

By-laws/Election Committees Joint Meeting #1 January 20, 2019 Report

Please include this report in the minutes of the February Board meeting or as a separate article in the Fair Family News. This is the report for our first meeting, we have much more to work on. Member feedback, comments, and suggestions may be sent to: elections@oregoncountryfair.org

This report summarizes our group discussion and has some preliminary suggestions for the Board to consider. Please note that the By-laws and Elections Committee members come from a wide variety of Fair backgrounds, including booths and crews.

Regarding the following advisory measure (October 2018 received 1,232 votes agree, 304 votes disagree):

We recommend that the OCF develop plans/process that allows for FAIR family to register to vote when they collect their wristbands at the fair.

- *We believe this would allow for the FAIR family to be better represented.*
- *We believe this increase Membership/Voter turnout.*
- *We believe the mail-in process must continue.*
- *We believe this will increase the number of registered voters & hopefully, allow them to become more engaged in our process.*
- *We respectfully ask that this recommendation be discussed with any subcommittee and with the membership & that it should not be ignored or buried if it passes thru the election.*

Group discussion of this advisory measure included the following points:

- Most everyone at the wristband/registration sticker booth is eligible to vote if they sign up.
- Not everyone knows that the OCF elects Board members at the October annual meeting and that one needs to sign up to vote for the board.
- Forms to sign up as a voting member are available at Quartermaster pre and post-Fair, and at Info booths during the event. Membership forms are also available throughout the year at oregoncountryfair.net.
- GOTV (Get Out the Vote team, not a crew) works pre-fair signing up OCF voting members.
- Pre-fair at the Sticker Booth is quite hectic with long lines in weather that can be challenging for many Fair family. Most wish to complete the process as quickly as possible and would not appreciate any delay, including adding questions about membership. There were heat stroke concerns last year. We think that including membership forms on already limited counter space is not feasible for many registration groups.

Our suggestion is to provide a covered, shady space, in or near the Wristband/Registration sticker booth pre-Fair, for GOTV or other volunteers to provide membership forms and a seating area to fill them out. There could be a locked box for returning completed forms if there are times when this area is not staffed. We also think that civic education could/should be provided to inform potential voters of the Fair's non-profit structure that includes an elected Board of Directors. We agreed that one of the responsibilities of a crew coordinator or booth rep is to educate their members about the

structure of the organization and the possibility of becoming a voting member. This education could also include a Spoken Word presentation by board members or other volunteers during the Fair.

Regarding the other advisory measure (October 2018 received 853 votes agreeing and 647 votes disagreeing (printed verbatim, not edited for spelling or grammar):

Recommendation for OCF By-Law Change – Change Candidate Declaration Date

We, the undersigned being members of the OCF request that there be a resolution added to the ballot for the annual meeting of the membership...it is hereby resolved that.....

We recommend that the candidates who intend to run for election to the Oregon Country Fair Board of Directors declare themselves by JUNE 15 (or some date prior to the actual dates of the fair) of the election year & we WILL accommodate a candidates forum during the FAIR so that our ‘family’ can have time meet, ask questions of & evaluate future BOD members.

- *We believe this would allow for the FAIR family to have better access to & knowledge of the candidates.*
- *We believe this increase Membership/Voter turnout.*
- *We believe the mail-in process must continue.*
- *We respectfully ask that this recommendation be discussed with any subcommittee and with the membership & that it should not be ignored or buried if it passes thru the election.*

Discussion of this advisory measure included the following points:

- The by-laws do not currently include a deadline for declaring candidacy. A person can choose to run for the board at any time before the annual meeting. Group consensus was that a deadline should not be added to the bylaws. Candidates might be encouraged to declare earlier without a by-law change.
- The only deadline in the bylaws is for getting items on the agenda 55 days in advance of the annual meeting. We recommend no changes to this or adding additional deadlines to the bylaws.
- Some people would have time during the Fair to participate in a candidate forum and others would not be able, due to their Fair responsibilities. This group thinks this creates inequity for voting members who could not go to a forum.
- We are not convinced that non-event business is a good use of time, energy, and space during the event, even during non-public hours.
- Election deadlines are not policies, they are operational decisions.
- Education/information about the structure of the fair as a non-profit organization with an elected board of directors could be provided in many forms during both public and non-public hours.

Our suggestion regarding this petition is not to add a deadline to the bylaws and to work toward education about the structure of the fair as a non-profit with an elected Board of Directors.

This work group of the combined By-laws and Election Committees looks forward to working with an attorney with knowledge of non-profit law and OCF customs, culture, and values as we consider what by-law changes might better serve us in the future. (We miss you, Russell!)

Our next meeting is planned for February 17, 3:30 to 5:30 at the fair office to continue working on the directives from the board.