

## OREGON COUNTRY FAIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

Monday March 6, 2006, 7pm, EWEB Community Room

**PRESENT:** Katie Cousins, Paxton Hoag, Brad Lerch, Jack Makarchek, Marlene Monette, Deane Morrow (alternate), Joseph Newton (alternate), Greg Rikhoff, Anna Scott, Lawrence Taylor.

**NOT:** Diane Albino, Bear Wilner-Nugent (*Deane and Joseph voted on all motions.*)

*(Note: During Agenda Review, it was unanimously decided to move the discussion of renting the site to String Cheese Incident from new business to old business. The proposal was brought to Leslie just last week and a quick decision was needed.)*

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

norma said the Spring Fling is May 6 at Wow Hall. She also had some happy news and some sad news. Bear's wife Dedee was in labor "as we speak." (*Gwendolyn Daphne Wilner-Nugent was born the day after the Board meeting.*) Even with the happy news of a new member of the Fair family, she also reported the sad news that we recently lost another Family member. Ghafoor Sardar of the Afghani Booth died on Thursday, March 2. He had been ill for a long time. His family is holding a service at a mosque in San Francisco.

Greg thanked everyone for their good wishes during his wife's heart surgery and said he needs to leave at 8:30 because he's still a 'single dad' while Lisa is recuperating.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Lawrence moved and Joseph seconded that the minutes of the February 6 Board meeting be approved.** Deane asked to clarify a comment in the discussion of the computer privacy policy by adding the words "or who don't want to have their information listed in a computer." The line in question should read: Deane supports the motion but "hopes we will make room for people who don't want to use a computer or who don't want to have their information listed in a computer."

**The minutes were approved as amended: 8 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions (Greg and Katie.)**

### MEMBER INPUT

Jim Sahr (Crafter) said the String Cheese event "sounds good" but asked the Board to be mindful of Leslie's feelings and to "give her an event manager of her choosing if she needs one." He said "we're grateful to have Leslie's skill in negotiating these contracts."

Deane said that the 'pony lady' Dena Neeman "couldn't be here tonight but she wants to be at the Fair this year." He also said he wants to make audio digital recordings of the Board meetings and asked for feedback on that idea.

David Zupan (Peace and Justice Booth in Community Village) passed out a letter to the Board explaining the history and results of a survey they did of about 100 people at the 2005 Fair. He represents a point of view that would like non-profits to be allowed to sell items like buttons or bumper stickers. He stressed the P&J Booth does not speak for the Village Council or for the Community Village as a whole. He also understands that the Craft Committee does not support the sale of manufactured goods but said, "We believe it is consistent with Fair values for non-profits to petition, educate, and benefit financially in some way at the Fair to support their important work." He suggested adding a discussion of this topic to the agenda. Joseph said he would be willing to work with David on that.

Brad said he appreciates people taking the time to put their concerns in writing. He said handing out papers at the meeting is okay, but would be even better if the papers were delivered to norma a week before the meeting because they would then be included in the Board packet that gets mailed on Tuesday. This would give the Board more time to study the written information in advance.

Mark Pankratz (Construction Crew) said last month's discussion of Elder issues "was emotional" and he felt differing opinions should not be taken as a "personal attack."

Lawrence said he was sad to hear that the big yew tree at Mime Camp was lost to the river.

