



**CELEBRATE MANSFIELD FESTIVAL COMMITTEE
MEETING
Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 5:00 PM**

This meeting was physically closed to the public but the public may view the meeting on livestream at https://townhallstreams.com/stream.php?location_id=69&id=28818

MINUTES

Attending: Sarah Dufresne, Virginia Walton, Emily Wicks

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm, Denise Kegler

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM by Cynthia van Zelm.

2. Public comment

There was no public comment.

3. Introduce new Committee member, Emily Wicks

Ms. van Zelm introduced a new member of the Committee, Emily Wicks. Ms. Wicks is the Manager of Operations and Collections for the Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry. She has worked for the University of Connecticut for seven years and currently oversees the day to day operations of the museum and the collection.

4. Approve Minutes from March 25, 2020 and April 15, 2020

Sarah Dufresne made a motion to approve the minutes and Virginia Walton seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

5. Update on Downtown Partnership 2020 event season, cancellations, and postponements.

Denise Kegler reported on the status of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership's 2020 event season, explaining that the Board of Directors has decided to postpone or cancel all events that were planned for May and June. Further, the Board will meet next week and discuss events that are planned for the summer and fall.

6. Update on headlining music act and entertainment ideas

Ms. Kegler reported on Kathleen Paterson's progress on the headlining music act. After the Committee's previous budgetary reductions, Ms. Paterson contacted the management for the potential headlining act and requested a pause in negotiations for 2020 with a possible contract in 2021. By discontinuing with this potential act, the budget will be further reduced by a significant amount.

She recommends that we wait to contact any other potential music acts until later in the year, when health and safety guidelines for the fall are better known. When we are ready to

begin contracting a headlining act, she has several Connecticut-based acts under consideration.

The Committee approved of these changes and they will return to the topic of headlining entertainment at a future meeting.

7. Discuss crisis outreach to partners, vendors, and HQ volunteers

Ms. Kegler reported on the planned outreach to long-time partners, vendors, and volunteers for the Celebrate Mansfield Festival. She share the list of people and businesses who will be contacted and she asked the Committee if they had ideas of others who should be contacted.

Ms. Walton suggested contacting the businesses that are located around Betsy Paterson Square. **Ms. van Zelm and Ms. Kegler will discuss a strategy for updating all businesses in the downtown on our plans for the Festival and the entire 2020 event season.**

8. Discuss fundraising outreach and review updated appeal letter

The Committee discussed the current draft of the fundraising appeal letter. Ms. Dufresne commented that a letter would not be out of place at this time because the event will not be held until the fall. She think that those who can continue to donate will respond well to the letter and would understand if changes were made to the event after their donation. Ms. Kegler suggested updating the appeal letter to include transparent language stating that all donations would be saved for the 2021 event if this year's Festival were forced to cancel.

Ms. Wicks also shared background information on the Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry's event planning for the fall. The Committee discussed the timeline for sending the appeal letter and agreed that mid-May was an appropriate time to begin. The consensus of the Committee was that fundraising for the Festival should move forward, despite the continued uncertainty on gathering restrictions and safety guidelines for the fall.

9. Adjourn

Ms. Dufresne made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Walton seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Minutes prepared by Denise Kegler