

OREGON COUNTRY FAIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

August 7, 2006

Present: Diane Albino, Katie Cousins, Paxton Hoag, Jack Makarchek, Marlene Monette, Deane Morrow (alternate), Joseph Newton (alternate), Greg Rikhoff, Anna Scott, Lawrence Taylor, Bear Wilner-Nugent.

Not: Brad Lerch (Note: Joseph voted in place of Brad tonight.)

Announcements

Marlene said the Personnel Committee will have the annual employee evaluation meeting at the Central Presbyterian Church in Eugene on September 18 at 7pm. She encouraged “all to come and participate in the evaluations of our employees’ job performances.”

Greg said the Fair will have a booth at both the Multi-Cultural Festival on August 11 and Pride Day on August 12. He also said he’ll be late to the next Board meeting because he is on the Human Rights Commission and they will give their annual report to the Eugene City Council that same evening.

Barbara said the deadline for submitting candidate statements for the Board election has been extended from August 21 to September 4. The deadline to apply for OCF membership in order to vote in this year’s election is September 14.

Lara Howe (Recycling Crew Co-Coordinator) said Wally Jones is retiring from being a Recycling Co-Coordinator and she thanked him for his work.

norma said Bob Fennessey booked four acts for the Picnic on August 19.

Steve W. said there will be a site de-construction and clean-up work party on Saturday and Sunday, September 16-17. Lunch will be provided on both days.

Paxton said Lois Morford who is “a retiring Wristbänder and Elder” is in Venezuela as part of a Witness for Peace delegation.

Joseph said to “mark your calendars” for the Bioneers Conference on Oct. 20-22 at LCC.

Leslie thanked GOTV for registering over 1,000 new voters at the Fair. She also said OCF will host LiveArt! at the Oregon State Fair in Salem from August 25 through September 4. (See OCF website for a link.)

Bear said the Vision Quest Task Force will meet at the town office at 6pm on Wednesday, Aug. 23.

Approval of Minutes

Bear moved and Deane seconded that the Board approve the minutes of the June 5 Board meeting. Bear moved and Deane seconded that the Board approve the minutes of the “July” Board meeting held on June 25. Both motions passed: 10 in favor and 0 opposed. (Note: It didn’t occur to me at the time, but the Board already approved the minutes of the June 5 meeting at the June 25 aka “July” meeting. So I guess you could say they re-approved those minutes tonight.)

Member Input

Bear said he volunteered at a folk music festival and had “great fun” but it also made him realize that “nothing can touch the Fair” when it comes to “our great infrastructure and human response capability.”

Lara Howe said public attendance was up this year, but so was the garbage output which increased by 5.8 tons over last year. She asked everyone to be more careful not to contaminate recyclables by mixing them with garbage and said, “Beer bottles and diapers don’t go together, folks.” She had many people to thank including Mechanic Mike and Uncle Krusty who helped out when the recycling trucks broke down. Lara thanked them “for their knowledge of old cranky trucks and for helping us to continue doing what we do.” She also thanked the volunteers who recycled at Zimfest, Jim McAllister and Anne Morris for their work on the durables project, and all the people who helped wash the utensils.

Kay Kintzley (Booth L86) said, “What we provide to the outside world is incredibly wonderful and a delight for everyone” but she also wanted to mention a few problems at this year’s Fair. She said some toilets were out of paper at 11:30 am on Friday morning, just 30 minutes after the Fair opened. She went to QM but was told there was no back-up supply. She also said that sprinkling makes “a significant difference with dust control” and would like more water barrels in that area (near Blue Moon Stage) because they ran out of water on Sunday morning. She would also like to see a private toilet for crafters “behind the scenes” so they can return to their booths quickly.

Neil Friedman (Crafter, Booth 207) spoke about aggressive cart-pushers at a Board meeting two years ago and re-addressed that issue tonight. He said last year “was a dream, so mellow, so patient” but that aggressiveness returned this year. He gave praise to White Bird and said their cart-pushers are always polite, saying things like, “Excuse me, watch your toes.” He feels it is very impolite to our paying guests to scream, “Get out of the way!” He offered four solutions: 1) ban the use of carts during business hours except when absolutely necessary, and enforce the ban; 2) the Board should instruct the Food Committee to set a policy that food workers should be courteous when bringing carts into the eight; 3) construct storage lockers near each sixpack to store cleaning tools so the Sanitation Crew won’t need to haul their supplies around; 4) promote a Fairwide policy of patience and courtesy when bringing carts in during business hours.