## STAFF AND OFFICER REPORTS

**General Manager:** Leslie gave a talk over the weekend at the Northwest Festival and Events Conference on green events and said the Fair “has a good reputation in that area that she hopes we can live up to.” She walked the site with AM Charlie and said “our highest priority from a path planning perspective must be to develop replacement space for riverside booths over the next couple of years.” She and Charlie also met with the City Manager of Veneta who is “really encouraging representatives from the Fair to engage in their long-range planning processes.” She hopes some folks will volunteer for this, especially people who live in the Veneta area. The Fair again received a \$10,000 grant from the Lovell Foundation for Culture Jam. Hip Hop Hope is happening March 27-31 “so a new youth project has been launched in partnership with the City of Eugene and the Power of Hope.” She spent lots of time on contract negotiations, met with Jason from TicketsWest, and completed the ZimFest contract. She was approached by String Cheese Incident about a summer concert (more about that later tonight). She “turned over City Fling to some of our Portland crowd to negotiate and organize. We are not certain it will happen, but hope it will happen May 20 at the Baghdad Theater which is being provided at very low cost to us by McMenamin’s.” She said there were very few applicants for the endowment money and that the Jill Heiman Vision Fund had only seven grant proposals submitted. She said the State Fair project is progressing slowly and she hopes to have more to report on that next month. She encouraged support for the VQ budget and the capital projects budget that will be presented later this evening. She said they “tried to be both responsive and responsible. We think we’ve been fair and reasonable, though some people will undoubtedly be disappointed.” She thanked Carolyn Sykora and Robin for their work on the Culture Jam grants, and thanked Marlene “for originally connecting us to the Lovell Foundation.” She also thanked the VQ task force for all their work.

**Administrative Assistant:** norma said she has also been working with the VQ process and that it’s “a great team and I’m honored to be a part of it.” The performer and craft applications are available at the office and on the web. The Teen Crew applications are also available and are due April 12. The new Guidelines book will go to the printer on March 7. Registration packets will be put together March 18. She thanked Sheila Landry who has been the office cleaner and said the new cleaner is Ki from Main Camp Kitchen. She has been reorganizing the website and also continuing to work on transitioning the FFN to a new press and a new process.

**Site Manager:** Steve W. said it’s been “another interesting month” and even though there was less than half the normal amount of rain in February “we are still ahead in seasonal rain levels because of January’s heavy rains.” The site was flooded again early in the month, and then a week of clear skies and cold temperatures. He has been walking the site every day that its accessible and said there are” immediate problems at Strawberry Lane and Arc Park caused by riverbank erosion that we can solve this year but we need to initiate a process that looks at major booth, performance and path replacement space. A number of large trees have fallen in, there’s bank erosion everywhere, and the river is headed our way.” He said the planning process could take a couple years and he “hopes the river gives us that long. As someone said, resistance is futile.” He said, “Lots of stuff, even whole booths, have floated around.” He thanked Jim Sahr for a trailer full of recycled light fixtures, and also thanked “Jeff Levy and the fine folks at Balance Nursery in Lorane for another generous donation of bare-root native trees and shrubs.” He said, “The beavers are having a field day.” He invited everyone to “take advantage of the dry spells. Come out and walk around and see what parts of the bank have disappeared, and please help out by joining in the work parties that Charlie Ruff will be talking about in his report.”

**Assistant Manager:** Charlie said they will put an article in the FFN about some upcoming work parties on March 19, April 22, and May 6 (the same day as the Spring Fling). They will provide hot and cold beverages and lunch for folks who come out to help. He worked with Caretaker Andy Strickland on a web page that will be devoted specifically to site issues. He has been working with Anna Scott on a teleconferencing system; and also looking into mail serve lists and making them available to committees who would like to take advantage of that technology. He announced two events onsite, both starting at 10am on Sunday, April 23. One is the Spring Wildflower Walk, the other the Spring ODOT Highway Pick-up Day.

**Treasurers:** Grumpy said they will talk about the capital projects budget later tonight.

**President:** Jack said he's been thinking a lot lately "about petrified wood, archaeology, and computers, and it's interesting how those three topics have been playing around in my head." He met with the state archaeologist who said the Fair is on "one of the most significant sites in the state." He talked about finding petrified wood and how "it's something you can't look for. It's something that finds you, if you know what I mean." He said, "The spirits are strong at the site and it's important that we respect those spirits." He talked about how computers and discs are "a record of history, like fossils. A record of our spirit, a record of how we deal with ourselves and the land will be put on computer discs." He said he "has a hard time wrapping my head around the notion of our spirit being inside a computer. Be mindful of our honesty and our integrity. Our site is archaeologically significant and we can't disturb it in a disrespectful way. I'll be talking more about this. People need to 'get it'. It's precious. Embrace it." Jack yielded to Deane who felt inspired to talk about last fall when he and his sweetie Kay were onsite near Blue Moon Stage and watched leaves that looked like dancing spirits. He said, "Some leaves would fall, dance to the ground, and then float up again and again. It was magic."

