

ELDERS OCTOBER RETREAT MINUTES – Pending final approval at 11/21/19 committee meeting

October 26, 2019

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane Albino, Alan Cohn, Katie Cousins, Jain Elliott, Robert Jacobs, Heather Kent, Kay Kintzley, Michael James Long, Robert “Mouseman” McCarthy, Eric Nicholson and Ann Rogers

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Roger Lesiak, Patricia Van Esso, Dee Wirak

OTHERS PRESENT: Roberta Austin, Steve Barnes, Sandra Bauer, Jon Beer, Steve Berkson, Andy Constant, Kehn “mambo” Gibson, Alan Gross, Carolyn Gsell (scribe), Christine Howe Harrison, Annemarie Hirsch, Paxton Hoag, Peggy Isaacs (retreat host), Suzanne Philips, Jon Pincus, Vivian Kelly Rov, Licia Shultz (facilitator), Etienne “Auntie Em” Smith, and Taylor Truesdell

LOCATION: Alice’s

MEETING TIME: 10:15 a.m.

MORNING AGENDA:

- Introductions
- Thank-you’s
- \$Elder Budget Report – Katie C.
- \$Capital Project Requests – Discussion
- \$Should we solicit donations (yearly) from all Elders to fund Elder Hospitality, Elder Services, special projects – Discussion
- Geezer Pleaser Report – Jon B.
- Need volunteers for Events Subcommittee – 2019 Elder Holiday Party – WOW Hall – Dates
- Thank-you’s

INTRODUCTIONS: Each attendee stated their name, and their association with a favorite smell.

THANK YOU’S: Appreciation expressed for Carolyn’s scribe work and Peggy I. for hosting the event.

ELDER BUDGET REPORT:

Katie C. passing around printed copies of the proposed 2020/2021 Elders Budget that was submitted mid-October to the budget committee (referred to below as B.C.). The highlights around the budget and ensuing discussion were:

- Current number of elders is 1,338. We’re anticipating an additional 100-125 verified elders per year over the next few years
- Overall budget request increased by \$300 (\$3,500 previous compared to \$3,800 requested)
- Increase in request for food vouchers – in the past we’ve been turned down by the B.C.
- Request for T-Shirts – In the past we’ve been turned down by the B.C.
- Geezer Pleaser numbers for 2019 fair still unknown. Last year Elders got charged double. Paxton will look into it.
- GP Cart was not received until Thursday before fair rather than Monday when it was expected to be delivered. Will it be taken into account for amount we are charged?
- Diane is willing to speak on our behalf regarding the GP cart, food vouchers, t-shirts, etc.
- Questions arose regarding pre-fair meals and that availability to on-site working Elders has been variable. It was pointed out that the reason we don’t consistently get pre-fair meals is that there isn’t a designated point person on site to place orders to the fair kitchen day prior, and to show up the next day to distribute or confirm meal recipients. In the past, this was handled by Chris Brown. We need to designate an official representative, and pre-fair meal requests should be tied to SLR and elder camp work.

- There was a discussion about teams vs. committees. Currently Energy Park, Community Village, Archeology and Elders are outside the scope of other working committees.
- It was suggested that Still Living Room apply to be a crew, given that the SLR is an educational project.
- There was a discussion of the Fair making SLR part of Ambiance Art.
- Katie stated that she can take responsibility for accuracy of budget numbers, but she does not want to be the point person for pressing for approvals.

CAPITAL PROJECTS:

Capital projects are authorized by the Budget Committee. Capital projects are defined as large projects and/or purchases.