Lawrence said the Sanitation Crew ran out of soap but then “it magically appeared” and he wanted to “thank the soap fairies” for that. He said Saturday was a sell-out day and he thanked David Paul who “called it in advance.”

Joseph thanked all the employees for their hard work over a very busy summer that included not only the main event but also Zimfest, the evaluation meeting, and the upcoming Culture Jam.

Marlene said the understory and vegetation are very important and that she is “appalled by people who disregard the Guidelines” on this matter and hopes the Board and Operations “will address this issue seriously.”

Staff and Officer Reports

General Manager: A beautiful rainbow appeared as Leslie began her report and everyone stopped to admire it. Leslie said, “We all care so much about this amazing thing we do...and we get so busy... sometimes we just need to take a deep breath and look around and say ‘wow’ and ‘thank you.’” She suggested we take a moment to turn to our neighbor and share a favorite moment from this year’s Fair. So for the next few minutes the room was buzzing with animated chatter. (Note: One of my favorite moments was hearing Jim Page sing “Petroleum Bonaparte” from his new CD “Pictures in My Head”.) She resumed her report by sharing a few of her favorite moments: being in the special beauty of Altared Space; the fact that Suzanne Swift and Francisco Letelier were both in the audience when Amy Goodman mentioned them in her speech at the Front Porch; and Rob Brezsny’s pronouncement during his Main Stage performance that the eleventh commandment is “Thou shalt not bore God.” She said the magic of the event is “due to you, due to us, due to what we do. It takes every one of us. It’s nice to sell out, but it’s not

really about the numbers.” She said, “Who the Fair speaks to is changing and shifting” and she thanked Greg and others for their ongoing work to increase the Fair’s diversity. She said there is “so much to be proud of and so much to build on” and that it is “humbling and deeply gratifying to do this work.” She talked about Zimfest and said it was “a privilege to host them.” She listened to an instrument called an mbira and described the performance as “intimate and extraordinary.” She thanked Charlie and the rest of the site staff as well as Jamie O’Brien, Carl, Palmer and others for their work that weekend. She gave a “special appreciation to Andyman for keeping on with everything given his loss.” She hopes Zimfest will return to the site in the future but they are already booked in Washington for next summer. She said there was a small turn-out for the evaluation meeting this year but she “has faith in the process and that whoever shows up are the right people.” There were five areas of discussion: year-round participation; smoking areas; decibel issues; entitlement and empowerment; carpooling and shuttle buses. She said notes were taken and a more complete report on that meeting will come later. She thanked Robin for “doing a terrific job getting ready for Culture Jam” and said there are 50 youth attending this year, “an all-time high.” She encouraged attendance at the Oregon State Fair which runs August 25 through September 4 and thanked Kirk and Tia for their work on LiveArt!, the OCF section. The OCF is also participating in an area called “Art of Oregon Grown” dealing with local community-supported agriculture and with City Repair on an Oregon “green ideas” forum about sustainability issues. She said admission at OSF increased one dollar this year but that parking is now free. She thanked Charlie for his help in moving her office to the upstairs floor of the town office and she thanked the treasurers and Lucy, Matt, Amanda, Eric and Leslie C. for their work “making the yurt and inventory systems run so smoothly and the Fair financially healthy.” She hopes to schedule a Coordinators’ Potluck for sometime in September or October to talk about the new process for a two-year budget cycle.

Administrative Assistant: norma thanked everyone for “such a wonderful Fair” and also thanked the “small but very active and participatory group” that attended the evaluation meeting. She said post-Fair work is “hefty, and the office has been very busy.” She said the office will be closed on Aug. 16 and most of Aug. 18 because “Leslie and Robin will be at Culture Jam and I’ll be preparing for the Picnic.” She said more people are needed to work on the barbeque grill so “please sign up for a shift.”

