

Attendance: Jim Sahr, Anita Parish, Kim Allen, Ken Kirby, Cathy Coulson-Keegan, Diane McWhorter, Sue Theolass Other Participants: Jeff Allen, Bill Wright, Charlie Ruff, Justin Honea, Wren Davidson, James Nason, Vince LaRochelle

Scribe: Diane McWhorter

Approval of Minutes: Motion: Accept the minutes (of 3-12-14) as written (Cathy/Sue) All in favor 5-0-0

Letter to Board: Bill wrote a letter we would like to send to the Board in support of the Bylaws. We will wait until the end of the meeting to create a final version.

Craft Sanction Issues: Charlie began the meeting by describing the current situation surrounding the resignation of the CI coordinator and the sanctions on the three booths. Each situation is different and he has heard from each person. He understands what led to the frustrations on all sides and feels that clear process and policy are needed to untangle them and proceed in the way the OCF prefers to handle disputes. The treatment of the sanctioned booths seemed harsh in contrast to how things had been done in the past, and two of the three had no previous indications that they had guideline violation issues. Timing is important in sanctions, and there is a difference between revoking a craft and suspending a craftsperson. Some of the emails seemed to be banning people from the Fair and that is only done in extreme Code of Conduct violations, and always involves the GM. In order for the sanctioned craftspersons to have time to respond, sanctions would ideally be done in the fall. Time has run out to take these actions before this year's Fair.

During the long discussion many points were raised, including the number of complaints and repeated ineffective actions against one of the three. The evidence-gathering processes were thorough but there was no process in place for the sanctioned to respond and be heard. The Burden of Proof falls on CI and must be clearly articulated. The actions would be operational and need not involve the Board until agreements are worked out. In the past the GM was kept informed but not involved in sanctions, as an appeal to the GM is the next step

for the sanctioned. The Bylaws are clear on the intent of our founders but the processes for removing violators after they pass the jury is not as clear.

The discussion found common ground in a clear understanding of the Bylaws and all present committed to upholding the Maker is the Seller handcrafted nature of OCF. The problems arose partly from an erosion of this value by some willing to jury without meeting the guidelines, and partly from the choices of already participating craftspeople who advanced their businesses beyond the strict definition of hand-crafting. Preventing someone from jurying is much easier than removing them after they have sold for a number of years. Much more pre-jury investigation needs to be done.

For already established members who are the focus of complaints or suspicions, some type of Review Panel could be established to examine the evidence and hear from the craftspeople. There would ideally be adequate time and opportunity for the person to bring their evidence before an impartial group. Many of these members have been overlooked due to our “yes yes yes” culture and the difficulty of being consistent. Many members of CI and CC are fed up with the repeated complaints and the increase in factory-made goods. Items could be required to be made in the USA. Definitions have to be specific and clear and understood by all parties.

The committee is willing to work with CI, management, and others to clarify the definitions, set a process for dialogue, and form some type of review panel after the Fair. A separate document such as a Craft Policy Handbook could be written. Issues such as 3-D printers and laser cutters can also be addressed in such a document.

In addition, the 63 different crews all act in different ways that have evolved over time. CI coordinators have a complicated set of duties and may need more training in some aspects, plus the clear knowledge of what actions they are going to be supported in taking. The transition for the coordination of CI has not been quite as smooth and gradual as it could have been, and there may have been some communication gaps.

In the past the committee was a respected part of the process, acting as a place for crafters to bring appeals, until the Paxton rule. Because of Paxton's motion of 1998, Craft Committee cannot be involved in any disciplinary actions. Charlie will look into this. A lot of the institutional memory of CI and Craft Committee ought to be put into the processes and policy improvements. It will be necessary to define terms like "factory" and "cottage industry." No individual caused this present situation. The problems are institutional. We were asked to deal with "party booths" and the issue has evolved to the present situations.

Cultural change is never easy and usually somewhat painful. This will be a process that needs engagement from a wide variety of OCF members.

A motion of support for Charlie to handle the situation was made and withdrawn. The following motion of support for his position of waiting until post-Fair to process the sanctions was passed:

***Motion: Letters will be sent from Charlie on official OCF stationery notifying Steven Villegas that this is his last year of selling any sewn canvas goods, and letting Xylem and Tinctoria know they will be allowed to sell this year but they will be under review post-Fair. (Sue/Kim) All in favor 7-0-0.

We will craft a report to the Board before the next Board meeting (May 5) to let them know about our work on this subject.

Drawing the Points Line: The group, with Justin from Registration and Ken from CI, discussed where to draw the line in the juried crafters to make sure that everyone above it gets a space. There are 12-15 booths available, though the final number depends on how many take Leaves of Absence and how many already have space. There are about 6 craftspeople in Solutions. The Wait-Share list is growing, as it got longer in anticipation of Crafts Lot spaces. There will be more space next year when the Crafts Lot project is taken further. Drawing the line under 37 would let in 41 additional crafts (or people).

***Motion: Draw the line under 37 points with the caveat that after all the information is in, Justin can redraw it if needed. (Jim/Ken) All in favor 7-0-0

Letter to the Board: While members liked Bill and Cathy's letter, it doesn't fit the situation so well now. We will work through email on another.

Survey: On the agenda for next time. Next meeting May 14, 6 pm.