



**CELEBRATE MANSFIELD FESTIVAL COMMITTEE
MEETING**

Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 5:00 PM

MINUTES

Attendance: Chair Emily Wicks, Louis Goffinet, Colby Trembley, Virginia Walton (left at 5:25 PM)

Absent: Christine Ballestrini, Jocelyn Santiago

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm, Kathleen Paterson, Joshua Stern

Guest: Sabrina Hosmer

1. Call to Order

Chair Emily Wicks called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. Welcome New Committee Members

Committee nominee Sabrina Hosmer, Committee members, and staff introduced themselves.

4. Update on Food Service and Composting

Virginia Walton said she and the Solid Waste Advisory Committee have re-evaluated their priorities and will no longer coordinate food service and composting efforts for the Festival. She encouraged the Committee to continue to emphasize waste prevention, possibly with an instructional sheet or video clip distributed to the vendors outlining specific reduction methods.

Committee members expressed support for producing video clips, with Colby Trembley suggesting that different videos could be made for food vendors and activity booths. Ms. Walton said some compostable plates still contain PFAS chemicals and suggested encouraging food vendors to use minimal packaging, noting that the UConn Dairy Bar could serve ice cream in cones. Ms. Walton and Louis Goffinet suggested contacting UConn's EcoHusky organization or Mansfield Middle School's Changemakers Club about the possibility of involving them in producing a video.

Mr. Goffinet will mention the idea to Annie Perkins, the advisor of the MMS club. Kathleen Paterson will connect with Ms. Walton and Mr. Goffinet after Earth Day to discuss this effort further.

5. Approve Minutes from March 14, 2023

Mr. Goffinet made a motion to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of February 21, 2023. Mr. Trembley seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Review Updated Partnership Sponsored Events/Committee Tasks

The Committee reviewed the list of potential Partnership-sponsored events:

- UConn Dining cooking demos – **Event Coordinator Magdalena Pawlowski will arrange these**
- Magic performance by Pete Haddad – Confirmed
- Puppetry/Clown Performance – Ms. Wicks has talked with Anthony Sellitto about a possible performance **and will follow up with details**

MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP

Business and Community

- Chalk drawings – Mr. Goffinet contacted Noah Yilmaz and he is interested
- Scarecrow decorating contest – **Ms. van Zelm and Ms. Pawlowski will work together on organizing the contest and recruiting a volunteer to run it.**
- Cornhole tournament – The Committee discussed asking a student organization to staff the tournament. **Ms. Paterson will reach out soon to student groups that have participated in the past and will be in touch with Ms. Wicks about which groups to contact.**
- Restaurants and food booths – **Joshua Stern will follow up with Eastern Highlands Health District to ask how restaurants could receive a permit to sell food outdoors.** The staff will then reach out to the downtown restaurants to gauge their interest in participating in the Festival and will consider food trucks if there is low interest among the restaurants.
- Recording stories about what people love about Mansfield – Ms. Wicks said she spoke with two students involved at WHUS, who will put her in touch with the current student leaders. Mr. Stern said WHUS Program Coordinator Jason McMullan could also serve as a contact. Ms. Wicks said Christine Ballestrini had reached out to some UConn Digital Media and Design students who had expressed interest in helping.
- Agility course for dogs – Ms. Wicks said a Partnership Board member had recently suggested this idea. The Committee and staff discussed, but some members expressed concern about dogs being disturbed by the commotion at the Festival.
- Agility course (for humans) – Ms. Paterson said Ms. Ballestrini had reached out to some teachers but did not find anyone who could commit to running this activity. Mr. Trembley said an agility course would be good to have if possible but not essential. Ms. Wicks suggested reaching out to Johnnie Walker to participate in this or other children's activities.

Ms. Walton left the meeting at 5:23 PM.

7. Review Updated 2023 Potential Booths

Ms. Paterson said she condensed the list of potential booths by removing the entities she could not find current reliable contact information for. She will soon order Save the Date postcards and mail them to the potential booths, past sponsors, Partnership members, Downtown Storrs businesses, and other key players for the Festival. The postcards will be followed by an email blast, a press release, and a series of social media posts; committee members will make follow-up phone calls and emails as needed. Application forms for booths and the scarecrow contest will be on the website before the postcards are sent. The deadline to sign up will be August 4.

Committee members and staff suggested some edits to the list. In response to a question from Ms. Hosmer, Ms. Paterson said the most booths the Festival has ever had was 97, including waste stations, and Wilbur Cross Way has never been entirely occupied. **Committee members will let Ms. Paterson know of any further updates to the list.**

8. Update on Sponsors and Committee Follow-Up/Solicitation in April

Ms. van Zelm encouraged the Committee members to sign up to contact potential sponsors and said Ms. Paterson has ordered copies of the sponsorship brochure to be mailed. Some businesses on the list require an application form to sponsor an event. Mr. Goffinet noted that D & D Auto Repair no longer exists and should be removed from the list.

9. Review of DRAFT Budget

Ms. van Zelm briefly outlined the draft budget and said the largest expenses are the T-shirts for the volunteers and the music. She said the fund balance is significant.



Ms. Wicks said many guests at last year's Festival expressed interest in purchasing the Festival T-shirts. The Committee discussed the feasibility of selling shirts at this year's event. **Ms. van Zelm will add as potential income in the budget. The Partnership staff will research T-shirt prices and the idea of selling T-shirts.**

10. Adjourn

Mr. Trembley made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Wicks seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 PM.

Minutes prepared by Joshua Stern