

Oregon Country Fair

Craft Committee Minutes: April 16, 2025

Format: Zoom

Committee attendance: Lucy Kingsley, Sue Theolass, James Nason, John Govsky (left at 6:30), Ken Kirby, Jay Shuster, Arna Shaw, Kim Allen, Vince (left shortly after meeting started)

Guests: Paxton, Tash, Autumn Maker, Richard Blue, Suzanne Glick, Will Davis, Sherrod Blankner (Will's niece here to support his idea of booth succession), Moira, Adam (arrived during closed session)

Staff liaison: Vanessa

Other Participants: Christine (Scribe)

Announcements:

Spring Fling fundraiser for Culture jam coming up. Donations wanted for the raffle.

Vince LaRochelle - announced he is resigning from the fair and the committee and left the meeting

Agenda Approval: Sue moved to approve the agenda. Arna seconded.

All voted yes except James - abstained, couldn't open the file. Agenda approved.

March meeting minutes approval:

Sue moved for March minutes with changes. Jay seconded. All in favor.

Ken and Jay abstained because they weren't there.

Meeting minutes approved with changes.

Will - feels like a catch 22 that his booth might not get juried in after he is gone. Advocating for a model of booth succession like food booths have - they can pick a successor as their new booth rep. It seems like a more fair way of doing it. A lot of craft people are getting older. Can't be an Elder and be a Booth Rep at the same time. The idea is to bring in new blood. His oldest granddaughter is a part of the jury process right now. Trying to be a part of the existing process but has not been successful, the whole system needs to be reevaluated and reworked and made more open and more fair for craft booths.

Suzanne - has similar sentiments and wants to make sure she can pass the booth over to her daughter. She got a concerning message about these kinds of confusions where people feel like they have entitlement to certain things. Sees a theme, a thread through the crafting culture and just wants to make sure that it's fair. Happy to help with any process it would take to make it viable to have booth succession for crafters especially when it's generational.

Lucy - Fair has become extremely competitive. Talked in subcommittee workgroup about legacy crafters wanting to carry on a booth when their family members don't meet the standards in order to get juried in. Has been heartbreaking for a long time. Work group decided to leave the

current situation in place without creating a special category of legacy crafters to maintain the standards as they are.

Ken (also sits on Craft Inventory) - has had this conversation many times. Understands the value of legacy crafters and the frustration of family not being able to jury someone in. Question is how does booth succession contribute to the well being of the fair community as a whole?

Sherrod - tried to jury in 4 times. Disappointed because product had community spirit without lowering the standards of the fair.

Arna asked Will to email her. Arna has watched generations of kids make their own buttons at Will's booth. Would love to talk to Will.

Sue - Has been involved with food committee almost as long as craft. You can't compare. They are totally different entities and work in totally different ways. There's a good solid reason why a secondary rep from a food booth can be put in the primary rep situation.

Suzanne - still sees products floating around fair that are not legit. She asked, "If my daughter has been working with me since she was 16 how does that impact me as a crafter? It's integrated into life and lifestyle. How could she possibly join me on this journey for longevity?" Has high skill and has been accepted to high end fairs. Generally when you have a lot of experience it's all on par with high quality products. And if your child is coming in to take over the family business do they need to jury in if they have been coached their whole life to work by your side and then take over the family business?

Ken - is a booth worked on the apprenticeship model? This model is an important part of crafting and of a number of cultural traditions but it is not a model that is inscribed in the guidelines of the Oregon Country Fair. Doesn't want to reject that model but it is not our model. Rather than being polemical, the process would be, perhaps in this committee, to discuss the benefits and disadvantages of the apprenticeship model and following those discussions we could, if there's sufficient interest, propose a change in the guidelines. "All organizations should say what they do and do what they say."

Richard - years ago his wife who has worked with him for many years, tried to get in but was told they were not both automatically in because they were partners. Some friends of theirs had both registered as partners in the business. So she applied on her own but didn't get in because she's applying with the same basic thing that he does. It is frustrating. They are in their 70s. The only reason they can't do what their friends did was because they missed their own chance to re-register this way, which seems kind of weird. Would love to see this issue get revisited at some point.

Will - kid crafters - his granddaughters have sold stuff in his booth as well as in kid craft area. In the jury process if you're jurying you can't ever mention that you've been at the fair so how does

the jury know that this is a kid crafter and if they're going to get any perks for that in the jury process?

Ken - kid crafters in the scoring process get advantage of not needing to have as high a score as new crafters. Treated as returning crafters. Have to check with craft inventory. The ones who need to know about the history of kid crafters. We have a vetting process to make sure to get all people who meet the status of returning crafter.

Jay - he is a juried crafter under glasswork. He will have a piece in Xavanadu this year. Will he be allowed to set a price or tell folks to reach out to him? Not supposed to be selling if you're not a juried crafter. Lucy said to talk to whoever is in charge of Xavanadu.

John had to leave at 6:30.

Arna - liaison report:

Teddy Bear Picnic is on Aug 16.

Board appointed new Membership Secretary and signed new conflict of interest with the Ritz. The board updates their contract with him (George) every year because he's a board member and has to waive the conflict of interest. George doesn't vote on that motion. It passed unanimously without George. This year we renewed it for two years so we don't have to do it every year.

There is an updated employee manual.

Established that we are going to have a hybrid voting system. Hoping most people will go to voting online.

Vanessa - staff report: Spring Fling May 10 at Wow Hall.

New video posted in Sunshine on how to make your payments.

You can also log in and update your crew. Adding training videos every day this week. Links are on .net site. If you have questions you can reach out to info at or office at or call the office. email sunshinehelpdesk@oregoncountryfair.org

Autumn - letter to crafters about Sunshine database will probably go out next week. Has sent out initial feelers to booth members and almost all have responded. All of those went out and they are waiting for Sunshine to start reaching out to people they haven't heard from.

Vanessa says that booth reg has been having some issues with sending out their emails. The payment training landed on Vanessa about 20 minutes before this meeting. They haven't updated the home page yet. Booth reg has to do their work in Sunshine before they start letting booths make payments. They are working really hard on it. Doesn't know if everybody has been

contacted or which email they sent out at this point. In the meantime you can reach out to Booth Reg for an update. Some of process is working closely with one year only and craft inventory to see who is going to be there.

Jay is baffled that supposedly an email went out to all booth reps and a number of people here said they didn't get it.

None of the cutoff scores for one year only was based on responses from booth reps. Based it on what was available.

Artisan survey and proposed changes to craft jury - 177 responses. Sent out about 1000. Only a couple of "horror stories" most people said they had good working relationships with the people they were in booths with.

4 places where there appeared to be challenges - returning people who want to add a craft, kid crafts, new crafters, and people applying for permanent booth space.

Numbers have been close to 500 and that is feeling excessive, looked at difficulty of frustration of people applying for one year only and how long it takes them to get into a booth and how long to get a permanent space. Some conversation about legacy process, subgroup decided to leave process in place as it is for now. Returning crafter score needed to get in is slightly less and while jury doesn't have that info, craft inventory does and applies that to results.

Talking about asking former crafters and people involved, but not active crafters now, to do a preliminary jurying so number of items jury has to see is lower. Going to have some conversations of what the logistics of that will be. Lucy will send results of survey to people who worked on it and see if any proposals come out of it or not. We did put some time on our schedule for fall to revisit things talked about during the retreat.

Next meeting: 5/14/2025 5:30-7:30 Zoom

(Moved to Closed session)