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ELDERS COMMITTEE**

Chris Browne gave a written report to the Board detailing some of their work over the past month. They reviewed five applications, approved three that met all the requirements, but held two of them for more review on "questions that came up as to their eligibility." There are now 168 "qualified and approved Elders." They discussed placing information about Elders and Helpers Pass deadlines in the FFN and said the info is already on the website in the 'back door' section. They talked about establishing an 'Elders chat room' to exchange views and ideas and said they "are open to any information and assistance relating to this subject." They have also contacted site personnel to "explore the possibility of establishing an Elders camping area."

### **LUMP COMMITTEE**

Joseph Newton presented a summary of the OCF Preservation and Restoration Plan that was approved at the March meeting of the Land Use Management Planning Committee. He said, "The salient points are that we will be starting with two or three pilot projects this year, working with experienced camp hosts in well-established neighborhoods, and that we will be asking each camper to participate in stewardship of their surroundings." He said the program will eventually affect the entire camping population. It was developed because "over the years, camping impacts have caused significant loss of native vegetation onsite, and we seek to mitigate and reverse the effects on our ecosystem. The plan approaches the task from two major directions: adjustments in camping practices to lessen the impact on understory vegetation and vitality, and active management of plant communities to develop self-sustaining ecosystem characteristics. Implementation will call on the entire Fair Family for cooperation and assistance."

### **VISION QUEST TASK FORCE**

Beth Grafe submitted a 5-page report to the Board detailing "where we've been, where we are, and where we're going" including an itemized budget totaling \$7500 that "will take us through the Fair but probably not through the year if we have an additional summit in the fall." She noted that the \$2,000 cost for consultants that was already approved by the Board is included in this budget, so their request is actually for an additional \$5500 from the already approved Board budget. She talked about the "six key areas that were identified from survey results." They are: buy and preserve more wetlands; increase the diversity of all aspects of the Fair; support more artists and entertainers; create intergenerational events and experiences; establish facilities for year-round events on site; and increase communication throughout the Fair family. The VQ task force requested two work sessions with the Board: one this month "to review their revised plan, budget, and scope of work" and one in May to "review capacity assessment research results and establish a comprehensive goals list."

### **OCF COMPUTER PROJECT TEAM**

Steve G. aka Grumpy passed out a 4-page written report to the Board explaining some of the history, structure, and goals of the project. It began last year when Grumpy, AM Charlie Ruff, and former wristband co-coordinator John Chambers met to organize what came to be known as the 'computer project.' They structured their work so that each project includes "a sponsor who helps make the overall decisions that the project needs to go forward, a project leader who is responsible for the overall planning and execution of the project, and a project team who help the leader plan and execute the project." The first project they started is the Data Base Project with John as team leader with the goal being "to assess, analyze, and organize the Fair's non-financial data and eventually develop a system to help the Fair's volunteers and employees use this data." The second project is the Office Computer Project with Charlie as team leader. The goal is to "assess, analyze and organize the Fair's current office computers and associated hardware and software. This project will make sure the Fair's office computers, network and associated peripherals are secure and maintained." The third project is the Wireless Network Project with Clif Cox as team leader. They are requesting a budget of \$10,000 this year to be spent mainly on hardware and software for the data base project, computer servers, and a development laptop.

## **OLD BUSINESS BUDGET ISSUES**

### **APPROVE VISION QUEST BUDGET**

**Brad moved and Marlene seconded that the Board approve the VQ budget as submitted by the VQ steering committee and that the money be allocated from the OCF Board budget change line item.**

*Background:* This motion does not increase the spending of the overall budget but simply allocates money from the change line item that was already approved by the Board.

