

ELDERS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – Final, approved at 6/23/22 meeting

DATE: Thursday, May 26, 2022

LOCATION: Online (Zoom)

MEETING TIME: 7:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane Albino, Jain Elliott, Nancy Hafner, Heather Kent, Michael JamesLong, Robert “Mouseman” McCarthy, Eric Nicholson (late), Ann Rogers-Bennett

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Kay Kintzley

BOARD LIAISONS PRESENT: Anthony “AJ” Jackson

OTHERS PRESENT: Maida Belove, Steven Berkson, Laurie Childers, Alan Cohn, Darlene Colburn, Katie Cousins, Shell D’amour, Peggy Day-Fitzgerald, Vickie Grek, Carolyn Gsell (scribe), Isa Haverlan, Annemarie Hirsch, Paxton Hoag, David Hoffman, Chris Howe, Tim Kraft, Chris Meurer, Linda Mooney, Jon Pincus, Jorjan Plimmer, Jerry Shultz, Licia Shultz (facilitator), Jon Silvermoon, Laura Sky, Jenny Wilson, Monica (last name unknown).

AGENDA:

- Announcements
- Approve April minutes
- June Meeting at Kay’s
- In-person/Hybrid meetings
- Facilitator’s reminder
- Elders Application - change recommendation (add D.O.B.)
- Elder Wristbands Update
- Elder Volunteers Update (SLR, M&G, GP, Elder Camp, other)
- Wonderful OCF Elders Listserv

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alan – 6 or 8 years ago the committee agreed anything posted on ECOCF should not be forwarded outside of the list without the listserv members’ permission. It is a privacy consideration. Paul Compton is managing both listservs. Paul should be informed of this ECOCF rule.

Ann – Read the updated Covid info on the .net site. The closest test site appears to be in Eugene on W. 11th that is a 24-hour test. The gov’t issue in-home Covid test does fulfill the requirement. The main difference between the at home test and the lab version is that it is administered by someone else.

Steve – Instant testing is not PCR. The PCR is 24-48 hours. To get an immediate return test costs money. PCR tests have to go to a lab. Insurance companies won’t cover it.

APPROVE APRIL MINUTES

Ann made a motion to approve the April 4/28/22 minutes. Mouseman seconded. The motion passed 8 - 0. (Eric just joined and missed the vote).

JUNE MEETING at KAY’S

Thursday, June 23. The meeting is a potluck outdoors. Bring food to share or bring your own. Bring your own eating utensils. The Porta-Potty needs to be approved. It looks like the cost will be around \$125. We gather at 5:30, eat at 6 and generally have the meeting at 7 p.m.

Location: Kay’s place: 84674 Hill Top Drive, Pleasant Hill OR 97455.

The rental of a porta-potty was generally approved. The meeting will only be in-person. Carolyn mentioned the Hybrid meeting is an agenda item.

HYBRID Meetings (Online & in-person) - Carolyn

Jon S. – if the Fair is committed to provided safe environments for everyone, the fair should support this.

Peggy – Kay’s meeting is an exception for online.

AJ – The fair does have a meeting place, but this sounds like a special meeting, and it would be unreasonable to make it a hybrid.

Jon P. The fair does have a place for Hybrid meetings which is Alices. It has an owl microphone and can record everyone in the room. Path Planning has been using it. A comment was made that the people who attend online seem to get the short end of the stick.

Carolyn – brought this up as something to consider for future meetings and thinks the venue should be in town.

Mouseman – everyone attending the in-person meeting should be vaccinated. It’s more of a party with an ancillary meeting. Alice’s is still limited by the number of people who can be inside the building.

At the June Board meeting to be held at Alice’s, Paxton will try using the Owl camera outside.

Guest Question – Laura Sky

Laura Sky attended this meeting to talk about the question of raising the age eligibility for elders. Licia asked Laura to provide her contact info and someone from the SC (Carolyn) will reach out.

Facilitation Reminder – Licia

Licia reminded the committee that this is her last meeting facilitating online and the in-person meeting at Kay’s will be her final facilitation. Reminded the committee that we need to find a new facilitator.

Everyone shared appreciation for the fine facilitation work that Licia has done over these many years. She will be dearly missed.

