

ELDERS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – Draft 2

DATE: Thursday, September 23, 2021

LOCATION: Online (Zoom)

MEETING TIME: 7:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane Albino, Alan Cohn, Jain Elliott, Michael James Long, Robert “Mouseman” McCarthy, Robert Jacobs

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Heather Kent, Kay Kintzley, Eric Nicholson, Ann Rogers-Bennett

OTHERS PRESENT: Roberta Austin, Sue Barnhart, Kirsten Bolton, Peggy Day-Fitzgerald, Carolyn Gsell (scribe), Nancy Hafner, Percy Hilo, Annemarie Hirsch, Paxton Hoag, Chris Howe, Lisa Parker, Spirit Leatherwood, Kevin Levy, Jon Pincus, Licia Shultz (facilitator), Jenny Wilson.

AGENDA:

- Announcements
- Approve August minutes
- Update on Elder Wristband Subcommittee lead
- New Elder Applications
- News from our Executive Director – Kirsten Bolton
- BOD Liaison report – Spirit
- Elder Age requirement proposal

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jain – Board Election is coming up. You should have received your ballot by now. There’s a candidate forum on Sunday September 26, 4-6 p.m.

Spirit – See announcement for Reggie DeSoto’s Celebration of Life under the BOD Liaison report.

APPROVE AUGUST 2021 MINUTES

Carolyn recommended the following amendments to draft 2 of the Elder Committee August minutes up for approval: Add Colleen Bauman and Kevin Levy to the attendance list under “others present”.

Jain made a motion to approve the minutes with Carolyn’s corrections. Alan seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

WRISTBAND SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

Job positions with Elders.

Wristband Coordinator:

Wanted to bring to everyone’s attention that we don’t have a lead person for the Wristband Coordinator. Nancy asked about job description. It’s on the Elder website. Carolyn will send a link to Nancy.

A question came up about Crow taking on the budget committee.

Carolyn will text Crow’s contact info to Peggy Day-Fitzgerald.

Jon Pincus offered his assistance having experience with July 4 wristbands.

NEW ELDER APPLICATIONS

Linda Reymers’ application was up again for review. Roberta verified that Linda had a solid 15 years of participation fundraising for Culture Jam and the Bill Wooten Memorial Endowment Fund (this fund offers grants to schools and art organizations in the Fern Ridge area).

Roberta was assisted by Sandra B. to get verification from Leslie Scott that Linda had worked at least 20 hours or more per year for an additional 5 years (outside of her committee work). Roberta has this verification documented in emails.

Jon P. - This gets into technical discussion because the board's motion specifies Elders work during the Fair. Linda's contribution has been enormous. Michael JL said that we should come up with special dispensation when people verify the work.

Robert Jacobs – When someone who contributes to putting on the Fair and is vouched for, that should count towards eligibility for Elders. Linda has 28 years in the Fair.

Spirit brought up participation during the two non-Fair years where people have contributed to putting on virtual fair.

Licia mad a recommendation to approved Linda Reimer's application to Elders.

A few people are concerned about not keeping to the wording that the board approved. Some said the board has empowered Elders to make decisions.

Licia again recommended a motion to approve Linda's application. Jain made a motion to approve. Alan seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

Mouseman feels that it is up to us to interpret the guidelines. When it comes to interpretation, it is clear Linda is qualified as an Elder.

The motion was passed 6-0.

Elder application from Beth Little. Norma Sax was initially working on this application, and Jenny stepped in after the August EC meeting. Beth's application indicates holding multiple positions over the years. Norma was able to confirm all references except for two. One was Peachy the Dragon and work with the Construction Crew. Beth was an S.O. Jenny contacted construction coordinator and the person didn't have a specific recollection. Jenny was referred to Kirk Schultz. He didn't remember specifics but recalls that Beth was a Construction S.O. and was with the construction pre-fair for 10 years. It was reasoned that if Beth was with construction as SO for ten years, that she likely has at least 5 years to add on to the confirmed 15.