- ❖ Still Living Room – Display & Storage
 - The original timelines were designed for indoor, climate-controlled displays. Last year, one was made on aluminum, a more durable substrate for exposure to non-ideal conditions. Licia put in a request for a quote to have all the timelines redone on aluminum but to date has not received the numbers.
 - There was a discussion about duplicating the display, possibly at the fair entrance. Ann said that Path Planning has a subcommittee “Joyful Entrances”. This group oversees displays, rest areas, shade, art installations, etc. along the entrance into the fair.
 - It was suggested we could partner with Path Planning.
 - Paxton added that Joyful Entrances will be folded into Ambiance. It was suggested that as a capital project, the SLR display upgrades could be funded through Ambiance.
 - Someone mentioned that Capital Projects typically take a couple of years to carry out. Proposals for new capital projects must be submitted to the budget committee by the end of January 2020 for 2020/2021. Capital project approvals are made at the March BOD meeting.
 - It was suggested that the SLR storage problem could possibly be resolved if SLR comes under the wing of Ambiance.
 - Diane would like to see educational displays developed and installed by Joyful Entrances. More specifically, educate on other cultures’ eco-footprints, so attendees can reflect on how we live compared to other cultures who do with significantly less material wealth.
 - Paxton mentioned the fair has purchased several storage containers, but they are not climate controlled. Someone mentioned that we could look at climate-controlled storage. There’s a storage facility in Springfield that charges \$165 per month for a 10 x 15 space. Another person said that seemed to be the going rate. Everyone agreed that was way too expensive.
 - Robert J. stated that Jerry S. has a design concept in mind for storage with a dehumidifier, which would require electric.
 - It was stated that the storage issue could be a two-year project and we need someone to spearhead it.
 - Eric reminded everyone that right now we have a free storage space in Elmira, and the property owners have not indicated an end date. In the meantime, Eric has been actively investigating other storage possibilities. One idea was to put have a storage trailer and park it at Doug’s Green.
 - Someone reminded us that the timelines are currently stored at the Fair office.
 - Eric reminded everyone that we are better off to fund our own storage project rather than have the fair pay for it. That way we have full control. Kay seconded the idea for self-sufficiency. She knows some contractors who would be willing to donate their expertise and labor to a project.
 - Kay offered that she has an old trailer that is in disrepair. If we could get a crew out to demolish the “house” and haul off the non-usable and recyclable material, we could use the frame to build a storage trailer.

- An interim suggestion was made to solicit our storage requirements to all Elders. Perhaps there is someone within Elders who have a climate-controlled space to offer until we have our own storage system implemented.
- Michael James has had experience with metal containers. They stay dry but there's no temperature control.
- Ann shared that the trailer storage Archeology uses has been a great solution.
- Mouseman explained how oscillating fans can be run to prevent mold.
- As soon as Licia gets a bid on the aluminum timelines, she will inform Katie C. and they will put a proposal together.

SOLICITING ELDERS FOR ANNUAL DONATIONS TO FUND ELDER HOSPITALITY, ELDER SERVICES, SPECIAL PROJECTS – DISCUSSION

- Per Katie C., the Luis Verrano Memorial Elder Fund was established to give Elders the opportunity to aid less-fortunate Elders in paying for their wristbands. More fortunate Elders may donate to this fund, along with paying for their own wristbands, but in no way do we ask for or solicit these donations!
- There was general agreement that we should solicit for donations to fund or projects and events, but we don't want to put pressure on anyone to do so.
- We should find a way to encourage elders to become more active. Paxton mentioned that the best way to solicit for volunteers is to clearly define the positions.
- Michael James Long said that what has worked in the past is publishing a newsletter.
- There was a mention of sending out postcards to announce Elder Committee meetings and Elder events. To be effective, postcards need to be sent frequently. Newsletters are more complex.
- Annemarie said we need to make a list of volunteer positions available. Having held positions as a volunteer coordinator, she said that job descriptions are very important. Carolyn said she is willing to work with Annemarie to organize a subcommittee to outline volunteer positions. They will get together end of January.
- Paxton said that we should try using the social media platforms, and that Alice's will soon be set up with video conferencing so that people can attend meeting remotely. Elders can take advantage of this technology.
- Katie C. shared that there is already an OCF Elders Facebook Page. It turns out Steve "Admiral" Cole started it. There are 216 elders on Wonderful OCF Elders listserv. Peggy I. said she is willing to work on a newsletter and will contact Steve Cole about taking over the Facebook page. Peggy has a lot of experience using technology for social media and other marketing outreaches.

GEEZER PLEASER REPORT – JON B.

- Things that went well for G.P. at 2019 Fair:
 - Signup process for drivers online filled up quickly!
 - Every driver showed up on time!
 - Drivers reported how appreciative passengers were of the service
- Things that were challenging:
 - Procurement of golf cart through Quartermaster resulted in GP arriving late. It should have been received on Monday. It wasn't delivered until Thursday. Jon suggests going back to direct procurement.
 - Communications – connecting riders and drivers was difficult. There's no good way to communicate with Elder Camp Central, since there is no Tinkerbell, and cell service is unreliable. Jon suggested we create a volunteer position to staff a radio. This would be in addition to the camp host.
- Jon said he is willing to manage the G.P. pre-fair work such as getting drivers signed up. However, he does not want to manage the GP activity on the ground. He committed to writing up a volunteer position description.
- Paxton is looking into internet phones and expressed the necessity of having a dispatcher. Paxton urged us to procure our own G.P and not go through Quartermaster. Jon B. responded that he has discussed the issue of procuring our own cart with Cotterpin. We should also think about getting a 6-person rather than 2-person cart.