DOB on Elder Application

James ML – Originally, leaving the D.O.B. off the Elders Application was a security thing. Since we have a subcommittee that vets the application, and now that social data is so easy to obtain, then it’s just one more thing that might compromise the applicant’s privacy. JML is against it out of historical respect for Janet (Planet Bubbles Tarver).

Carolyn explained that the reason the question is being asked is that data entry into the VSB (virtual sticker booth) requires entering a birthdate Carolyn explained that our wristband subcommittee created a birthday for each person based on a calculation that uses the person’s age at date of application.

There’s a formula for that. Everyone entered is a Scorpio!

MJL suggested that we continue to “make up” the birthdate.

Ann explained that by using a DOB, it helps differentiate folks with same names. Jain confirmed same holds for the Elections committee.

Jon P. shared that it would be helpful to know ages because it does help with demographics. It is important information for some things. We need to understand how secure the Fair’s database is.

Vickie – Works the VSB and yes you can put a name into the VSB without a birthday. Making up birthdates is not advisable because it (the d.o.b.) helps to separate out same names. At the sticker booth, *(in order to receive wristbands and vehicle stickers)* people are required to show their I.D. Katie

says the only printout used at the Sticker Booth is the name. Vickie said you can enter (*via data entry*) a person's name without a birthdate. Generally, a middle name helps make a distinction (*between same first and last names*).

Steve – Has had experience using the VSB and recalls entries were rejected without a D.O.B. entry. He is unsure if DOB data are part of the information that goes to Fair insurance.

Paxton – The Fair wants the DOB for planning purposes. We have a new tech person who is setting up good security protocols. He requested we don't create false birth date data.

Mouseman – It seems like a necessary statistic for determining when someone is actually an elder.

Ann – Driver's License information is needed for driving OCF vehicles, both leased and owned, on the property so drivers can be listed on OCF's.

Katie – The VSB also requests the birth date for the companion pass. We should be asking for D.O.B. on the Pass Request Form.

Chris – Geezer Pleezer drivers must submit their Driver License information to the Fair for insurance purposes.

Carolyn – Currently we don't have the D.O.B. of each elder. What we do know is their date at the age of application, and from there we calculate their current age. It is accurate plus or minus a year.

Licia – Let's table this discussion for now. It needs to be addressed at a future meeting and send it on to our Board Liaisons.

Elder Wristband Updates – Nancy

Applications are still dribbling in. As of today, we have 545 Elders already submitting money for wristbands, 353 companions. Parking pass requests: 417 regular, 25 Farside, and 19 oversized. Nancy is still processing more wristband requests. Nancy said that the process needs to be streamlined to make the whole process easier.

We have 36 total Farside Vehicle stickers so given 25 has been requested, there's a good chance the person currently asking

Jain asked what happens if you pay for a wristband and change your mind about attending.

Nancy – Once the money is turned in to Lucy, the money is not refundable. We have an appointment on June 19 to turn in the money to Lucy's team. Once we turn in to money, it is non-refundable.

Jain asked if someone has just become an elder and has never camped in the Farside before, can you get on a list. Nancy said it may be possible this year.

Jon S. asked about someone who changes their mind about attending due to the change in vax policy. Can they get their money back? AJ requested to give a brief board report which will answer some of these questions.

Board Report - Vax Policy Update - AJ

The board had a special meeting last week. The only change in the vax policy is that the requirement is now simplified to require the 2 shots of mRNA or 1 J&J. The booster is no longer a requirement. AJ recommended that Elders get the word out – put it on the Elders Website.

AJ recommended that folks who need to back out of their pass request do so before money gets handed over to the Fair.

Two people familiar with the VSB system said that once collected money is turned in to the Fair, it's essentially not possible to refund money. Katie asked AJ if the Fair would relax the stipulation to refund money. AJ said that was not discussed, but in a discussion that followed, it made sense to let people know that if they change their mind, to do so before we turn over money to the fair (for us that would be June 19).

Mouseman mentioned that because he doesn't have a printer, he hasn't been able to fill out and form and send in his money. Nancy recommended the option of going to the Fair office where one can obtain the application form, fill it out and pay then and there.

Another question asked was about the removal of the proof of Medical or Religious Exemption to accompany a 24-hour Covid test.

AJ – The Medical Director, at the special board meeting, advised what was do-able. The board didn't have a big choice and had to follow the recommendation of the medical director, or we wouldn't have White Bird at the Fair, which would essentially mean not having a Fair. The Medical Director explained that religious and medical information is protected, so that anyone can come into the fair and make the claim without having to prove it. Jain mentioned that 24-hour covid tests are very difficult to get.