Peggy recommended that Jenny go back to Beth and have her find the contacts in construction who can verify at least 5 years. Jenny agreed and the application for Beth was put on hold.

Jain – We should send a letter to the fair reminding coordinators etc. to keep good records so that applicants for Elders can easily get the references verified.

Kevin asked about a record of registry with the Fair. Wouldn't that be a way to verify? Michael James Long said that the crew leader or coordinator is the person who knows who does the work. He described that we have a protocol for people to apply for Elders Status. There are several gray areas where volunteers have worked for the Fair, but they don't necessarily have a crew coordinator or leader. Some applicants have very clear credentials which makes it easier for applications to be vetted.

Jon P. – There are records at least back into the late 70's. Lucy made a point at the last board meeting that she keeps meticulous records of wristbands, and regular and S.O.'s is identified. Then there are also crews.

Jain recapped: Lucy can confirm a wristband, but only the crew and booth coordinators can confirm participation.

Jenny will continue with vetting Beth Little.

The other applicant is Colleen Bauman. 1982 – 2019. Her participation was straightforward. Mouseman made a motion to approve Colleen Bauman as an Elder. Jain Seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

Jenny asked about congratulations letters. Carolyn explained that the Applications Subcommittee sends approved Elders information to Carolyn for entry into the Elders master database. Approved applications are given to Jan Royalty, who in turn sends out the letter of congratulations.

Jenny will contact Carolyn to get newly approved Elders into the master database. From there Jenny can hand over the paperwork to Jan Royalty and Jan can send out the Welcome Letter.

Michael James Long emphasized the importance of archiving the original elder application that shows the action taken and the approval made by the committee.

NEWS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - Kirsten Bolton

Kirsten (pronounced KEER-STIN) – Kirsten spoke of the Shuttered Venues Grant, a federal grant that was recently approved. It has parameters set by the SBA (Small Business Association). Money from the grant must be used for operational expenses. Floyd Prozanski connected us with Peter DeFazio which helped push the grant over the finish line. Kirsten was able to accomplish the submittal during her first 5 days of employment with the fair.

Kirsten also explained that the overall fair population (ticketed participants plus participants with Fair passes) will be scaled back to the 2018 population numbers, and budgets will be based on holding a middle-sized fair.

The Shuttered Venues grant is for 1.279 million dollars and must be spent by September 2022. Grant money will pay for all the expenses to put on the fair. Because we can use the grant money to put on the fair, the 2022 Fair revenue will be unencumbered. This will put us in the financial position to pre-fund the 2023 fair. We will be audited after September 2022 to insure we complied with the regulations for receiving the grant money. Spirit reminded us that revenue could also be used from next fair to replenish the Rainy-Day Fund.

SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING REPORT - Spirit

Spirit gave a board report which is recapped in her written summary here:

Board Liaison report for Elders Committee by Spirit – September 23, 2021

Board business updates:

The Board now consists of 12 voting members due to the Bylaw change approved in August per recommended by our NAO consultant, Mary Miller, in 2018. Included in that change, Board members will serve 3-year terms that will be implemented over a course of a few years beginning in 2021.

The Board supported a motion by the Fixed Assets Committee to get an appraisal and sell the winery equipment as it is not in our best interest to operate a winery at this time – while the value of the equipment is not confirmed it is guessed to be in the \$30,000 range – perhaps more.

After lengthy discussion, the Board supported setting population parameters reflecting the average of the 3 years prior to the 50th 2016-2018 (parameters = overall limit per day of 35,000 including camping,

day passes, patron ticket holders, etc.) The 50th had a significant impact on our resources and it was determined that it is not sustainable to maintain the increased numbers without also significantly increasing our internal population to support the growth thus continuing the cycle of unregulated growth impacting our land. The budget committee will work on how this can be applied and report back to the Board.