- It was noted that Info booths have Tinkerbells; not radios. Paxton said that commercial radios are more reliable, and we could rent them from Day Radio for about \$60 each. We could have a radio at Elder Central, GP and one more at Registration.
- Annemarie suggested that whoever volunteers as a dispatcher for Elder Central could also act as Camp Host during the shift.

NEED VOLUNTEERS FOR EVENTS SUBCOMMITTEE – 2019 ELDER HOLIDAY PARTY – WOW HALL – DATES

- Last year's party was held at the Wow Hall upstairs. We are looking at getting the date of Thursday December 19th reserved. (That's Phil Ochs' birthday).
- Time schedule: Setup 5:30 p.m., Party 6 – 9 and cleanup 9 – 9:30 p.m.
- Jain will contact the WOW Hall to schedule. If Thursday 12/19 is not available, second choice is Wednesday 12/18.
- Nobody at the meeting stepped forward to volunteer hospitality services for the holiday party or to be on the events committee. The party will be essentially potluck.

THANK YOU'S – LICIA

- Licia passed around Thank-You postcards that she had designed with a fair photo and thank you message. She encouraged each of us to send out a postcard to someone we would like to acknowledge for their service at the 50th Fair. There is also a clipboard available where attendees can list people who should be thanked.

REQUEST FROM NON-ATTENDING ELDER PEGGY DAY FITZGERALD – Eric N.

- Eric spoke on behalf of Peggy. Peggy would like to make 2 positions for Elder Camp: Host and Hospitality.
- Eric and Peggy said they are willing to set up the Hospitality Tent and they will be the hospitality fairies.
- Annemarie stated that she would like to meet with Eric and Peggy to coordinate details.

The morning meeting adjourned shortly after Noon for lunch.

AFTERNOON AGENDA – Round Robin Discussions

- What is the role of Elders in relationship to the Fair at large?
- What are we giving now and how can we continue to contribute?
- How do we bring wisdom and experience to younger members of the Fair?
- How are Elders misrepresented at the Fair?
- What are the talking points for handling misperceptions of Elders?
- Schedule next retreat

WHAT IS ROLE OF ELDERS IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE FAIR AT LARGE?

The OCF Bylaws were reviewed:

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the corporation shall be to sponsor The Oregon Country Fair, hereinafter "the Fair", which shall be an annual event intended to educate and inform the public about choices in personal and community lifestyle through the promotion and preservation of the work of individual crafts persons, artists, artisans, musicians, and performers, displays in a traditional fair setting, psycho-spiritual rejuvenation, and the creation of a public forum encouraging the exchange and discussion of ideas about alternative community organization, use of economic resources and appropriate technology, as well as any other lawful purpose within the scope of sections 501 (c) (3) or 509 (a) (1) of the Internal Revenue code.

Points of discussion:

- Bylaws are a living document and therefore we can expand on the original
- A resource for providing wise counsel
- Educate
- The Fair is so much more than a 3-day event. How do we share that?
- Some Elders remarked it's difficult to convey who they are, especially in context to the fair, to a person in a younger generation.
- As Elders we strive to communicate our vision to younger generations, and to live by example. We model our core value by how we are with each other.
- Elders perceive that younger generations see Elders as "a force", but it's unclear as to what that force is
- The Elders' SLR display shows who, what, and how things evolved over the past 50 years to bring us to where the fair is today.
- Reverence for the land, reducing the carbon footprint and using appropriate technology, stewardship.
- Elders is not necessarily a retirement system. Many Elders volunteer, taking on Fair roles
- Elders can provide wise council, pass on knowledge and participate in conflict/resolution. Facilitate difficult discussions by hosting forums or workshops
- Put together a mission statement
- Elders are the memory of the Fair; stewards of the 60's and 70's cultural experience
- Promote higher consciousness
- How about a Council of Elders? We can show what civil conversation looks like
- Promote inclusivity. Allow each person to show up.
- been inviting everyone to the party; Now let's invite them to the mission
- 4th generation
- An Elders stage – not necessarily in the main part of the Fair
- Have more Elder representation by attending committee meetings and reporting back to Elders Committee
- Be a resource to the Fair that's wanted. Be present. Be available.

WHAT ARE WE GIVING NOW AND HOW CAN WE CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE?

