

Capacity Follow up 2022 OCF

We started planning for the 2022 Fair with a metric not used before to talk about our capacity--the number of people, per day, on property. We have always paid attention to the number of ticket holders, by day and in total. Using the number of people on property (POP) gives us a better measure of capacity for considering space and resource limitations. As we move toward internal payment systems that can give us immediate reports on population (like what we are now using in registration), we will continue to have better, timely information.

We are in the process of updating our systems, and beginning to talk about how to manage our capacity and what that means. Having space feels great. Was space the reason some crafters did really well? Or to what extent was there pent-up desire to support crafters and bring home wonderful home-made art?

We have work to do figuring out how to solve the uneven distribution of responsibility among crews/volunteers. Think of some of the main camp crews with the most demanding roles—recycling, QM, kitchen, construction, decon, site crew (sorry if I'm missing your hard working crew)—to right size their duties will take more than just cutting admissions. If we are no longer going to try to solve problems by adding passes—we will need to develop the means to get help where it is most needed. That's a big conversation.

Developing the data collection capability is as important as finding ways to coordinate between crew efforts. We have challenges in the system to overcome, including being able to track whether day/comp passes are turned in, and getting an integrated system that records our pass sales in real time, like we have in registration. Pass sales includes crews, entertainers, community village, energy park, teams, trades, and folks who get passes to fulfill contracts (like portapotties).

Some of the core documents we have used to discuss capacity are now on the dot net site, [here](#). They are numbered 1-3. For 2022 discussions of capacity and financial planning/budgeting, I am asking the board to have an open worksession in October or November (maybe more than one). The revenue projection, where the board approves prices and income projections, will be on board business as new business in November, to be voted on in December.

How we project revenue, and plan our spending/budgeting depends on POP. In the past, we just set a maximum number of ticket sales per day, and budgeted passes, but didn't create firm limits defining site and organizational capacity. To work with capacity/growth boundaries, means that we will consider alternatives and compare trade-offs. I hope that using the POP metric is the start of having conversations about how to make priorities, how to create opportunities for change, how to welcome new people and programs and keep folks engaged. We have had many decisions made in silos—and this is a good time to start collaborating on

how to best use our crews, reduce redundancy, prioritize spending and welcome new people. This could mean new opportunities for our organization---we haven't explored having a campground for ticket buyers, having a large stage in the parking lots for larger acts and crowds, coordinating to fill crew openings, or taking a fresh look at ways to change our capacity.

I encourage us not to jump to cutting admission this year. Less crowded did feel good...but a 1/3 cut to our income cannot sustain the crews and programs at the current level. Now, our event funds Culture Jam, our philanthropy, and our year-round organization. Our event is the center of our programming—we support our public purpose by creating a showcase for arts, handmade food, community organizations, social discourse, and alternative lifestyles. This is not the time to shrink our engagement with the public. We are right there with so many historic organizations that are grappling with living up to their values, reaching their youth, and engaging with real issues that arise in social justice work.

I hope we will continue with the 35K/day capacity limit (unless covid safety concerns change that—in which case I think we should look at our prices before adopting reduced numbers). Let's see how the 32-35K feels in 2023, attempt to rebuild our cash reserves and position ourselves to resume our full philanthropy and site maintenance. I am expecting that our current staff is going to manage spending carefully and be alert to ways OCF can make the most of what we have. They are also ready to work with volunteers on expanding our funding sources—a challenge we have talked about for years.

In a few recent years, our daily attendance (ticket sales) Friday/Saturday/Sunday, in thousands has been 2015, 17/20/15; 2019: 20/21//18.5. An overall limit of 15K/day could even out the attendance over those days, and have each day closer to a typical, nonpeak, Sunday. And if we can bring down some of our internal population with the methods described in the capacity documents, we could further reduce crowding.

Preliminary summary numbers.

Below is an update of summary POP information. Note: these numbers are not exact. We have multiple systems, and have multiple ways of capturing information. A small number of passes are used for training, and some passes remain in question at the end of the year. We also have systems that group types of passes differently for budget and reporting, or that have changed over the years....Yes, I think we will benefit from some simplification and uniformity of how we classify and report inventory (inventory referring to wristbands, food vouchers and parking passes).

These are comparisons from the past few years (the day passes are PER DAY—not the total number for passes that can be used once over 3 days). Note: some of the rows are actuals, some are budget. Link [here](#)

2022 in a nutshell

We initially adopted a 35,000 POP limit. With an internal population of about 20K (about 17 camping); that left about 16K spots for ticket buyers.

Then the effects of the heavy lift after 3 years down, covid and the vaccine policy set in. We limited the ticket buyers' spots to 10K/day.

As the Fair approached, we were aware that not all internal population spots would be filled. We had already started some of the "low hanging fruit" type approaches that appear in the capacity documents—such as, not having the "feeding frenzy" sale of SO passes during the last days pre-fair; and taking a hard look at the use of complimentary day passes. But the bulk of the decrease in our internal population was covid/vaccine related.

To point out: The adult booth population (we have conflicting numbers from two systems here) was down by 15- 30% (depending on how those discrepancies are resolved). The crew population was down by a smaller percentage—but the dramatic drop off in SOs would indicate that some folks who may have otherwise come on an SO pass may have filled some of the crew positions that were open.

Our event income was initially projected at about 3 million, our spending a bit lower. Our event income was closer to 2 million, and we had over 2 million in covid relief funds. We will end the year with reserves that can get us through 2023, even if we don't have a full fair again. Let's see if we can fill our booth and crew positions for 2023, and continue to work on finding the right size for our event, and how we will continue to be dynamic and inviting. Finding solutions that move us toward being more sustainable and fair is a great way for us to come together over shared values.