

Oregon Country Fair

Craft Committee Minutes: October 8, 2025

Format: Zoom

Committee attendance: Lucy Kingsley, Sue Theolass, John Govsky, James Nason, Tash Wesp, Kim Allen, Ken Kirby

Guests: Morningstar Owens

Staff liaison: none

Board liaison: John Govsky

Scribe: Christine Claringbold

Announcements: there's an election coming up! The annual meeting is Saturday at UU Church.

Tash checked in with the person at Xavanadu. There's going to be a lot of Xavanadu coordinators, the ones who book Dance Pavilion bring in large dance groups, could ask for vendors there. Tash suggested connecting with the Siletz nation pow wow after Fair, could go there and put up a notice for Native vendors. Ken suggested contacting the pow wow organizers for Lane CC, U of O.

Sue said there will be a call out for 2 or 3 new food booths, also planning to claim space M66 but not fill it for at least a year. It will still be for crafters this coming year.

Applications Oct 15-Nov 15. Applications will be on the .net and .org sites. Losing Cafe Mundo and NW Empanada. Also possibly Raw. Depending on folks who apply and who rises to the top, may only take 2 for this year, want to make sure to onboard everybody successfully.

Agenda Approval: Sue moved to approve October agenda. Ken seconded.

September meeting minutes approval:

Sue moved to approve minutes. John seconded.

Guests: none

Board liaison report (John): Board decided to not extend the term of the EDIB workgroup. They had a closed meeting a couple weeks ago with workgroup members. The workgroup issued a report. Workgroup members didn't all agree with the report. The board had no consensus on how to proceed after getting new info at this meeting. The term of the group has run out, but the board will be taking up the topic with new board members. The board's sentiment is we still have a lot of work to do and want to do this in a very methodical way at the retreat.

The election is proceeding smoothly. 98 percent of ballots are electronic. Kudos to the elections committee and everybody involved. Saves the Fair quite a bit of money.

Staff report - none

Craft inventory (Ken) - nothing today, has not heard anything from Adam.

Booth Reg report (Morningstar) - wrote a letter that needs to go out in the next week to juried crafters so they know how to get a permanent booth and to make sure to apply for jury. Starts in January, will send second letter in the spring and we will take a booth inventory at that time so we can tell people in April if there's going to be a booth. So we can tell them every spring - we decide in spring and do it for the next year. Gives them until September, that way it keeps our timeline the same.

EDIB conversation

Morningstar talked to Path Planning about the Oasis booth and Native Arts and Craft area. Kirsten wants us to approve two placements, one for each as a temporary only until we have more crafters in those areas, but left it up to us how to make that happen.

Morningstar still likes the idea of keeping the same jury and having an opt-in.

This year we didn't have enough crafters to fill those spaces. Ken says we need to find a way to publicize some more and do some information sharing. We all recognize that we are a white dominant culture community. Need to do more outreach and publicizing of the spaces. Morningstar agrees.

Tash said when rereading Morningstar's proposal, found it interesting because from Adam's comment last time, there are BIPOC throughout the Fair but don't want to sell in those two places. Morningstar says some people don't like to move because of connections at the fair, but newly approved might.

Ken has thought about Fair constructing a shade device out there. Can't sink foundations but has been trying to think of creative ways to provide shade.

Lucy said there's a wide spectrum of comfort and acknowledgment about ways that white privilege is rampant at Fair. Would like to see the Fair be a genuinely more diverse community and start some active outreach to not be so white-centric, expecting people to come to us.

Morningstar asks, since Esoteric has its own jury, doesn't it make more sense if we are doing two placements to use the same jury and use an opt in form?

Ken said we last had the convo two years ago about Esoterics, perhaps the committee should return to it this year to decide whether we want to identify particular booths as being dedicated to massage or healing arts.

Morningstar does have a spot for the Esoterics that she would like to put them in (hasn't talked to Construction yet). But for BIPOC and Native area - do we need two more juries?

