

Minutes for the 2019 Festival Committee Meeting – January 31, 2019

Those attending were Juliann Adams, Barbara Albers, Melissa Boyles, Marla Hanna, Ronda Hummel, Lee Kleinman, Bob Korver, Lida Lafferty, Paola Legarre, Lisa Proietti, Susan Smith and Curtis Swift

Festival Director Juliann Adams called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

The first order of business was reviewing last year's festival and discussing areas people wanted to see improved or changed. Adams noted that almost every survey she saw was positive with a few pointing out minor problems that she felt could be easily corrected for this year. Areas brought up for discussion were the set-up of the LAC tent, charging for entry to the festival, having a wreath-making workshop, website ticket availability and hosting a dinner.

Under discussion about hosting a dinner, it was pointed out that we have minimum volunteers and that they are tired after working all day at the festival and that adding working a dinner on top of the festival makes for a grueling day. Finding an outdoor venue and setting up for the dinner required even more work. It was noted that hosting a dinner adds to the overall experience of the festival especially for out of town attendees. There seemed to be agreement that if we were to host a dinner, it would need to be at a facility that could provide the food and staff to run the dinner.

Juliann will check with businesses like 13 Bricks, Wine Country Inn, whoever is the host hotel (like the Clarion) or other facilities to get a per plate cost with and without wine to see if the dinner is feasible. It was noted that the most successful dinner that LAC has hosted in the past was at the Wine Country Inn and featured a guest chef who was proficient in using culinary lavender.

No decision was made to host the dinner. Once Juliann has gathered the prices and other information to be considered, a decision will be made at the next meeting.

In regards to doing the wreath-making workshop, Juliann will contact Susan Metzger about leading this project again. If Susan is unavailable, Juliann will see if she could train one or more people to lead the workshop. We'll discuss this again at the next meeting.

Discussion then moved to charging an entrance fee for the festival. The primary reasons for charging an entry were to increase revenue, get a more accurate count of how many people attend the festival and to create a perception of value (possibly making attendees more likely to spend with the vendors). Reasons to oppose the entry admission fee included it might discourage drop by visitors, might decrease the attendance of folks who are marginally aware of lavender and might decrease the overall attendance at the festival. It was noted that when the Denver Botanical Gardens began charging an entry fee for their festival, attendance was cut almost in half. True die hard lavender fans will probably come no matter what, but expanding the market might not happen if "newbies" don't come.

It was mentioned that vendors probably would be willing to pay a slightly higher fee rather than see an entry fee charged. It was noted that we couldn't raise vendor fees this year as the applications are already out and more than half of the probable vendors have already paid. It was noted that we should look at possibly raising vendor fees for 2020 to increase revenue. We could allow vendors to sign up within a week after the 2019 festival for 2020 at the current prices but that anyone signing up after that would pay the new fees. Juliann noted that the current vendor fees seem to be fairly valued in relationship to what other local festivals charge.

To make charging an entry viable, the park would need to be fenced and the town of Palisade may be charging to do that starting this year. We would also need to have volunteers man the entry point(s) to collect the entrance fee.

After much discussion, no admission fee will be charged this year.

To get a better handle on how many folks attend the festival, it was suggested that we might have counters at the main entry points to the festival or that we hand out stickers to folks to wear (like I Voted stickers). Each of these will require volunteers to do the task. Getting an accurate count is important to sponsors and advertisers so that they can help determine if they are getting value for their dollars. Juliann will look into the cost of stickers.

To raise additional revenue, we might try educating attendees through advertising and signage about how helpful donations would be in helping put on the festival.

To help with the LAC tent organization, we need to get LAC to the front of the tent so that we are more visible. A possible idea is to have two smaller tents so that LAWC can be more centrally located in one and AARP and CSU could be in another.

It was felt that by getting events like the bus tour, dinner, etc. finalized earlier, it would allow for website ticket availability to begin earlier and hopefully improve sales.

Next on the agenda was the budget for the festival. Juliann will send out a copy to everyone attending. Bob will get Juliann a list of everyone's e-mail in order to do this.

Discussion moved to merchandise. It was decided that there will be no t-shirts this year. They have been money losers every year and storage of left over shirts is becoming a problem. It was also decided that there will be no logos on the festival fine art commemorative poster. We have cultivated an image and clientele as a festival that is more upscale. We select only the finest vendors to participate, we have sponsors who are highly respected in their fields and want the products that LAC sells to reflect that quality.

It was also mentioned that we don't want to sell products that compete with our vendors. To that end, Juliann will look into quality canvas bags and post cards as two potential products for us to sell. We might also check into bags made from industrial hemp. The products won't be festival specific so that they have a longer shelf life but instead will be a marketing tool for the association versus for the festival.

It was noted that we should more aggressively sell our supporter memberships. We need to have signage at the LAWC booth. It was also proposed that some buttons be made for folks to wear. The buttons would say something like "Ask me about being a lavender supporter."

It was also noted that we should probably have a sale on all merchandise with the LAWC logo on it as we will start using the LAC logo as we move to a state-wide organization.

The theme for the festival was chosen: **Colorado Lavender Blooming State-Wide.**

A vendor selection committee was chosen: Juliann, Melissa and Lee Ann Nielsen will serve on it. Since the vendors selected last year were outstanding and there were no problems with them, they apply by the first deadline, they will be automatically accepted for this year. New vendors will be selected based on the quality of their products and how they fit into the overall mix of all the vendors.

Juliann will check with Grand River Winery (new owners), Talbot (sp?) hard cider, and Revolutionary Brewery to see if they wish to participate in the "alcohol court area." To be an alcohol vendor, they must make at least one lavender product. Melissa will get Juliann the name of a hard cider brewer in Denver that makes a lavender cider to see if they wish to participate.

Juliann noted that the Palisade Chamber was running an ad in the magazine Bushel and Barrels that would feature the four big festivals in Palisade which includes the lavender festival.

It was also mentioned as part of our merchandising/advertising efforts we should send out e-vites on Facebook.

Juliann will look into musical entertainment options.

Lida volunteered to once again do the cooking demonstrations at the festival.

Discussion then moved to sponsorships. Juliann noted that most of last year's sponsors were on board again. She is just waiting on a couple. It was noted that sponsorships need to be locked down real soon or they can't be included in the advertising that is currently be designed and will be turned into the printers over the next couple of weeks.

It was suggested that a real push be made to have LAC members be sponsors. It was suggested that an article be put in the newsletter [Bob said he would talk to Kristin Nielsen about this] and that an e-mail be sent to all the members with a sponsorship application attached so that they or someone they know could become a sponsor.

Several sponsor possibilities were made to Juliann for her to check out that would be a good fit with our festival and association.

It was also suggested that requests for volunteer farms to be on the Sunday and bus tours be made in an article in the newsletter and in an e-mail blast.

It was decided that the festival committee will meet the last Thursday of each month at 5 pm at the Palisade Chamber of Commerce. The next meeting will be February 28.

Main topics for discussion at the next meeting will be the dinner, workshops, seminars and bus tours.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.