that with our partners. We were having a hard time awhile ago with people who wanted to partner with us in the theater which is code for I want a discount. It wasn't the same thing. Discounts and partners are not the same. So we have to actually put together a whole partnership process and program and we wouldn't take any sort of partnership less than however many months ahead of time and it had to be something that was going to benefit both parties and people had to outline it. But we had times of the year that we would not take a partnership. Not a partnership that was a discounted rate partnership. If it worked as a promotional partnership, 100% we would do it. But we could -- we could rent May out five times over. We don't take on that level of partnership unless it is so aligned with our mission that it actually gets taken on kind of like an internal program, like our own programming, then we will make exceptions to but otherwise we say it this blackout period we don't do it. In the same way if you know all couple of months crazy high rental potential, and that's going to pay for all the stuff that you do year long as an organization you say this is the priority at this time and a priority at that time. You get to pick and choose for what works for your organization. Do you have agreed upon policies for priority? So rental versus programming. Like who has first dibs. We are -- we run around you once you are confirmed. We don't leave internal for external stuff, and we don't leave holds for very long unless it is in that period that we haven't -- we can't really release those dates yet. So yeah, with our external rentals, for instance, somebody comes in and they put an inquiry on the theater. They fill the form and put a hold on it. They have two weeks once they have received the estimate, the cost estimate, to make a decision. So if they are ready to move on, and they want to confirm, we start to prep contracts in the first deposit invoice, we get that stuff out and they sign, they pay and they are locked in period. They are actually on the hook for the whole thing. They only have to pay a deposit of 50% but they are obligated for that whole thing. That works for us in the theater. It doesn't work -- like it wouldn't work everywhere for that but that's how we do it. Once

they are locked in, it doesn't matter what internal program wants to take that space, they can't. We have promised it to somebody else. We have worked really hard to gain a reputation that people want to keep coming back and we do it -- I'm really just conscious of time right now. I got to keep going.

Okay. Great. Are there other tools and tips, this is actually going to be -- we are going to fly through this and Alex says it is okay. Thank goodness. I thought we were going to be done early. So other tools that you can use, other than using your process and your policies and your bringing back to your mandate, taking your programming on the road, if you are running out of space like we are, why the heck not start to program outside of your building. It is a great way to get your brand outside of your walls, too. So we have a couple of -- like we have done some popup classes at like a local farmer's market and it helps to promote our fitness center and something they can do because we are filled to the gills. We also we have like a sort of partner of groove component. It is a part of Jewish Life programming. They do pop-ups at parks and they do it in partnership with a number of different organizations and they take that programming out on the road. We are starting to look at more and more of that and how can we do more of that. We don't actually have to limit the programming. But we just have to find space to do it. We don't have it here. Go elsewhere. A great example of the JCC, some in the states who own their own building and realize that they were not able to like keep up with it from a financial perspective. But they actually prefer that they sold the building because as a center it was their programming that was who they were. It wasn't their actual facility. They sold the building and took the programming to different places and and it apparently just blew up with what they were doing and it got huge and it worked for them. I don't know that it would work for us here. But definitely look inside the box. You can always take that on the road. Curated rentals. We can go after who you want to. If you are finding you are taking on stuff that's outside of your mission what you are aligned with, just go after the stuff that you want to be doing. Right? You might go to film festivals if you have the capacity to do that, and that's in keeping with what you are doing with weddings. You got to know your space and what you are good at doing. And what's going to give you the most bang for your buck, too. So if it takes a lot of work from a rental perspective you might want to go for the little work high reward kind of thing. That's why there is nothing wrong. I know that when Alex and I were chatting before we were talking about what was it, not AGMs. Other kind of corporate events and that kind of thing and

if it is simple and walk in and out they got a ton of money to spend. You can actually just know that's why you are doing that is because you need the money and it is quick and it is fast. You get a lot of bang for your buck to take it and if it is a lot of work and doesn't bring in that much you might sit there and say we don't do that. You can communicate that. Don't be apologetic about it. This isn't what we do. Thank you. Have a good day.