Steven – Suggests we let elders know of the new vax policy updates as it may impact their intention to attend the Fair.

Vickie – Mentioned that the Medical Director stated she had recommended a simplified version of a vax policy back in November and asked why the board went ahead and took a tougher stance.

AJ – At the time the original decision was made (back in November), it wasn't clear that she felt as strongly as she expressed in the recent meeting.

Paxton mentioned that he understood the Medical Director back in November, but 3 nurses in the group recommended that adding the booster was important, and that is what drove the initial division.

AJ – It wasn't made entirely clear back in November that Ann Cooley was the Medical Director. AJ feels that everyone on the board was doing their best to make good decisions for the Fair.

Paxton - There are internal dynamics at White Bird that we aren't privy to. The Medical Director is leaving the position soon. We need to move on.

Ann – Asked about the economic impact given the change to the policy.

Jon P. – The entire covid situation has been tough for everyone, not just fair people. It would be interesting to hear stats on how the change in policy has changed people's decisions to attend the Fair.

Elder Volunteer Updates - Annemarie

Jorjan Plimmer has joined the Elder Volunteers Subcommittee. She will coordinate the **Still Living Room** (SLR) on behalf of Marcia who cannot come to the fair this year.

AM - SLR setup and Takedown – many folks have already signed up.

Jorjan – we still need people to sign up for staff shifts. Come find me! There will be a sign-up sheet to help staff SLR at Elder Camp Central.

The Elder Volunteer Survey is still accessible on the Elders Website. Here's the link:

<https://northarrow.net/ocf-elders/>

Licia reported that she and Kay are meeting with 3 new volunteer **Meet and Greet** Hosts in Eugene next Thursday. Licia will have one of the 3 people reach out to Isa Haverlan, who offered to help. The M&G is booked at Alice's Firepit from 6 – 9 p.m. Thursday before fair opens.

Geezer Pleezer – Annemarie reported that Jon Beer has connected with Mark from the Motor Pool to procure an electric cart starting on Wednesday July 6. He is currently trying to figure out whether to go through The Motor Pool or rent directly from Action Rental.

At least 45 people are on the Geezer Driver volunteer list. We are still looking for volunteers to help manage the radio at Elder Camp Central. Fran Rosenthal is the onsite GP coordinator. Daniel Levine is interested in being a GP co-coordinator.

Jon Beer will not be at the fair and is looking for someone to replace his position (pre-fair Geezer coordinator) next year.

Shower Update: Shadow from Shower Crew is happy to partner with Elders if there is a primary responsible person to manage showers on behalf of Elders. Steve Barnes has stepped up to volunteer for this. Annemarie expressed her appreciation for Steve taking responsibility for the showers.

Licia – Shadow assigns a lead person for each shower area, and Cassidy is assigned as the lead shower person to work the Hub Showers. He has a super bubbly personality which will add to the fun.

Elder Camp – Annemarie

We had a good work party last weekend. Annemarie gave special thanks to Morgan, Eric and Larry for putting in a significant effort, removing poison oak and helping with cleaning up camps for folks who haven't been able to come to work parties.

Annemarie has tried her best reaching out to former Elder campers but has not been able to reach everyone. She needs to hear from former campers by June 18th, or she will reallocate camping spots to someone else.

Elder Central – Annemarie is looking for helpers. She is hoping that people who camp at Elder Camp will take shifts to provide camp security and answer questions. She reported that all the Elder Central Camp items in storage are in really good shape.

Jerry – Reported that all the SLR stuff including the box of soft goods has been found. Confirmed that items Eric secured storage for out in Elmira are still there, and Jerry still has the furniture stored at his place. Jerry suggested that Eric get over to the barn to open the soft goods storage to see what kind of shape the items are in.

Vaudeville Stage – We are helping the Royal Famille du Caniveaux by recruiting elders to help rebuild the Vaudeville stage.

Ticket Sales Report – Paxton

A quick estimate (referring back to attendance) – Ticket sales are running 25 to 30% sold as of last week.

Given the vax motion that we just passed, it looks like for every 2 that decide not to come to fair, there are 4 who will come to fair.