**The motion passed: 9 in favor and 1 opposed (Anna).**

### **CONSIDER CAPITAL PROJECT REQUESTS**

**Jack moved and Lawrence seconded that the Board approve the capital projects budget as submitted.**

*Background:* The budget total for capital projects is \$57,995. It contains 26 line items including the biggest expenditures of almost \$14,820 for the Peach Power fund and \$12,000 for the durable cutlery project. Mid-size items include \$10,000 for the computer project, \$7500 for radios, and \$5000 to add a shower and remodel the bathroom at Alice's. Smaller projects include \$3675 for vault toilets, \$2700 for event tents, \$1,000 to help with reconstruction costs at Community Village, and \$500 for a canopy for the Puppet Stage. If the capital projects are approved and if the Board gives the usual \$25,000 to the Endowment fund, the 2006 budget will be in the red with a negative \$90,591.

*Peach Gallery:* Both of the Treasurers, the General Manager, and the Site Manager all expressed concern over the size of the deficit. Grumpy said the Fair has reserves to cover this amount but "of course, if we use it that lessens our reserves." He said budgets often start in the red but end up in the black because of underspending by many crews and because of a high gate on Saturday. The 2005 budget was projected at a negative \$105,328 but came in at a positive \$9,250. Leslie noted though that this year's Fair dates are close to July 4, and traditionally the closer we are to that holiday, the lower the gate. Hilary cautioned that "it's iffy to count on a high gate and underspending, and I hope the Board will remember that next year if we come to you asking for fee increases." Steve W. said that even though he doesn't like deficit spending, he is very concerned that his requests for \$500 for a GPS unit and \$4800 for a flail mower were denied. He said the state archaeologist told him that "mapping what we have is crucial" and that a GPS unit is essential for that task. He also said they really need the flail mower for many reasons including the fact that it "reduces the risk of fire danger faster." Leslie doesn't "dispute the need for the mower but we can't do everything this year and sometimes we have to say no." Grumpy said they denied funding for the GPS unit because they were told \$500 may not be enough "for a unit that is accurate enough for our purposes" and they didn't want to fund something that may not be helpful. Mambo (Security) said the accuracy of a GPS unit is "critical especially for archaeological issues, and money well spent is getting the tool you need." Jonathan Seraphim (Pre-Fair Kitchen) suggested that instead of renting equipment to wash the cutlery, that the Fair instead buy an industrial dishwasher that could perform that

task and be used by Main Camp Kitchen.

*Board:* There seemed to be consensus among the Board to fund the GPS unit but rather than add \$500 now they asked Steve to research what it would cost to get one that would serve the Fair's needs and to come back with that figure later. Joseph said the flail mower would probably still be working for us in 25 years and "we shouldn't put Steve off more than another year." Paxton would prefer a looser budget and would support renting a mower and perhaps a GPS unit too. Jack "sees the writing on the wall" and said "we're having to make some hard choices this year." Katie said it's all about priorities and values and "if the Budget Committee is saying this may be a lean year income-wise, maybe this isn't the year for the puppet canopy or the spirit house at Altared Space." She said she is not against those projects but couldn't understand the logic that "if 2006 is a lean year for Site equipment, why is it not too lean a year for those other projects?" She suggested that "these important decisions as to how our money is spent should perhaps be influenced by a larger number of people than the few who make up the Budget Committee." Marlene said maybe in the future "we should reassess our calendar when our event is scheduled this close to July 4." Brad said we "should all keep our eyes and ears open for a flail mower at a good price." Lawrence said a commercial kitchen is part of the long-term plan for an onsite lodge so "we won't be renting dishwashing equipment forever."

**The motion passed: 9 in favor and 0 opposed.** *(There are 9 votes instead of 10 on this motion and for the remaining motions because Greg had to leave to care for his daughter.)*

### **AMEND GUIDELINE CHANGE FROM CRAFT COMMITTEE**

**Katie moved and Brad seconded that the Board amend the Guidelines as submitted by the Craft Committee.**

*Background:* Last month the Board passed a guideline change suggested by the Craft Committee but the following day Anita Parish contacted the office saying there was a mix-up and the proposal that was brought to the Board was one of the committee's earlier drafts. The final draft included strolling vendors so this motion adds that category. The correct version reads: "Before or after the hours that the Fair is open to the public, the sale of handmade or handcrafted items is allowed inside of booths and approved strolling vendor carts as long as the person or persons who made them are present at the Fair with a valid wristband or pass."