You can implement express bookings. It is a process that we starting to put in. We kind of borrowed the idea from the Fringe Festival. If we have empty space at the last minute we have a quick system process as is space. We want space we can give you a discount on it. We can make extra revenue for little work. The biggest thing we take on is partnerships and having those rentals turn in to partners. A couple of great examples. One of them is past event and the theater brought in a production. It was an interactive all abilities show, Mid-Summer Night's Dream. They came to us wanting to rent the theater. They could not afford the theater at the regular rates and we sat down with them and we ended up coming up with a partnership that we hosted in the community center in one of our rooms. They gave them free space to conduct the workshops to help create the actual production. And then we did a discounted rate on the theater and it fulfilled on our mandate and three times over. And just what we created. We had tons of media attention with it and everything else and it was just like it was such a perfect partnership. So that was one of the ways that we kind of translated a rental potential that we would have actually lost. We still gained some rental revenue off of it. But the partnership option was huge. Push Pull Dance is a regular rental. They rent one week a year and they were looking to expand out in to doing more relaxed performances and it is a focus that we are trying to tackle more here. So they are paying their regular week, they are still paying full rate and doing the regular thing and they have a separate booking, it is not within that week. It is at a different time and they are going to do a relaxed performance and they are doing it in co-presentation with us. So we are still paying a bit for the space and paying for all the labour and everything and we are helping push it. You can see on the slide there is like the ReelAbilities Film festival on there which is run by our facility, we facilitate that. And it is working really well and it helps us, you know, promote and encourage people to be doing more relaxed performances, and it gives us an option to actually do a little bit of outreach and teach our clients about what it looks like and how they can bring in a whole new audience by doing relaxed performances. Partnership is a really good way to

take those rentals and leverage them. Okay. So I lost track of where we are with questions. Is there any more questions? We have time for them.

>> ALEX GLASS: Thank you so much. That was awesome. We can take a couple more. I did want to point out that Laura had a question.

>> ANGIE STILLITANO: Yes, so we -- we are kind of working on a more formalized like survey. We don't have it at present. We have regular touch points, we regularly communicate with our renters and we try to check in as we go. So it is for us to more of an informal process but we do have a really huge retention rate for rentals. So it tells me we are doing something right.

>> ALEX GLASS: Thank you. Roxanne is where we are.

>> ANGIE STILLITANO: Okay.

>> ALEX GLASS: She says for a situation in a museum we would have to include rentals in the museum's mandate and mission in order to make it as much of a priority of programming. For example, the present time our programming department can put our theater on hold for a potential date for one possible lecture and they are not flexible to release any new dates just in case the presenter changes their mind. Our biggest block to new rentals are internal programs. We talked about this a bit.

>> ANGIE STILLITANO: Ours too sometimes. Yeah. It sounds like there just needs to be a -- as an organization really just getting aligned -- it sounds like silos maybe. I don't know if that's what you are guys are dealing with. We are slowly breaking them down here that we have been very much working in individual silos, like I said these businesses within a business without much thought of everyone else and it becomes, you know, fighting and vying for space and resources and it is us getting on the same page. And understanding what each other is doing and opening that dialogue. So maybe it is just -- a matter of a conversation to have everyone understand the challenges on both sides and it may be that there is a different solution that you guys haven't come up with yet that will actually better serve both areas and I don't know if that helps you or not.

>> ALEX GLASS: We have Nicholas. Do you use standardized forms for bookings internally and externally or is it done organically on e-mail?

>> ANGIE STILLITANO: We have been adjusting our structures. Right now it is nothing fancy. We are looking to digitize that a little bit more. We will take it back to you both internally and -- I need to you fill it out in this form. More of a guarantee that we don't mess something up in the process.

>> ALEX GLASS: And then I think this is our last question for now. Erin is asking which booking system are you using.

>> ANGIE STILLITANO: We use Event Pro. You can manage multiple venues within that. You can do invoicing out of it. Quite a lot.

>> ALEX GLASS: Awesome. Thank you so much Angie. I think this is where we have to wrap it up but you have included your e-mail there and so if anybody else has any outstanding questions to ask Angie do feel free to e-mail her. What a fantastic resource you are. Thank you so much for your presentation today. It is definitely a topic that has been top of mind for many creative spaces in Ontario. It is great to have some time to dive in to it and learning about what the Miles Nadal community center and the Al Green Theatre has tackled over the years is great for anyone who has a rentals program right now.

>> ANGIE STILLITANO: We share what we do. We love it.

>> ALEX GLASS: We do. Awesome. Thank you. SpaceFinder, we are talking about booking systems, SpaceFinder is there for you as well. It is a community source tool and available in eight Ontario communities and three provincial communities. On this system you can integrate your calendar. You can take payments right through the system as well. And it is just a free way to promote your space rental. So I encourage you if you are a creative space or have forgotten about your listing to go back and update and we want your space on there and to help you build up your promotion around your spaces. So please visit spacefinderincanada.ca. And we would like to thank our funders the Government of Canada, Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Ontario Arts Council for supporting us. I want to say thank you to everyone for joining us this afternoon and I will be sending out that recording and link to the recording and the transcript and slides for your reference and the evaluations which I encourage you to complete as well. I hope you guys have a great rest of your day. ***

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