Wonderful OCF Elders LISTSERV

AJ - Doesn't have firsthand knowledge of what's going on at the listserv but has heard rumors that are concerning and would like to hear what this group knows. He has been told there are nasty comments made on the listserv including racist remarks. He respects the Elders committee and has felt supported by Elders. Enough people are talking about it, so he'd like to hear from our group, and how what's going on with the listserv represent Elders as a whole?

What's happening in our organization right now, is there is a narrative being spread that Elders are responsible for tearing down marginalized folks and the Diversity Committee. AJ asked how the listserv being monitored, and if it is not being monitored, how are the Elders committee doing anything about this problem.

Laurie C. – Has been trying to consciously respond to long emails and diatribes that are criticizing the Diversity Committee. The worst accusation made against the so-called “divisive committee” is calling people names. It feels like a hostile takeover of the Elders Listserv. Was there a written purpose for the listserv when it was established? Wonders if it is funded privately (*scribe's note – the listerv is a free Google service. There is no funding associated with it*). How can we respond in a good way? She feels it is important to respond kindly with love and persistence. Laurie said that typically when she writes the listserv to push back on behavior she finds objectionable, anywhere from 2-10 people will write her back privately thanking her for making the comments. She encourages people who respond privately to respond on the listserv so that others can reinforce feedback. Would like to see us set up a time to have a thoughtful discussion on the matter.

Heather – Just because something is said by someone on the Elders listserv doesn't represent all elders. She is disappointed in how we keep people from speaking. Would it be better to know how about others speak? Do we have free speech or not? We don't get to decide for everyone else.

AJ – People are going to use these platforms to say whatever it is they wish to say. This is more about the Wonderful OCF Elders listserv, and whatever is said on that listserv reflects on the Elders. He gave the example of how as a Black man in this community, what he says reflects on other black men in the community. Know that what is occurring on the listserv reflects on the Elders. He doesn't want to see Elders as a whole get a reputation based on a few people mouthing off on the listserv. The real question is, what can we do about this?

Jain – Knows what a certain person thinks because they say (post) it (the same ideas) repeatedly. She knows of Elders who have left the listserv because of these kinds of emails.

Alan - In the past certain verbalizations on the list have been quieted. When Alan managed it, he was able to sway things before they got out of hand. We had some pointed remarks at individuals that we discouraged. This helped shift the tone. It's not just Elders on the list. The committee should decide the guidelines. Anyone can be removed from the list based on any guidelines the committee decides to implement.

Ann – Was formerly on the listserv and then left. Since then, 3 individuals have separately contacted her and forwarded listserv emails they found to be offensive. She doesn't think this is who we are. We have to address this somehow.

Paxton – Knows one of the primary offensive people and likes him, The person has worked on the vision action committee. Paxton thinks this person is watching too much Fox news. Paxton has learned to tune it out, but it remains a problem. Paxton really believes in moderation of lists. It's a nasty job and requires more than one person, especially when the content is political. The list needs moderation.

Steven – The listserv has been a source of more reasoned and in-depth conversations about issues affecting the fair family compared to FB and other avenues. If you want to discuss guidelines that's fine, but there is dangerous territory we are treading here. What he is hearing about the listserv is generalities. He recommends that the listserv can be self-moderating. Others on the listserv can respond to the offending person. If someone has written something that you think is wrong, hold that person accountable individually, rather than trying to systematize the moderation process. He has personally seen that things described as "racist" or as "attacks" are really disagreements or interpersonal conflicts. Many of the people claiming that the listserv is filled with terrible behavior are the same people making accusations against elders like "hippy bureaucracy," "old hippies", "ok boomer", and all other dismissive things. The accusers of "bad actors" are exhibiting the same bad behavior. We need to be very cautious here about how we proceed here with some sort of censorship. If you don't agree with a source, counter with another source. However, you'll find sources on either side of the equation are generally unreliable. Encourage controversial material to be vetted. He has not seen any organized attacks against individuals, and things we should approach these accusations with a great deal of skepticism and caution before we start censoring.

Peggy – When you say the Elders, you are saying "the Fair." We are not a special crew. We come from every part of the Fair. We are going to have the widest number of opinions on everything. We should be ready to hear opinions from every corner. That said, one should be able to state an opinion without calling someone a name. Yet it seems that the last allowable group to be denigrated is Elders. Maybe we need to have a subcommittee to look into it.