As one of Kirsten's first actions as Executive Director, she made the decision to postpone the September 18th Fundraising concert. In hindsight, considering the first rains arrived in time to drench the ground on the day the fundraiser would've been held, her decision proved to be a wise one for more than just health and safety regarding the Delta Variant.

In addition to all the work that is required to get up to speed as our Executive Director, Kirsten also took the lead in applying for the SVOG – the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant. Right up against the deadline Kirsten, with the help of Hilary, began the arduous task of filling out the application. Special thanks, also, to Mary, Peter DeFazio, and Floyd Prozanski for assisting with some unforeseen barriers. I would like to recognize Big Boy Ryan Dunn (aka Braidless) and Jon Pincus for nudging me to bring this grant back into focus – a reflection of true teamwork. In the end the Oregon Country Fair was awarded the SVO Grant totaling \$1.279M – which is an incredible opportunity that gives a big sigh of relief given the unknowns we face during a pandemic.

Kirsten has meetings scheduled with groups of Coordinators every Thursday 6-8pm through November which is preventing her from attending an Elder's committee meeting until December, unless the Coordinator meetings that coincide with the Elder's committee mtgs end early... She is looking forward to meeting with the Elders and she wanted to make sure that message was relayed. She also expressed that she would be available to meet with the Elders if a special meeting were to be called where she could be available.

I think it would be good to take the next couple months for Elders Committee to consider any specific topics the Elders want to talk about with Kirsten... 😊

Election season is upon us! The deadline to apply as a voting member has come and gone – A big thank you to the 6 candidates who threw their names in the hat: Sue Theolass, Sandra Bauer, George Braddock, Paxton Hoag, Lisa Parker, and Jon Silvermoon – And I am happy to announce that we had someone who was brave enough to step up and run as a write-in> Kevin Levy. I am attaching his write-in candidate statement that has circulated, please don't hesitate to contact him (and the others) to discuss the future of the OCF. I'm also including a link so you can access the other 6 candidate statements and contact info:

<https://oregoncountryfair.net/2021-ocf-board-election-candidate-list/>

Via that link, you will also find the plan to implement 3 year terms.

Please note: The 4 candidates with the top votes will be serving 3 years beginning in 2021, the other 2 candidates will serve the traditional 2-year terms.

The Candidate forum is September 26th at 4pm and other election timeline information can be found at:

<https://oregoncountryfair.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Election-timeline-2021-v6A.pdf>

Last but not least an announcement with details for Reggie DeSoto's memorial - please note location change:

Official Announcement:

This is a heart open invitation to come and Honor and Respect with memories of Reggie Soto, OCF Traffic Horse Crew and OCF Elder. Bring Love, Peace, Flowers, raincoats, and chairs.

**Reggie's ceremony will be on September 25, 2021, at high noon.*

the location will be at **Elijah Bristow State Park, near Dexter, Oregon. This will be much easier on his immediate family, and he dearly loved this park.*

**Covid rules are requested.*

**Park rules apply.*

**thank you ALL for your kind considerations.*

Love lives forever.

Reggie & Lil

Mouseman asked if the intent of the Forum is for candidates to give stump speeches, or if there will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Jon P. reminded us that in years past we hosted a candidates' forum.

ELDER APPLICATION AGE ELIGIBILITY

Licia reminded us that a big influx of elders has greatly increased the total number of elders, and hence has increased the workload. Licia says we shouldn't feel bad about moving the goal post. We've been talking about this for a long time, 55 is young, and we should make an avenue for people of 55 or better that may have a special condition where they can no longer work, otherwise she agrees to move the age criteria.

Jon Pincus – what is the problem we are solving here? When we look at the total numbers, elders are not the problem. We're going to deny 20-30 people. The real glut is in other areas that account for excess. Jon doesn't see a lot of gain in doing this. There are a lot of people who hit age 55 and are unable to do a lot of the work. It was pointed out that many people do well in their elder years.

If we do end up changing the age requirement, it doesn't include authorizing us to create a "disability" category.

