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VENICE INSTITUTE for
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 4, 2026

Contact:

Venice Institute for Performing Arts

Email: yvette.wasserman@vipam.org

Phone: (941) [218-3779](tel:218-3779) ext. 103

Website: www.veniceperformingartscenter.com

Link for Images: <https://tinyurl.com/vcc-pr-dropbox>

Venice Institute for Performing Arts Management Awarded Contract to Manage the Venice Community Center

The Venice Institute for Performing Arts Management (VIPAM) has been awarded the contract by the City of Venice to manage the Venice Community Center. Following a competitive proposal process, VIPAM received the highest evaluation score and was selected to oversee the operation and management of the City's iconic community gathering place.

"We are honored to have been selected by the City of Venice to manage the Venice Community Center," said Michael Hartley, Co-Founder and President of the VIPAM Board. "Our organization has deep roots in this community, and we are grateful for the opportunity to partner with the City to ensure the Community Center reaches its fullest potential. Our vision is to create a welcoming destination for residents and organizations, a source of civic pride, and a vibrant venue for performing arts, cultural programming, community celebrations, meetings, and special events. We look forward to working alongside City leadership, community partners, and local organizations to build on the Center's legacy while creating new opportunities that enrich the lives of everyone in our community."

As the Center's management organization, VIPAM will focus on expanding community engagement, increasing programming opportunities, strengthening partnerships with local organizations, and ensuring the facility remains an accessible and welcoming destination for residents and visitors. The organization brings extensive experience in venue management, event operations, community programming, and nonprofit leadership through its successful management of the Venice Performing Arts Center.

The Venice Institute for Performing Arts (VIPA) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation; all donations are tax-deductible to the extent provided by state and federal law and 100% of such support is applied to VIPA's operations. A copy of the official state registration (CH49263) and financial information may be obtained from the division of consumer services by calling toll-free at 1- 800-435-7352. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state. Tax ID# 81-1190704.

Performance and Box Office Address:
1 Indian Avenue, Bldg. 5 Venice, FL 34285
941.218.3779
information@vipam.org

Legal and Mailing Address:
101 Venice Ave W, Suite 27 Venice, FL 34285
VenicePerformingArtsCenter.com



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"The Venice Community Center has long been an important gathering place for our community," said Assistant City Manager Roger Omenhiser. "With VIPAM's demonstrated success over several years managing the Venice Performing Arts Center for Sarasota County Schools, the City is confident that this partnership will provide an outstanding entertainment and special events venue at a great value to the community."

VIPAM will officially assume operations on Oct. 1. Transition work is currently underway, including contacting existing event organizers and individuals or organizations that have submitted reservation requests for dates after Sept. 30.

Reservation requests for events occurring on or after Oct. 1, 2026, may now be submitted through VIPAM's landing page at VeniceCommunityCenter.com or by contacting Director of Community Outreach Eli Jason at eli.jason@vipam.org or **941-218-3779, ext. 108**.

"We are excited to partner with the City of Venice as we begin this new chapter for the Venice Community Center," said Derek Blankenship, Executive Director of VIPAM. "Our goal is to create a vibrant community gathering place that brings residents, businesses, and organizations together while fostering connection, engagement, and civic pride."

VIPAM looks forward to preserving the Community Center's rich legacy while expanding its role as a dynamic hub for community connection, education, arts and culture, celebrations, and lifelong engagement for generations to come.

About VIPA

The Venice Institute for the Performing Arts Management's mission is to sustain the arts through innovative education programs and inspiring Venice and its surrounding communities with first-class entertainment, events and experiences. As the management company for the Venice Performing Arts Center, we work with all groups that use the space to produce, co-produce, manage, and coordinate over 300 events each season. VIPAM has a \$5 million dollar a year impact on the local economy, and this number grows each year as more people come to enjoy this beautiful facility. We can bring performing arts education to more than 2,000 Sarasota County youth each season through our educational programs.

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