Jerry – Echoes Paxton feelings about a moderator and at the same time hears Steven's concerns about the slippery slope that censorship represents. Suggests we create a statement to everyone who signs in that makes it known that anyone posting on Wonderful Elders listserv is the opinion of that person alone; it doesn't represent the Elder Committee nor the Elders group to whom you are speaking.

Licia – We should reach out to Paul C. to make him aware of this conversation. Maybe form a subcommittee to write something up and present it to the committee at the June meeting.

Jon P. - It's important to separate two streams. The listserv is merely a discussion list. It is not an organ of the Oregon Country Fair. This discussion is really two conversations. 1. Topics and 2. Behavior. The listserv has always been for all kinds of topics. Jon's learned a lot from the reading posts on the listserv. If you're not interested in the topic, then skip it. Behavior – has observed recently that there has been a lot of mean-spirited talk from every point of view. It's not necessarily about a topic or opinion, but people using the listserv should be observing the Fair's guidelines. Some of the things recently stated have been way out of line from the behavioral point of view.

Jon S.- Doesn't respond to anything on the Elders' listserv. Thinks what is happening on the listserv is symptomatic of what is happening with the whole organization. The posts on the Wonderful Elders Listserv are more pervasive than one person and are on a continuum. He is pessimistic that the Fair is going to be able to fix this. It has been a very painful experience trying to be supportive of the folks on the DC that he has been working with. He gets accused of manipulating them, that he is fostering division. He finds these kinds of comments to be racist and condescending toward himself and the people with whom he has been working. If anything, they have been pulling him along. He values what he has learned from having worked with them. He is saddened that most of them are done with the fair. They have written the fair off as too damaging to them or not worth the effort to fix. He is horribly pessimistic about all of this. If the Elders can address the listserv question, maybe that is one small thing.

Ann – As a member of this committee and the DC there is no way JS is directly influencing the DC. There is so much b.s. going on. People don't know the guidelines. They haven't read the best practices manual. She referenced Scientific publication discussing the addictive nature of internet use.

AJ – For those of us listening, it is only fair to say, that what we just heard, he has a different opinion from Jon S. and Ann on this topic. Some people are writing things based on how they see behaviors from the DC that is negatively affecting our organization. He doesn't want this to be this picture painted that it is just the Elders bringing these topics out of nowhere. This is a two-way street. He brought up the listserv situation up tonight because he wants to make sure that the Elders don't get into the same muddle that the organization has been in because of what happened at the December 6 board meeting, and things like that. He doesn't want anyone to feel unsafe in this organization, and yet he does not agree with the fact that this is only an elder issue, that there are other committees, including the DC. He has addressed the DC behavior that has been racist towards him as a Black man. He doesn't want to give the impression that this problem is unique to Elders. Controversies are coming from all different sides, including the DC. AJ is asking this group to keep the good reputation that Elders have, and not get dragged into this, and doesn't become about the Elders, and the organization can continue to deal with what is happening between the board and the DC, and the Elders aren't used as an excuse to get off topic.

Laurie – This is a conversation that should be ongoing. It's not something that can be decided in one meeting. It is complicated. She is not here to institute public shaming or censorship but would like to achieve some clarity. If it's decided that people should be able to say whatever they want; that free speech is an important element Perhaps we need a separate listserv that's only about Fair information and community building; not a stand-up soapbox. She doesn't want to hear things she finds offensive, especially after someone has been told they are offensive and continues to repeat them.

Licia made a request for Laurie and Alan to reach out to Paul Compton and form a subcommittee in a short order time to create some updates and parameters around civility on the listserv. Could we have something to present at the June meeting?

Alan – Bottom line, we'll need to come up with a list of standards that can be implemented.

Licia expressed gratitude for the elders volunteering and especially to Nancy for picking up the wristband. The entire group expressed gratitude to Licia. This is her last facilitated Zoom meeting. Her final meeting for facilitation will be at the June potluck.

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS PASSED:

The April committee meeting minutes were approved 8-0

TO-DO List:

- Contact Kay to order Porta-Potty for in-person committee meeting on June 23
- Carolyn to reach out to Laura Sky re. Elder Age Eligibility
- Volunteer recruiting – ongoing – Annemarie, Jorjan, Carolyn
- Alan, Laurie, and Paul C. to propose guidelines for the Wonderful Elders listserv.

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Gsell