

Playa del Fuego, Inc. 2012 Board of Directors Retreat Report

Attendees:

Dave Diller - President
Maya Cook - Treasurer
Andy Wing - Secretary
Barry "Blue" Silber - Director
Don "Mungo Jerry" Elwell - Director
Ed "Lizard" Rosen - Director
Henry "BuddyK" Kilpatrick - Director
Mary "Evi" Shaffer - Director
Melody "Smelly Melly" Shatto - Director
Nicole "Miss Fidget" Stranko - Director
Lauren "Ananas" Oviatt - Director

2011 In Review

- Many of our documents were consolidated in the Grand Unified Document, aka GUD.
- We formalized our corporate logo for business cards, stationery, etc.
- Expense reports were implemented, simplifying the tracking of expenses and reducing the time needed for reimbursements.
- An Art Grants "How To" guide was written to enable better understanding and turnover of the process.
- There were some communications issues with the Vets regarding event details, planning and art censorship.
- Sound issues have raised the distinct possibility of camp evictions by the Vets.
- There is a need to secure formal legal counsel.
- Burnable art needs closer attention getting out of hand. A new burnable art policy was implemented in response.

2012 Goals

- Obtain an actual trademark for the logo.
- Restructure the web content. The web site is out of date and contains redundant information.
- Identify/recruit a team to handle the web content rework/maintenance.
- Implement check lists and procedures including "should do" tasks.
- Assemble and publish an annual report for the community and Burning Man itself (as we are an official event).
- Improve our volunteerism strategy.
- Re-energize the land search effort.
- Use the new burnable art policy to implement a full fire safety plan.
- Rethink the Board meetings structure and frequency.
- Implement better line item budgets from Planning Committee meetings.
- Art Grants need to have expense reports reviewed by additional people to assist the Treasurer.

Regular Business

Officer renewals and changes, membership:

- Dave Diller remains as president.
- Andy Wing is now Secretary.
- Maya Cook is resigning as Treasurer. There is no immediate successor. Lauren volunteered to research hiring a treasurer or bookkeeper and act as a liaison.
- Lauren Oviatt returned to active director status.
- Ben Sarsgard, Ron "Wildland" Vogelsang, and Joanna Barnum have all gone emeritus.
- Jamie Love and Leah Marcus have resigned.
- Mike "Magorn" Galleher is de facto emeritus and will be contacted to find out whether he wants to remain emeritus or resign.

Official positions:

- Andy has resigned as Art Grants Coordinator. Oscar "O Man" Yong has stepped in. Mungo is the liaison.
- BuddyK is the Gate and Parking liaison.
- Miss Fidget is the Theme Camp, tickets, BPE, and GUD liaison.
- Melly is the Participation Station, drumming, Lamplighters, Sound Patrol, PC, and fire conclave liaison as well as the collector of post-burn reports from reserve ticket recipients.
- Dave is the Rangers liaison.
- Blue is the DPW liaison.
- Lizard is the Fire Team liaison.
- Pony effigy liaison?
- Mary is the hardship tickets, stage, and early entry liaison.

Review of finances:

- \$249,000 in assets. \$169,000 in savings/money market, remainder in checking.
- Spring expenses were about \$31,000 (\$5500 under budget)
- Fall expenses were \$9500 under the projected \$35,000 budget.
- Receipt deadline needs to be added to the Art Grant contract.
- Need better review of expense reports, line items need to correlate. Google Docs can be used to get itemized expenses into a spreadsheet.
- Itemized budget approval from PC meetings should be sent to Treasurer to pair with expense reports.

Legally required paperwork:

- The ticket disclaimer was added to Google Docs and needs to be added to the web site.
- Tickets: Is Adobe signature capture an option for the gate? Is there a need to store ticket forms on line? Can these tasks be crowd sourced?
- The public non-profit paperwork (IRS 990-EZ) will continue to be made available on the website once filed.

Review of asset distribution:

- Add this to every retreat agenda.
- Currently the articles of incorporation and Maryland State law state that assets must go to another non-profit.
- Most recent designees discussed are Artomatic and BRAF.

Archiving and document storage:

- We have two basic needs:
 - Storing active documents.
 - Archive old documents.
- Google docs is kinda working right now, but is not a good archival tool because we have no backups.
- We can task a volunteer through the PONY want ads forum. Need someone to explore options and make recommendations. We are willing to pay for online document storage, if it's a better choice.

MASH Camp funding and organization:

- Consulting with our insurance vendor did not uncover any liability issues with the policy.
- Funding and coordination are PC decisions, not the Board's.

Vet sign off:

- Need a formal procedure written up.
- Melly to work with Fritz to develop a pre- and post-event check list. These need to be assessed before paying the Vets.

Fire damage:

- Vets declined our offer (made by Buddy after the event) to pay for damages because there was no damage to the Vets' property.
- Examination of on site art projects: re-review with two sign offs, the design and the final realization before the burn.
- Art Grant change: add a "you will forfeit grant funds for modifying the design in such a way that makes it unsafe to burn."
- We will implement a checklist and some sort of approval badge (ceremonial/burnable) for all burning art projects and develop a list of acceptable materials that can be used, and identify those that can't.