Ken thinks for those two groups of crafters our regular craft jury should be sufficient. Still judging by the same general standards that the Guidelines establish (handmade etc.) Have been making efforts for years to make it a diverse group of jurors. BIPOC and Native crafters will have to score above 30 to be included.

Ken said for the last several years people have been allowed to identify themselves on the application as Native crafters, so the jury can already see that if folks put it in their description. An opt-in would be pretty easy to add to the form (only for internal use).

Ken said in 2024, 3 of the top 5 scorers were Native crafters. Thinks it was a good thing to give them a chance to identify themselves.

Morningstar mentioned the requirement to follow federal guidelines.

Ken said AJ expressed a sense of not feeling welcome at the Fair. As a predominantly white community, what are our blind spots, how is our behavior exclusive?

Morningstar said Kirsten wants us to send the message you're welcome here, please apply.

Sue suggested crafting an article for Fair Family News to let people know we are really interested in finding BIPOC and Native crafters to apply for Fair and let them know we have space for them.

Lucy and Morningstar agreed with this idea. Sue said we can work on it and try to get it into the January issue.

Guidelines discussion - permanent booths

Morningstar would like to change the part about permanent booths that you have to score "high" because it is nonspecific. It should say you have to apply to the jury in the year that you apply for a permanent booth and once people apply we can decide what their score means. The definition is above Cut the Line. She will craft the wording for that.

Guidelines discussion- wristbands for booths

Lucy would like to put back into the Guidelines that an artisan is entitled to a total of 4 passes to support the efforts of putting a booth together. Somehow when this was divided into 2 different booklets, that item got dropped.

Morningstar says a booth actually gets 8. Lucy said it was in the Guidelines before.

Kim said as long as she's been a Booth Rep, craft booths get 8 passes and if you want more you have to ask.

Lucy said there have been complaints that Booth Rep only gives a new person they're sharing with one pass and keeps the rest for themselves. Wants to make it clear if you're on the Wait Share list you can have an equitable share of the passes for the booth.

John thinks it's a good idea to put the 4 passes thing in the Guidelines. If you do that and you have a booth where historically the booth rep was keeping 6 and giving 2 - do they add 2 more passes to their normal quota and that becomes the new benchmark?

Morningstar said each booth gets 8 passes. After that we really do leave it up to the Reps. We do get calls from people on the WS list who say, "I found a booth but they won't give me any passes." In general we will give them passes but we don't have to. Kirsten says we have been underselling them. There's no real Guidelines to go by. It's up to their discretion whether anyone gets more. Asks them where they will be camping because we have the room to sell passes but not necessarily room for everyone to sleep on site.

It's 4 for 1YO because they only get half a booth. The problem is that you have booth reps that have historically been getting 8 or 10 or 12 and they're not going to want to have them taken away from them. If they have someone come in, they're going to want to keep their 8 and give an additional 4. Morningstar approves 4 more as long as they have somewhere to camp; there's plenty in the budget.

John - So every crafter is entitled to at least 4. Balance between passes and general admission tix, the board has been discussing this as the constraints on growth become more apparent. Right now there's a lot of wiggle room.

Morningstar - Right now we are allotted 5000 wristbands, sold 4200-4400.

James doesn't think we should be messing with the current system, it works well as is. At registration you can usually get more passes. Real problem is with getting camping space. Perhaps say that "every camper" should be provided with camping space for themselves and one or two helpers. It doesn't make sense to say only this many passes for each crafter out there. As we get older as crafters, we need more help.

Ken has no problem with providing more opportunities for wristbands to the crafters. Has thought for years he likes the 1YO system. Fair needs to be an event where it's plausible for a talented crafter to apply and score high enough to be offered a space. Would like to see the number of spaces we reserve expanded to 20.

Lucy said crews get close to 12,000 wristbands, booths get 5000. This includes SO passes. With adults and teens it's around 20,000 altogether. We are the 4th or 5th largest city in Oregon for one weekend when you bring in the public.