- Committee work – get on a committee or attend committee meetings. Find a way to plug in.
- Need overall plan of how Elders can plug in – there are many ways to help. Let's find out what the opportunities are.
- Engage in conversations with younger people. You don't necessarily have to know them.

- Do art!
- Liaison
- Volunteer with other crews
- Exchange ideas
- Inspire more people to participate by formalizing what the fair needs in terms of volunteers, then defining the positions.
- F.A.R.T. and the Candidate Forum were initiated by Elders
- Reduce/Reuse/Recycle
- Participate in Long Range Planning.
- Share the experience of joy through fun with purpose
- Beyond getting a pass, Elders can engage with the younger generations through song, story and conversation.
- Do a survey to determine the number of hours Elders contribute.
- The Fair receives over \$100,000 in contributions and fees from Elders
- Elders need a seat at the table where decisions are being made

HOW DO WE BRING WISDOM AND EXPERIENCE TO YOUNGER MEMBERS OF THE FAIR?

- In lieu of Board sponsored workshops, have elders host the discussions and organize the meeting. BOD Workshops are a burden on staff. Elders can shoulder it. We don't make decisions. We allow all sides to speak. We can present a report. This could segue to an Elders Council.
- Conduct workshops on respect, civility, healthy discourse
- Utilize KOFC and FairFamilyRadio.com. Podcasts, videos.
- Have a crafters' booth for retired crafters
- Votes, words, deeds are a way to show wisdom and experience
- It's a big challenge!
- Be clear about our common values and how we co-create community. Create a Code of Ethics
- It's a myth that the original fair founders were all young and did it on their own. The early founders of the fair received a lot of mentoring from older generations. For example, the founder of the Saturday Market, Wayne Morse, etc.
- Follow the example of our founders' mentors – Take yourself out to places where the young people hang out. Back in the day, the elders who mentored the Fair founders hung out at the Odyssey Coffee Shop.
- What can Elders bring to Culture Jam?
- Participate in crew parties. Meet younger people!

HOW ARE ELDERS MISREPRESENTED AT THE FAIR? / WHAT ARE THE TALKING POINTS FOR HANDLING MISPERCEPTIONS OF ELDERS?

- ★ Common misperceptions; thoughts
 - Elders are a drag on the Fair, non-contributors, recipients of special privileges.
 - False narrative that Elders are causing overgrowth of the Fair population. The Fair looked at adjusting the age when one can apply for Elder status, but the numbers didn't pan out in terms of reducing the numbers of new applicants.
 - There's a common misperception that Elders lose their camping space. It's not true (The issue is confused with vehicle pass distribution which is controlled by the crew leader.
 - If the Fair lost revenue from Elder passes and contributions, what philanthropic project would get dropped?
 - Elders are a separate group and do separate stuff. The truth is that most Elders camp outside of Elder Camp.
 - Elders are getting a free ride.
- ★ Solutions:
 - Communicate about what Elders do.

- Offer our expertise. Push for a seat at the table
- What would Chris Brown do?
- Become involved and visible. Set the example
- Make a list of myths about Elders, along with the truth of the matter
- Elders could align with Energy Park, Archeology and Community Village
- Create a theater section in SLR. Mickey with KOCF **(Fact check please. Or is Mickey with fairfamilyradio.com?)** has been interviewing Elders for Podcasts. We could run videos of the interviews in the SLR theater.
- Send an Elder representative to the BOD Meetings to give a report.
- Conduct a census – what percent of qualified Elders don't come to the Fair?
- Have a mission statement
- We need a communications director. Peggy Isaac?
- Ask crews what kind of help they need. Ask them to solicit Elders
- Have more Elders attend different committee meetings and report back to the Elder Committee. Keep informed.
- Use Fair media like Fair Family Radio's website to do Elder Profiles (similar to "Happening People" in the Eugene Weekly).
- Revitalize the Intergenerational Task Force
- How could Elders show up for Culture Jam?
- Become a powerful voting block, promoting Elder goals

SCHEDULE NEXT RETREAT

Date preferences were voiced, and Jain will contact Shane to reserve Alice's. ***Post meeting email confirmed the next Elder Retreat will be weekend of March 28 and 29, 2020.***

The afternoon meeting concluded at 6:15 p.m.

Many Elders stayed for dinner and afterwards Paxton showed a wonderful video of a Reverend Chumleigh interview. **The interview was done around 1996 (Fact check)** by Ann Goddard and includes footage from the '76 Fair.

Thank you again Peggy Isaacs for hosting!!!