Old business:

- Newcomer (burners, not board members) orientation, can this be crowdsourced?
- Internships: We currently don't have the capability to take this on, but will remain open to internships for individuals who can do set-up work.
- A sticky can be added to Help Wanted section of the PONY for community service (as an official non-profit, individuals can perform required community service hours for school or other situations).
- GUD review: Add versioning. Add more detail to section 5 for how the event works and the new organizational diagrams. Header section for high level information about the community.

Burning Man affiliation:

- Is there a contract?
- It would be useful to be present in SF for the Regional Summit to get our event related interests in focus. It may be worth it to subsidize travel for one member annually.
- Need for a regional summit vs the leadership summit.
- Need to collaborate with other regional events.
- If a director attends another regional event that conflicts with PDF (or a BOD meeting), it should not count as an absence.
- Can we start/create a regional event leadership list-serve or other networking tool?

Call with Michael Cukor, Esq.

We consulted with Michael Cukor on topics including modes of legal counsel, the PDF logo and trademarks, ticket waiver text, and fire safety protocols.

- We discussed several options for obtaining legal counsel including a volunteer pool of lawyers.
- Clarify what we need to do with regard to logos and trademarks. We probably don't need a lawyer for this.
- The ticket waiver should be updated to Burning Man standards.
- Fire safety should be reviewed, including the number of firefighters on site.

Sound policy review

Many options and alternatives were discussed. We settled on a midnight turn off, but left it to the community to propose by a certain deadline a different policy that would nevertheless be effective and follow a specific set of criteria.

Team Building:

The frequency and format of the meetings was discussed. Adding more face to face meetings would be more productive.

Vision survey:

- If we have a vision, we can make better decisions, rather than just reacting.

- If we're "Not Burning Man", then what are we?
- There seems to be too much of "everyone for themselves". How do we change that?
- Need to create a mission and a vision together. Avoid burnout of volunteers.
- Lauren to take ownership of the survey results, condense it all down. ETA for draft, 3/1 to be kept in Google Docs.
- How to take this to the wider community? Maya to assemble questions on list.
- Establish "PDF Principles". Put out a community wide on line survey for this and other questions.

Communication:

- Positive goal, interest at outset.
- Does it have to be email? Is there a better format?
- How do we make each other feel heard?

Other:

- Have each BOD member post a month end report on nonprofit list, even if it's minimal. Archive these to Google Docs.
- Should we have a monthly call/video conference? We should all feel comfortable picking up a phone and talking to each other.
- The "Growth Edge" to be addressed. Prioritize important things over urgent things. BOD tends to get bogged down in daily business.
- Focused policies based on clarity. Community should know where PDF, Inc stands.

Finances and Land Strategy

Obtaining a realtor:

- Outsource this or hire a member of the community? A Burner would be ideal. We will need to screen the person regardless.

Other items for land search:

- Use the PONY Help Wanted section to recruit a land search coordinator/project manager and committee.
- We need to develop the job description for this point person and how they are to interact with the Board.
- We are at the point where a land search requires professionals because the stakes are getting higher.
- Board should take authority to get this under way immediately.
- Assemble the master punch list for land criteria and all concerns into a phone call or meeting agenda.
- Consolidate all our current and past information into Google Docs.

Community Outreach and External Art Grants

- Establish basic criteria for any external grant or organization we might block grant.
- What are the geographic limitations? Are there any?
- Establish a grant process.
- How should this be managed? Board or wider committee drawn from the community.

Board PR and Image Management

- Leverage web site redesign.
- Should we create additional publications or improvement to current ones?
- Leverage social media.
- Increased image and visibility at Burns.

Web Site Content and Wishlisting

- What should be on the site? Legally prudent and ideally, what is most helpful.
- What should be removed?
- Brainstorming/wishlisting.
- Criteria for "web helpers" (non-coordinator positions) and contact info for helpers.

Specific pages needed:

- Event dates.
- Ticket dates and other info (pricing, number, policies, etc...).
- Art Grants.
- Volunteering.
- Map/directions.
- Site location (VnVMC) map.
- Theme camps.
- GUD, as a linked document, not as site copy.
- Legal information and forms/filings.
- Annual report(s).
- Board.
- About/FAQ.
- History (including effigy photo history.)
- WWW
- 10 Principles.
- BPE
- PONY
- PC
- Specific information for the immediate upcoming event.
- Sign ups.
- All policies.
- Dept pages.
- General page for art.
- Other resources: Twitter, FB, fan pages, etc.

Remove:

- Redundant information.
- Obsolete, out of date information.

Wish list:

- Front page "ticker tape"
- Volunteer function with e-mailed job duty descriptions and reminders.
- Consistent non-personal e-mail contact list.
- Generic mouse over tips/descriptions.
- Glossary.
- Targeted user views, newcomers and experienced participants.
- Mobile friendly content, especially for content applicable to participants travelling to the event.

Web helpers overview:

- They need to be willing and available as web content may need to change on the fly.
- Possible Web Coordinator position with an associated reserve ticket. Will need project management skills.
- How will we contact these resources? Use the PONY Help Wanted section.