Mouseman – Elders aren't the population problem and keeping fair population down are two separate issues. Agreed that the increased number of elders does add to our workload. We should consider the age change.

Peggy – When we created the committee, we thought age 55 was old. But now that I'm 80, age 55 does seem young. She'd like to see a two-step process to make it easier for people applying for Elder status who are in the 55-59 age range.

Nancy – In some past meetings we've talked about a different level of pass for elders who want to stay late but don't plan to camp.

Robert agreed with Peggy and Mouseman. 55 is still young. Let's make a proposal to the board that we gradually raise the age starting in year 2023 that goes to 56, then every other year it goes up 1 year.

Roberta found working at the fair as she was older very difficult. She feels for the people who have worked hard, and she has compassion for them.

Paxton – When Elders was started in 2001/2002 Paxton sat on the committee. One of the things that sold him on the program is that they would tap out around 800 Elders. That has not happened. Paxton recommends a compassion pass. For the ones on a skipped over year, there could be a special application for those who are having difficulty working.

Jon said he has heard discussion on ways to ameliorate those who would be affected. Jon hears that younger people are having a hard time finding a position in the fair. The fair needs more diverse participation. The longer we keep people in positions the longer it will take the fair to diversify the population. Jon suggested that we don't just pass a motion and then figure all this stuff out later. Rather, let's figure out some mechanisms to ameliorate any issues and make a proposal that is an entire package.

Michael liked Robert's, Jon's, and Paxton's comments. He said we should call the question and then call it to discussion later.

Licia – what is nagging her mind is that we have a new E.D. Shouldn't we get some feedback from her before we make an official presentation to the board?

Robert Jacobs – Likes the idea of putting together a proposal to the board after discussing with Kirsten and see what other ideas she has.

Licia suggested forming a small subcommittee.

Mouseman agreed with Robert. Let's talk to Kirsten.

Nancy – agree, discuss before it goes any farther. Question – what, is the underlying force behind this? Are we trying to reduce number of elders? Open things up for younger generations? Where are we going?

Carolyn – recommends a subcommittee that can put together some ideas/proposals and from there bring in Kirsten and present her with our ideas and ask for her input.

Lisa Parker shared that when she hears discussion of growth of the fair, as a nurse she thinks in terms of epidemiology. We're talking about slowing the growth of the fair. There are a lot of different things we can do to flatten the growth curve of the fair.

Paxton – When determining a workable population for the next fair, they excluded 2015 (opening a Xanadu) and excluded 2019 (50th Anniversary). It was noted that 2019 stressed the system. Traffic was maxed out. We'd need to have more recycling and more porta-potties. There are real concerns about how we handle the limit. We took population counts for 2016, 17 and 18, looked at all the allocated passes, and look at every segment of the fair to see where we can reduce population growth. With elders, the numbers aren't tapering out. We need to look at every single area of the fair. It's an important discussion, and we must get a handle on our population growth. We need to deal with constraints.

Lisa P. noted that the medical group was able to handle 2019, but we must think about growth and the ability for essential crews to keep everyone safe and healthy. She asked where she could find a written statement on Elders Policy.

Annemarie – you can find the Elders Policy on the elder’s website. <https://ocfelders.weebly.com/becoming-an-elder.html>

Kevin reported that he hears about younger people looking for Fair positions. Is there a way to put in a mentoring program?

Mouseman – that is what the teen program is for.

Spirit – Likes the idea of mentoring. Where we are slowing the growth by changing the aging eligibility requirement, for each person who becomes an elder, that brings a new volunteer into the fair.

Mouseman – we talked earlier about a projected plateau. We are all getting older, and we’ll start dropping. That is how we are going to flatten the curve.

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS PASSED:

August 2021 minutes approved 6-0

Linda Reymers’ application approved 6-0

Colleen Bauman’s application approved 6-0

the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 28 at 7 p.m. via Zoom.