Site Manager: Steve W. said Leslie’s comment about Rob Breznsny reminded him of a “wonderful and enlightening” book he is currently reading, *God Laughs and Plays* by David James Duncan. As for current site conditions, he said the site is “as usual after the big event, dry, dusty and beaten down.” He said fire danger is very high and that if there is no rain between now and the Picnic, it will be “extremely high. Please be real careful; fire is our major fear this time of year. There is danger from a stray cigarette, a catalytic converter parked in tall grass, even a glass jug in the sun can focus enough energy to start a grass fire.” He has also been reading about global climate change and said, “We’re seeing that locally. The long dry stretch seems to be getting longer and dryer every summer.” He said lots of work remains to be done onsite and encouraged attendance at the work parties on Sept. 16 and 17. Lunch will be served both days. He said, “There are lots of fence panels, Main Camp stuff, etc, that were left up for Zimfest that need to be de-conned before the rains return. There’s lots of Fair hay, and some straw, baled and loose, free for the taking out in the parking lots and available for gardeners to use as mulch or compost. Chickadee Gate is open every day from 9am to sunset for anyone coming out to clean up their booth or camp (and there are lots of folks who need to do that) or to pick up hay.” He said noise issues were a topic at the evaluation meeting and he likes an idea he heard about at this year’s Fair for a “silent rave.” He heard people talk about passing the Gypsy Stage at night and seeing the lights, the dancers, and everybody having a great time but not hearing any music because everyone was wearing earphones tuned to an FM transmitter set up by the DJs. He had many thanks for everyone who has been working so hard post-Fair including DeCon, Site, Recycling and Kitchen Crews. He thanked Andy, Jeff, and Charlie for all their work during Zimfest. He said there were no major incidents or accidents, not even a case of heat stroke. (Zimfest was held the weekend it was 105 degrees on Saturday and 100 degrees on Sunday.) He said Andy Strickland, OCF Caretaker, and Nicodemus Vernon went to Cortes Island to deliver the Raven sculpture to Andrew Weil, who commissioned their artwork, and then Andy went to visit his mother. He delivered the sad news that Andy’s father had a heart attack in Europe and passed away on Sunday of the Fair. Steve said, “Our hearts are with him.”

Assistant Manager: Charlie said, “It was quite a Fair, lots of ups and downs. It breaks my heart to think of Andy in a sad space at the Fair.” He said Zimfest was “our first attempt at this sort of thing, and we learned a lot.” He said, “It feels like we’re weeks behind with site clean-up and we sure need lots of folks to come to the work party weekend.” He talked about the “attention to detail that it takes to make sure that folks stay safe and that the land stays safe.” He said the Rookie of the Year award at the Tuesday night dinner went to Velvet Hammer, but that “so many folks deserve a pat on the back. Site Crew was better than ever. DeCon Crew did a great job.” He thanked Jamie O’Brien in the Kitchen and David Hoffman for helping at Zimfest. He was impressed by the durables project and said, “Some people were out there for 12 hours sanitizing utensils. I never cease to be amazed at the number of people who will work until the job gets done.”

Treasurers: Grumpy handed out a paper with line-item charts of current revenue and expenses, showing both 2005 and 2006 numbers for comparison. He said to look at the revenue numbers and “you’ll see the Fair did really well financially. Now look at the expense numbers and you’ll see why we needed to.” He said, “We still have to watch our budget this year.” The projected revenue for 2006 was \$1,223,000 but the post-Fair figure is higher at \$1,303,665 due to higher-than-projected ticket sales for Saturday which was a sell-out day. The Fair sold a total of 44,567 tickets: 13,047 tickets for Friday; 18,339 for Saturday; and 13,181 for Sunday. These figures include the sale of 2,480 three-day tickets. He thanked Lucy and all the Inventory Crew staff; Charlie for “doing data entry late at night”; and Steve W., Norma, and Leslie “who were always working.” He said because of “our hard-working staff and all our volunteers” he doesn’t think “any other non-profit organization in the United States could possibly match the amount of work that the Fair does for the money we spend.” Hilary agreed that “we’re in good shape” and mentioned that the OSF revenue isn’t even listed yet. She said the reason that the Fair is in good shape is because “we’ve held back on capital projects and operating expenses for the last couple years. We’ve let the infrastructure slip a bit. Some of our trucks are even older than the Fair.” She said she “will probably advocate very strongly for fee increases next year” and she thanked everyone “for holding expenses down.” She said, “I agree with Grumpy that we get an amazing amount of results and productivity for what we pay our staff.”

