

Craft Committee Meeting Minutes

June 12, 2013

Attendance: Jim Sahr, Kim Allen, Anita Parish, Cathy Coulson-Keegan, Ken Kirby, Diane McWhorter, Sue Theolass
Excused: Lucy Kingsley Other Participants: Jeff Allen, Bill Wright

Guests: Charlie Ruff, Gary Nolan, Tim Jarvis

Scribe: Diane McWhorter

Minutes Approval: Accept the minutes of the May 8 meeting. (Cathy/Kim) All in favor.

Craft Standards: Charlie Ruff spoke to the committee regarding the solution arrived upon in the Deane Morrow Booth Rep situation. He worked with Deane to find one of a choice of solutions from retirement to working with Craft Inventory to meet their conditions for active crafter status within the next two years. Deane has opted to work on a craft to regain his status. Registration will handle the duties of Booth Rep for the next two years.

Craft Committee can be a resource in setting standards for this booth and others to be evaluated when there are questions regarding the handmade crafts offered in booths. He was grandfathered with the wire sculpture crafts he made when paraphernalia was outlawed. A long discussion of what constituted high quality crafts and a sufficient quantity and appropriate display for OCF ensued.

Saturday Market guidelines and process was touched on and a meeting may be arranged with the SM Standards Committee. They have processes to deal with complaints anonymously and to check on applicants for more information about their crafts. Updating OCF CI processes would be a step to work on the issues of alleged imports and the perception of declining craft efforts in some other booths. Grandfathered crafters are held mainly to "sufficient stock" and were promised to be able to continue as long as they were actively crafting.

It is difficult but would be helpful to have some concrete standards to evaluate such concepts as "sufficient stock" and the amount of handcrafted work necessary by the artists themselves. All of the criteria vary with craft category, but with some help from those who have already set up this type of system, it would not be impossible to make some improvements. For instance, the top jury scorers could be vetted with website checks or more complex application forms.

Bringing the same items year after year is not necessarily a negative aspect of craft booths, or even an accurate perception in some cases. Having some inexpensive items is a necessary strategy for many booths. Using assistance in some aspects of the craft business is a debatable necessity. Asking for photos of the crafter making the products, asking to see tools and materials, and asking if the crafter can do special orders are all ways to get information without a studio visit, often an impossibility with distance. Websites can be checked. Craft Inventory can take photographs of any questionable booth or item, and compare them to images online or from past years. Year-after-year documentation will help. Perhaps at least a crafter could fill a percentage of booth space according to the number of crafters in the booth. Photos of the booths could be included in the jury process as well.

Gary Nolan and Tim Jarvis, who is helping to do Jeff's job in his absence, joined the discussion and will be working with the members over the next year to put some measures for evaluation in place.

Suggestion: It should be in the bylaws that if someone sues OCF, they are no longer considered to be a member.

Wireless on Site: The project has not been completed but there are still expectations that it will be.

Imports: There have been a few reports of suspected imports including a letter in the FFN asking for action. It seems to be within the CI duties to educate the path walkers and jurists to recognize the details that would indicate imported manufacture. If the prices are too low to include labor, if receipts for raw materials can't be shown, and if the crafter can't speak knowledgeably about the making of the craft, they probably didn't make it. If they are booked into shows every weekend, they would not be able to keep up unless they are not making all of the crafts. Turning red flags into facts can be hard to do, and CI does not like to be enforcers, especially on site.

CI may need to add members to form a plan of action to add some level of research and enforcement to their duties. One of the particular crafters being complained about has clear information on their website and could be refunded and told they do not qualify for our venue. All of the systems need to be put in place before the need for them surfaces, so beginning the work this year will help with future problems. Cases in the past have resulted in companies being removed from the Fair for just these issues.

Craft Inventory operations could use more participation by crafters, and in general craftspeople don't have the deep understanding of Fair operations and what the volunteers do, but just come in and do our selling and don't participate much. Craft Inventory volunteers may not have a broad understanding of all craft categories and processes and could be assisted by the experts. Craftspeople are not expected to be out of their booths during Fair for more than about 90 minutes, so we can't really see anyone but our neighbors, and we have to be neighbors with them regardless of any actions. A notice of concern-type form could be put in the packet for use if needed. During Fair isn't a good time to volunteer for Crafters, but we will work with CI on this issue.

Craft Committee could help get information to our interest group and could encourage more participation as volunteers. Some don't want to be involved, but often people don't know how to be and get frustrated. Board members are willing to serve but aren't often asked to help solve member issues.

Amplified Music:

***Motion: Craft Committee requests of our liason that the Board request of Operations that the guidelines on amplified music be enforced. (Ken/Sue) 7-0-0 All in favor.

Next Meeting September 10th, which is a Tuesday, as there is a conflict on our regular meeting date on the second Wednesday of the month. We do not meet in July or August.