Sue said we are allocated 5000 passes and we are expected to sell 5000 passes.

Tash agrees with Sue. The people in our booths spend a lot of money at the Fair, they shop, they eat. We bring in a big revenue besides selling to the public, we sell to the people who work at Fair. James agrees, a good part of his sales actually goes to Fair family.

John explained that Jon Steinhart's argument is that when we do reach capacity, we get more revenue ultimately by selling a ticket to the public than by selling a pass. When we do start hitting capacity that will be the argument, wants us to be aware. He doesn't agree with that argument.

Retreat

Sue checked - Guidelines are due November 15 not the end of Nov.

Ken says to put at the top of the agenda to approve whatever proposals we have.

Sue assigned homework for all: read the Guidelines, make sure what we think is there is actually in there. They are online.

Work session at Alice's on Sunday the 26th starting at 10 - 4. Two items on agenda - how we might modify the booth jury system by having a pre-jury (suggestion from James), ongoing convo, and another convo from last spring about what we want to do about the booth rep system based on the survey from earlier this year. Sue will check to make sure it's at Alice's.

Craft policy review - not happening tonight

Selling a craft business

Ken brought up the letter he had received from a crafter. Part has to do with a logo issue, if the peach can be put on this. It was an inquiry of whether this was an appropriate craft to be put to the jury.

Adam had brought up a crafter who wants to sell their business. The craft is an integral part of that business. The craft is essentially a logo item at its inception.

John asked, if it's already been juried in as a logo item, how does selling the business work for a juried crafter?

Sue said if they sell it, the new owner would have to ask permission to use the logo because permission was only granted to the original owner.

Ken says jury approval is not part of their business property; it attaches to the individual person, not the business.

John says they can't sell either of those things.

Lucy said the seller needs to let the buyer know they will need to jury in the item. It's about the person and their artistry. Ability to sell a logo item doesn't follow the item; it has to have its own approval.

“Displaced crafters”

Morningstar said if someone turns in a booth rep, they also lose their space. There's no path for them to still sell at Fair. Should there be a Guideline that says we'll still find you a space?

Ken said for many years we handled those situations informally, used to call them “displaced crafters.” Never formalized. Consider whether we should do that.

Tash asked, Why would anybody turn in a rep if they're gonna lose their space? No safety net.

John thinks it's a good idea to have something published to let crafters know they can be whistleblowers and have some consideration to get replaced.

Sue said a “crafter's rights” document was talked about at one point. There needs to be some protection. Crafters who turn their reps in should not suffer losing their space, they in effect should become the new reps.

Imports

Kim said at this year's fair she saw two people put out imports after hours and there were a lot of people with unjuried items. Need to put out a letter like we used to, reminding people what they can and can't do.

Ken said It's a constant problem. Imports especially should be cracked down on. Should have that conversation including Adam about whether to make an effort in that direction. Would like to think that import sales would be recognized by security and they would be willing to go and say this is simply not allowed at the fair. It's a genuine problem and we need a new strategy.

John asked when does Fair start? Is it okay to sell imports such as tapestries before Friday?

Ken said Friday at 11 is traditionally when enforcement begins. Many think once you step on property you have to live within the guidelines. Food booths open at noon on Thursday and many craft booths are starting to do the same.

Sue saw blanket vendors and saw security folks take care of it.

Lucy suggested creating some heft around the “no imports” guideline. Topic for work session.

Sue said the food committee talks about “public hours” and “outside public hours” instead of “after hours.”

For next meeting - Guidelines part 3, Guideline changes

Sue says consider a date for an early 2026 town hall to educate crafters that deadlines are moving from May 1 to March 1 at encouragement of management. Want leaves of absence announced and booth fees paid by March 1 and also 1YO's which actually can't happen by that date.

Meeting evaluation - Morningstar said it was good, Sue said it flowed well.

Next meeting: 11/12/2025 5:30-7:30 Zoom