President: Jack said, “The spirit is strong, it’s an amazing thing. Our staff, coordinators, volunteers, crafters and vendors...our spirit is strong. There’s a richness and vibrancy with lots of wisdom that goes a long way. I’d like to hope this type of success is a glimpse of a change not only in our own community but in the mainstream community at large. We have the potential for an administration change that could be huge. If our success is an indication of a mood swing, that would be extremely big. I’d like to see a shift in mood swing this November. That would really be huge.” He thanked the BUMs who “have done an outstanding job.” He said, “Staff is strong and caring as ever. It’s very, very gratifying to watch this. Thanks everybody.”

Committee Reports

Peach Power Ad Hoc Committee

Anna said about a dozen people attended the Peach Power meeting on Thursday before the Fair. She said they reviewed the plans for a utility grid for a photo voltaic array; looked over technical and non-technical questions; talked about tax credit partners and other financing strategies; and talked about acquiring equipment. This Wednesday she and Dennis Todd will submit a special use permit for an F2 zone to Lane County. She said, “The hurdles are monetary ones for permit fees but the good news is the permit fees have been slashed.” She introduced Mark Johnson from Portland who sent a letter to the Board asking to join the committee and has already been doing some fundraising for the Peach Power fund. Approval of his appointment is on the agenda for the next Board meeting. The committee received \$2,000 in donations for the Peach Power Fund and a proposal for that money is also on the September agenda.

Old Business

Increase Culture Jam Budget

Bear moved and Marlene seconded that the Board increase the Culture Jam budget by \$500.

Background: Leslie said there are more campers and staff and not as many food donations this year so they need more money to purchase food “for all those hungry teenagers.”

Peach Gallery: Thumbs up.

The motion passed: 10 in favor and 0 opposed.

Re-Consider Donation to Center for Community Counseling

Lawrence moved and Joseph seconded that the Board donate \$500 to the Center for Community Counseling from the Board donation budget.

Background: Lawrence said he voted against the proposal at the June 5 meeting because there was uncertainty about whether the CCC accepted clients who use medical marijuana. The Board received a letter from the Center clarifying their position on that matter and he is now assured that CCC does not discriminate on that basis. He wants to change his original ‘no’ vote to a ‘yes’ and he hopes others who originally voted ‘no’ will join him.

Peach Gallery: Thumbs up.

Board: Joseph said they provide “an incredibly valuable service” and hopes there are “no hard feelings” between the Fair and the CCC. Marlene said many Fair Family members have benefited from their service and that the donation should have been approved the first time. Lawrence said, “We took a principled position. I stand by my original vote and I stand by my change of mind.” Paxton asked how much money remains in the Board donation budget. Grumpy said \$1,250.

The motion passed: 8 in favor and 2 opposed (Anna and Katie).

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm. The next Board meeting will be held on Monday, September 11, 2006 at 7pm onsite at Alice’s Wonderland. The agenda, subject to change, will include the following tabled items: Budget Issues; Approve Revised PC Job Descriptions; as well as the following new business: Appoint New Peach Power Ad Hoc Committee Member (Anna); Consider Donation to Wayne Morse Youth Program (Greg); Consider Minor Change to Statement of Intent (Greg); Endowment Principal Contribution; Increase 2006 Board Donation Budget; Peach Power Fund (Anna).

Minutes by Barbara Edmonds who thanks Norma for suggesting the following quote from Louis Armstrong in 1970: “Some of you young folks been saying to me, ‘Hey Pops, what you mean what a wonderful world? How about all them wars all over the place? You call them wonderful? And how about hunger and pollution? They ain’t so wonderful either.’ But how about listening to old Pops for a minute. It seems to me it ain’t the world that’s so bad, but what we’re doing to it, and all I’m saying is see what a wonderful world it would be if only we’d give it a chance. Love, baby, love. That’s the secret. Yeah. If lots more of us loved each other, we’d solve lots more problems. And man, this world would be a gasser.”