*Peach Gallery:* Thumbs up. Leslie said enforcing this would be a difficult operational challenge.

*Board:* Paxton opposes this because he doesn't like "restricting sales after hours" and thinks it means that volunteers "won't be able to market things to the family." Jack said it would be difficult to enforce and doesn't feel it calls for enforcement at this time.

**The motion passed: 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Deane and Paxton).**

### **PEACH PAGES PROPOSAL**

**Deane moved and Jack seconded to approve the expansion of the Peach Pages to include ads from other sustainability organizations in the Cascade bioregion.**

*Background:* This proposal was brought to the Board by the Peach Pages Committee. Aleta Miller was at the meeting to answer questions and said this change "will allow us to connect with other organizations."

*Peach Gallery:* There was a mixed reaction to this proposal by both the Peach Gallery and the Board. Opposition was expressed by Palmer Parker (Fair Central) who said the publication "is called the Peach Pages for a reason." Norma felt the motion should be tabled for a month to allow for feedback from the Family "because it was a vote of the Fair Family that created the Peach Pages for a specific intention." Support came from Mambo who thought it would be a potential revenue stream and from Leslie who said that even though the proposal "might be a little ahead of its time" it's important to remember that Aleta and the rest of the committee "busted their butts to get only 300 ads from Fair Family. It isn't growing, and it isn't really working as is." Robin Bernardi (Office Assistant) said every member should get a copy at registration.

*Board:* The Board seemed intrigued by the idea but many members felt they couldn't vote to change something that was originally set up just for Fair Family, especially without much input from the membership. Lawrence said this was originally "a way for us to network within our own community."

Joseph said he knows Aleta works really hard and he felt bad that he couldn't support it. Marlene wanted it tabled to inform the membership of the discussion. Deane said he is against the motion even though he made the motion. He felt it should be discussed "and that's what we're doing." Jack said this proposal "has the potential to grow into something bigger. We're about building community and reaching out. I can't see how this harms us as a community."

**The motion failed: 1 in favor and 8 opposed (Anna, Brad, Deane, Joseph, Katie, Lawrence, Marlene, and Paxton).**

### **CONSIDER COLLABORATION WITH STRING CHEESE INCIDENT**

**Jack moved and Deane seconded that the Board appoint a negotiating team of Jack, Hilary, Leslie, and Russell and authorize them to negotiate and execute a contract with String Cheese Incident / Madison House for use of the Fair site for a camping concert event August 4-6, 2006.**

*Background:* Jeremy Stein of Madison House (the Colorado promoter of String Cheese) contacted Leslie last week saying they "want to do their only West Coast show of the summer at the Country Fair site" and hopes the event will develop into a yearly collaboration because "they are looking for a new home." Leslie and Jeremy had a long conversation that included the Madison House proposal to have up to 10,000 people camping onsite, the stage being in the parking lot and the 8 being off-limits. They will probably want to hire the Fair's recycling and traffic people. They talked "about how we could try to ensure that this would help and not hurt our event, our shared values of building community, creating culture, and providing experiences that push creative boundaries in a safe way. We both agreed that our organizations would have to make a giant leap of faith with one another, and that it was worth seeing if we could make that leap." The Oregon Measure 37 challenge to Horning's Hideout is driving their need for a new location. They need an answer quickly so that is why the Board voted to discuss this proposal tonight.

