

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

Raising Costs: Jim wanted to express his thoughts regarding raising admissions costs to the public. He recommended judicious raises, not just to match other festivals, keeping the event accessible to families in particular. Lucy explained the Budget Committee practice of rotation of raises through the four main income-producing sectors: admissions, paid parking, booth fees, and passes. There is a lot of thought behind this and efforts to spread the raises fairly and in response to increased costs. Children under ten still are admitted for free. It is difficult to analyze costs as to whether they apply to the public or staff populations, as most are shared. Expanding into Crafts Lot will raise expenditures and require additional crews, and the net gain in booths will not be that large, as the plan is to attempt to restore crafts booths numbers to 250 from the present 241. Members support the difficult work of the Budget Committee and thank them.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the Feb. 12 meeting.

***Motion: Approve the minutes. (Lucy/Ken) All in favor 7-0-0

Craft Carts: There was a concern that it appears that we are creating a new type of booth, which might lead to an increase in this type, rather than just a way to improve the situation for existing strollers. Justin assured the committee that it was not the intent to increase the numbers, but to minimize path disruptions, to give some strollers an address where they can be found. These addresses would not be permanent placements. If sited, they would no longer have to check with Odyssey every day, but Craft Inventory will be able to come to them to check in daily.

Site Assessment: Charlie notified the members that management and CLOG have decided that the opening of Crafts Lot is just too large of a challenge to continue this year. There is so much clearing of campgrounds to be done, and so much coordination of volunteers, that it made sense to all to delay the moves for one more year. Some campers will remain, though some will continue to make new camps in the newly cleared areas. This takes the pressure off many people and allows management and Site Crew to work together with the new Site Manager to get the site safe for workers and volunteers, so the branch clearing can be done. Red Tag Crew started early to assess booth damage and hoped to notify all affected booth holders by the end of the week. Tours of the site (which is still closed) have had difficulty reaching several areas still, and the danger is not past from falling limbs. The Long Tom did not overflow the banks this year (yet) but there were problems with Indian Creek. The water stayed longer on the ground, but there weren't large erosion areas. The log jam may have spread out a little, with one large tree shifting downstream. Many booths will need repairs but most have minimal damage, with maybe only four needing complete rebuilding. A few of the improvement projects will go ahead, such as the Phun Gate and Morningwood areas. Work parties are being scheduled for all members, including booth families, interested in helping clear the site. Contact crews such as Camping Crew(jenlinjo@gmail.com) if you would like to add your efforts to the work parties. They will be small groups until later in April when

larger ones will be organized.

Board Liaison Report: Sue and Lucy reported that the Barter Fair has again been paused to resume in 2015. This was for two main reasons: that a site has not been selected, and a call for volunteer co-managers did not bring in enough interest to appoint them. Site damage and clearing is part of the issue. The Barter Fair Task Force will continue its work, which by all reports was tough but moving work to align emotional opposition through careful process to find consensus.

Rejuring: Through our continuing discussion on how to keep the crafts sector vital and exciting, ideas are being generated about other ways to do this besides jurying, and about what constitutes the actual problems which need to be solved. There seem to be three types of booths that are falling into problem categories:

1. Crafters who have been successful and have grown to be in the category of small factory, where the seller is no longer the maker.
2. Booth Reps who manage other crafters in unfair ways .
3. Booth holders who might be called “less than inspired, ” who have aged or become ill, or for a variety of reasons are no longer very actively crafting, and may not bring enough, or new crafts, to show the public.

All of these three types together add up to maybe a dozen booths and case-by-case solutions have been found for many of these types of problems in the past. In addition, after 45 years the Fair has changed, and the system of Booth Reps may need some changes to fit the future needs. In earlier years craftspeople were encouraged to “own” their land and invest in it, to build the event. Next they were asked to take in additional crafters who had trouble finding space. Now a lighter, more flexible type of booth with a single crafter may better fit the type of growth the craft sector is undergoing. It is wise to look at other arrangements going forward, to fit the changed conditions. Each craftsperson could be interacting directly with Registration instead of the umbrella Booth Rep system we have in place. Fair treatment for all craftspeople is always a goal, with consistent guidelines and enforcement. A survey of craftspeople was suggested, to be handed out when wristbanding, to discover what types of arrangements are actually being used or would be preferred. Publicity for new and exciting crafts could be used, featuring them at the front of the Fair, or incentive projects such as the decorated bags used by Saturday Market could focus on artistry.

Booth succession policy is part of the issue. The right role for the Fair to take, through Registration, Craft Inventory, and Management working together, is continually evolving. New efforts of Craft Inventory working with Craft Committee are targeting the small factories. Efforts are being made to do the online research with which to disqualify the factories before they make it through the jury process. There are many other venues for these businesses to sell, but as stated in our ByLaws, in Article II, “the promotion and preservation of the work of individual crafts persons, artists, artisans, musicians and performers” is part of our mission. Hand-crafted by the seller is clearly a choice and the only one that can be chosen by our booth inhabitants to sell at the Fair.

