



## Festival Committee Minutes

**Date:** Tuesday March 21, 2017

**Time:** 2:00PM

**Place:** VMC Office, 345 N Franklin St, Fort Bragg CA 95460

**I Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 2:15PM

**II Roll Call:**

**Present:** Bernadette Byrne BB(Phone), Cynthia Ariosta CA (Phone), Cally Dym CD , Alison Glassey AG, Tom Yates TY, John Cesano JC

**Staff:** Brent Haugen (BH Present) , Luz Harvey (LH-Present)

**Guest(s):** Tawny MacMillan, Lisa Alexander (Phone)

**III Public Comment/Chair's Comments:** None

**IV Festival Updates:**

**a. Crab Wine & Beer Festival**

Tawny MacMillan, Event Coordinator for the Mendocino Coast Clinics (MCC) spoke regarding the February debrief w/ VMC staff, Luz Harvey and contractor Alison deGrassi. Meeting packet had notes reflecting the information that TM provided along w/ hand written notes she made indicating items to be addressed. The most pressing one was the need for judging method to be changed to accommodate the chefs which is a prime concern for MCC. Additionally, LH noted a timeline and results sheet will be made part of subsequent MOU's in order to have all apprised of the mutually agreed upon format for the day's events. TM also thanked the committee and VMC for their assistance in this year's event, their highest grossing one yet.

LH reported on festival surveys: the previously approved Crab Wine & Beer survey which relied heavily upon subjective interpretations of festival's impact on business has not proven useful, so she changed the survey to a number based one using occupancy percentages on key dates. Although no business is tracking patronage as a result of the festival per se, a correlation can be made between festival dates and spikes in lodging. CD stated that she'd compared rates pre and post festivals and definitely sees their impact. LH reported that about 75% of those surveyed had similar results.

**b. Almost Fringe Update**

LH reported that 5000 rackcards have been distributed for the festival in county & Northern Sonoma county. All events have been posted to website and curated ticket packages have been created for each weekend. Publicity includes article in PD and events listing in Coast Packet which visitors use to plan their entertainment while visiting. South coast has been very enthusiastic about participating and has put together some great events.

**c. Whale Festival and Dog Festival**

BH reported on the commencement of a dialogue w/ Coast Chamber regarding VMC playing a more active role in the County's Whale Festivals. Noted the amount of attendees in Ft Bragg for



town's whale festivities was high. Sharon Davis, ED of the Chamber is willing to explore collaboration between the two organizations for next years' events. Some angles for VMC to take on this included family friendly activities and lodging (especially in Mendocino and Little River), incorporating the CV Starr Center, boat tours/celebrations. Plans for the 2018 Whale Festival should begin in August or September. AG reported the MCM is considering moving the Roadshow performances to March so this would be one of the Family Fun events that could tie in w/ the festival. More on all of this to come.

Additionally BH suggested the committee consider starting a new 'Dog Festival' since dog friendly travel is a popular tourist draw. Some ideas included reaching out to Humane societies to determine their interest, dog shows, sheep dog trials. Dates of October 21-22 were suggested. Also September, but that's Mendocino County Fair month.

#### **V 2017-18 Budget Review**

BH reported that the Grant Fund monies would be reduced to \$20,000 for FY 2017-18 (down from \$25,000) and that any applications for events taking place post July 31, 2017 would have to be taken from that sum. He also reported that the current allocation for festival printing and distribution is \$15,000 for all three festivals and suggested the committee consider cutting the Certified distribution since there does not appear to be a gauge of how many brochures are being taken back by them after festivals end. Also suggested that in lieu of distributing brochures to Stakeholders in the manner that's currently done, that VMC establish distribution sites where interested parties could pick-up what they needed. Both CD and JC stressed the importance of hard copy written material to certain demographics and the need to make it easy for them to get printed collateral. AG and TY stated that younger demographics are more digitally inclined and VMC should establish a policy that serves both. CD suggested leaving the printing budget at \$15,000 for now until a definite policy is established.

#### **VI Grant Application Reviews: Two applications were reviewed.**

- i. Dystopian Prom in Mendocino: This application for \$2185 was presented by LH. The event is a part of the inaugural Almost Fringe Festival and is a collaboration between Flynn Creek Circus, Circus Mecca and the Mendocino Dance Project, all of whom are putting in \$2000 of in kind services for the event. This will be signature event for the town of Mendocino's fringe offerings and the funds will be used to offset expenses. CD motioned for approval, JC seconded, all voted to fund the requested amount. BH suggested contingency on having funds used for advertising out of county.
- ii. Mendocino Winegrowers Inc in San Francisco: This application for \$2500 was presented by BB. The event is a consumer wine tasting taking place at Ft Mason in SF. The event is attended by 350-400 people who get a good dose of Mendocino County. The monies are for the purchase of MWI branded wine glasses. CD moved to approve the quest but asked VMC to include it in budget. CA seconded and all voted in favor of the request; \$1000 will be applied to purchase wine glasses and the rest to offset expenses.
- iii. Grant Fund Balance after these two awards is now \$9315.



**VII Review of Grant Fund Application Form:**

The meeting time came to a close just as this item came up for discussion. BH mentioned that the application had to go before BoD for review by July 1<sup>st</sup> in order to be ready for FY 2017-18. He reminded committee that the funds would be \$20,000. Some wording that needs clarifying terms like "qualifying events" and stressed that pre-existing events do qualify as long as they have a new aspect to them and meet all other criteria.

**IX Future Agenda Items:** Review of Grant Fund Application; Mushroom Wine & Beer Festival; Review list of all festivals to study possibility of making one rack card for all events.

**XI Next Meeting:**

TBD

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30PM.