*Peach Gallery:* Jonathan has concerns about issues such as security and parking but said "it sounds like a great thing all in all." Mark said it sounds exciting but "if it causes too much damage to the land it would have to be called off in following years." Randy Nowell (VegManEc) said "with budget issues running in the red, this is another revenue source and we should go for it." Jon Pincus (Elder) said it "sounds wonderful, especially on an ongoing basis" but that it will require "great attention to detail" to address environmental concerns. Lara Howe (Recycling Co-Coordinator) said, "Leslie's plate is so full and I'm sure she can handle it but should we really ask her to?" Grumpy supports it and said it will take a lot of work by a lot of people. He said the negotiating committee has done this before "and they know what they're doing." He also said the band has a new sound technician and a new sound system so "if we do this the Fair needs to work very carefully on technical issues to avoid stressing our neighbors." Mambo supports this but is concerned about environmental impact and also wonders if they will have cops there. Steve W. said 'reverence for the land' keeps getting redefined. He said, "The land gets hammered by the Fair but it greens up and comes back in the fall. The same thing would happen after another event. Our recycling crew and traffic crew will do a lot to mitigate the impact." He has confidence in the negotiating team and said they "will handle what needs to be done. It's already a busy summer, but let's go for it." Jim Showker (Main Stage Sound) thinks very highly of the band's new sound technician. He talked about problems they had with noise levels at Horning's Hideout in the past, and felt those problems would not be an issue with their new technician.

*Board:* Marlene has faith in management but "sees red flags." Paxton said the event went well in the past when the Fair rented the site to the Kesey family, and he noted that the parking lot where the concert would be held is "far away from archaeological sites." Deane said this would be a revenue source, that people have been asking for another event, and that this one "was dropped in our lap." Anna wondered if they would come next year if we said no this year. Leslie answered "probably not, because they are looking for a new home for the long haul, and these things are expensive to invest in at different venues from year to year. I'm afraid it's a 'grab it or lose it' thing, and I hate to say that because I don't like this last minute pressure either." Katie remembers when some of the neighbors "were looking for any excuse to shut us down" and would hate to see "a chipping away of the good relationships we now have." Marlene yielded to Leslie who said that is her biggest concern as well, and said she spoke "with Jeremy about ways to ensure the community benefits from this now and in the future." Brad is split because part of him is concerned about late-night noise affecting the neighbors and part of him is just really excited by

this proposal. He said, "I guess it's a leap of faith versus fear." Jack said it's an interesting proposal and opportunity that has marketing potential. He said they fence their perimeter and have a single entry system. He said, "I've talked frequently about the need for a second event. I think we should give it our best shot. We'll learn more after the first year, and we're not going to give away the farm." Lawrence wants to "work with the festival calendar in the future" so as not to conflict with other events like Reggae on the River. Deane supports this but hopes the team will be considerate of the neighbors when negotiating rules for noise level and ending time. Joseph said the idea of another camping event gives him "the willies, and the short notice is unreasonable, but this is an opportunity worth exploring." He encouraged the negotiating team "to take a tough bargaining posture" and to treat the Board vote "as a restrained mandate" to execute the agreement only if they were satisfied that the Board's concerns were met.

**The motion passed: 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Anna and Katie).**

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 pm. The next Board meeting will be held on Monday, April 3, 2006 at 7pm at the EWEB Community Room. The agenda, subject to change, will include the following tabled items: Budget Issues; Vaudeville Proposal (Paxton); Consider Donation to Elmira High School Grad Committee (Joseph); as well as the following new business: Logo Jurying; Appoint New Cart Central Coordinator; Appoint New Inventory Crew Coordinator; Appoint New Main Stage Co-Coordinator; Caretaker Sabbatical; and Consider Donations to School Garden Project, Nobel Peace Laureate Monument, Earth Day Celebration, HIV Riverwalk, Transtion to Success (Anna), and The Natives Program. Consider By-Laws Amendment for Elders Membership was dropped from the agenda because Katie said the Board already approved the change at the June 27, 2004 Board meeting.

Minutes by Barbara Edmonds who thanks Jon Stewart ("America, The Book: A Citizen's Guide to Democracy Inaction") for the following quote: "Yes, there's probably some state senator in Oregon who belongs to the Green Party, but face it: Hippie Q. McFreakington ain't going anywhere outside the greater Eugene area."