Tools used by Craft Inventory in the past have included the jury system with a library of digital images, the verification of the “pink sheet,” daily monitoring by CI pathwalkers, sanctions for insufficient stock, probationary periods, workshop visits and other evidence required to prove involvement. In 2013 CI added photographic images of booths and stock, internet investigations, and asking for a booth photo with the application. Working closely with Craft Committee adds knowledge and expertise from those who understand the individual craft processes and choices. Some type of Quality Control group composed of other artisans might be helpful to CI and Registration. Online research can take many hours and requires many more volunteers than the CI coordinators have available. Craft Committee members have been very helpful recently in documenting questionable status. Ignoring difficult problems doesn’t solve them, and difficult conversations must be worked through. Good meeting process is helpful to keep the discussions rational and not personal.

A lengthy discussion followed about the interpretations of such terms as “significantly altered” and “artistic involvement.” One way to look at the issue is with clothing. A generic, simple garment such as a t-shirt is considered a blank canvas, and a relatively simple design can be applied and meet the conditions of significant artistic transformation. However, a complicated sewn garment clearly involves much more artistic contribution in the sewing process than in the dyeing or printing processes. Thus merely dyeing a commercially sewn garment is not sufficient artistry, even if natural dyes are used, unless the dye materials are grown or gathered, and processed by the artisan. The contribution of the artist must outweigh the commercially done work on the item. The concept is that the item must be made by the heart and hands of the artist. Designing for the production of others isn’t enough, even if the work is done under direct supervision. There is some provision for “helpers” on some aspects of production, but in those cases the finish work, and main body of work must be done by the hands of the artist. Even items handcrafted by others are included in the definition of “commercially made” unless those others are listed as crafters in the booth and the collaboration disclosed.

Each craft may be different in how the materials and processes are used to make the items. One question to ask is “What is the customer buying?” or “What design element jumps out?” If the commercial aspects of the item dominate (e.g. a complicated wrap dress or shirt with collar, cuffs, ruffles, etc, which is then dyed or minimally decorated) and the customer believes it is handcrafted when it is not, they feel betrayed and the hand-crafted niche is eroded. Commercially made items can be sold more cheaply than handmade ones, so those who are still hand-crafting are faced with unfair competition from factory-made offerings.

Sometimes crafts businesses grow into factories and the booth holder may not realize they no longer fit the guidelines, or for other reasons, hides that growth. It can be a wrenching process and no volunteer wants to be in the position of policing. Policy language is very important and continual education is necessary for those in decision-making positions. Strong, unequivocal language is needed in communication with these crafters, who will often argue relentlessly for their continuing sales. Situations, which have developed over years, will take some time to unravel. Craft Committee members support and appreciate the diligence of getting the facts right, and the policies clear so that once decisions are made, they can be supported with a united front from all concerned. The Fair has always operated with a lot of trust and wants that to continue, but enforcement is better when the situation is

clear and definite.

Craft Committee drafted the following motion on this issue:

Motion: The Craft Committee recommends to Craft Inventory that in the matter of Steven Villegas/ Utilikilts that he no longer be an approved crafter of any items that use the technique and materials of the Utilikilts products. They suggest that the language of the letter to him should include similar phrases to "in light of numerous past infractions of the guidelines, we are rescinding your approved status in this technique and materials."

If he does decide to jury a new craft in a new technique and materials, he should be prepared to take extra steps to demonstrate his making of the crafts. (Ken/Jim) All in favor 7-0-0

Meeting Evaluation: This was a lengthy process but some of the points made were: positive atmosphere, respectful and attentive; productive; moving forward, relieved about placement delay; recent emails have been difficult and a periodic stress that has driven members from the committee in the past; pleased with the collaboration; young people have difficulty bringing new energy without the discouragement of "what we have always done" and an imperfect education on what indeed that was; team efforts will be better than decisions made without full information; caring a great deal brings emotion, but respect and trust are in place; appreciation for the work of CI in pinning down the infractions and strengthening the tools.

The facilitator took the opportunity to list some of the rules he uses: Everyone in the room is equal; Strive to complete the agenda; Make adjustments for guests so they can speak to their issue without sitting through the entire meeting; Make sure everyone is heard, in order; Be inclusive;

Another member took the opportunity to read the following statement: **THE ART OF BEING HUMAN**
To listen, we must intend to listen and then open, relax, and receive the words, impressions, feeling states, and energetic cues from our friends as they speak. We steady our attention, remain present, and allow our heart-mind to exchange without interference from our internal commentary of evaluations and judgments. We mute our "react and respond" button. We simply hear what they have to say, releasing the grip of the ego on our perceptions.

Sometimes we have a confused notion that listening means agreement. It doesn't. Whether we agree or don't is a separate matter; we need to hear what someone has to say without confusing it with whether we see things the same way. But we can extend empathy or a positive feeling of goodwill, nodding our head, showing them we are taking them in. Even if we can't fully understand, we can hear. This goes a long way in the art of being human.

Adjourn: (Cathy/Sue) 8:30 pm

