



**CELEBRATE MANSFIELD FESTIVAL COMMITTEE
MEETING**

Tuesday, May 9, 2023 at 5:00 PM

DRAFT MINUTES

Attendance: Chair Emily Wicks, Christine Ballestrini, Jocelyn Santiago, Colby Trembley (left at 7:02 PM)

Absent: Louis Goffinet

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm, Kathleen Paterson, Joshua Stern

Guests: Jessica Carilli, 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

New Committee member Jocelyn Santiago, nominee Jessica Carilli, Committee members, and staff introduced themselves.

4. Approve Minutes from April 11, 2023

Colby Trembley made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 11, 2023. Christine Ballestrini seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Update on Committee Tasks for Partnership Sponsored Events

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

- UConn Dining cooking demos – **Event Coordinator Magdalena Pawlowski has been arranging these and will follow up after graduation**
- Magic performance by Pete Haddad – Confirmed
- Puppetry/Clown Performance – Ms. Wicks has talked with Anthony Sellitto about a possible performance **and will discuss the scheduling with the Partnership and Ballard staff**
- Chalk drawings – Noah Yilmaz is confirmed to participate
- Scarecrow decorating contest – The Committee had finalized their decision to move forward with this event
- Cornhole tournament – Kathleen Paterson has been looking for student groups that could host this event
- Agility course – Ms. Wicks said Ms. Ballestrini has reached out to some teachers but has not found anyone who could commit to running this activity. Cynthia van Zelm said Johnnie Walker indicated that he might be able to participate this year.
- The Committee had decided against having an agility course for dogs
- Restaurants and food booths:
 - **Ms. Paterson plans to send a survey to the Downtown Storrs businesses to gauge their interest in participating in the Festival.** She noted that attendees have indicated that they would like to see more outdoor food options.
 - Ms. Paterson said serving food outdoors would require a temporary permit from Eastern Highlands Health District, which would involve the same paperwork as a

food booth. She noted that staffing food booths has been a challenge for restaurants in the past and wondered if tabling outside the restaurants would be easier. The Committee discussed the steps for obtaining a permit.

- **Ms. Paterson said she could put together an information sheet outlining the requirements**
- The Committee discussed the possibility of using food trucks if there is not a high level of interest from the restaurants. Ms. Paterson said food trucks should not be placed near competing restaurants or the stage. Ms. van Zelm said if trucks are desired, they should be contacted soon as their schedules fill up quickly.
- Ms. Wicks said restaurants that do not have food booths might still be interested in doing specials for the Festival. She raised the possibility of flagging any restaurants that are participating in this way.

The Committee also discussed ideas to mark the 20th annual Festival:

- Recording stories about what people love about Mansfield:
 - Ms. Ballestrini said she recently heard from a UConn student who is interested in this project. The Committee discussed whether to film people's responses before or during the Festival, and whether to premiere the video at the Festival or a different event. They also discussed the feasibility of making the project an independent study or internship for the student.
 - **Ms. Wicks and Ms. Ballestrini will follow up with Heather from UConn Digital Media & Design to discuss this possibility further. Joshua Stern said he could send the Committee names of some UConn professors with interests in film who could possibly oversee an internship or study.**
- Community mural or other visual project:
 - The Committee discussed possible community art projects. Ms. Santiago suggested an art contest with the theme of what people love about Mansfield, similar to an "everyday hero" contest the Youth Services Department recently held.
 - Ms. van Zelm suggested collaborating with Town partners such as the library and the Senior Center on this project. The Committee discussed what the parameters should be for a contest.
 - Ms. Wicks and Mr. Trembley said art submissions could likely be displayed in the windows of some of the downtown businesses, not just the vacant storefronts
 - **The Partnership staff will follow up on this idea**
- Mr. Trembley raised the idea of naming a mascot for Downtown Storrs or the Partnership in honor of the 20th annual Festival. He said that alternatively, residents could submit pictures of their pets for a pet of the year to be voted on. Ms. Wicks raised the possibility of making this idea part of the Winter Welcome. **Mr. Trembley will draft a proposal.**

6. Review of DRAFT Site Plan

Ms. Paterson summarized two drafted site plans that were included in the meeting packet. One of them is exactly the same as the layout from the 2022 Festival. The second draft is largely the same but has some changes, including putting additional booths in the area that was taken up by the electric vehicle showcase last year.

Mr. Trembley left the meeting at 7:02 PM.

The Committee discussed the entrance to the Festival, the flow of vehicle and foot traffic, and possible locations for food trucks. They decided to move forward with the second site plan draft,

with adjustments to account for possible food trucks and to ensure the Urgent Care center is accessible.

7. Discussion of Area Captains

Ms. Wicks noted the list of potential area captains included in the packet. Ms. van Zelm said it is important to have the area captains confirmed as soon as possible and to have a meeting to check in with them before the Festival. Ms. Wicks outlined the roles of the area captains.

Ms. Ballestrini and Ms. Santiago expressed interest in volunteering. **Ms. van Zelm will follow up with the potential area captains. Committee members will email Ms. van Zelm with any suggestions they have.**

8. Committee Follow-Up/Solicitation of Sponsors

Ms. van Zelm said the sponsorship brochure was mailed last week to the list of past and potential new sponsors, and one sponsor has signed up so far. **She will email Ms. Ballestrini with a reminder of the potential sponsors she had signed up to contact. Committee members will begin making follow-up calls by the middle of next week.** Ms. van Zelm said Ms. Pawlowski is in the process of completing applications for sponsorships from the banks and other businesses that require an application.

9. Adjourn

Ms. Santiago made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Trembley seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM.

Minutes prepared by Joshua Stern