

Beltane Fire Society Board Meeting Minutes

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Date and Time: | Monday 18th December 2023, 7pm - 9pm |
| Location: | Beltonia, and dial in option on invitation |
| Invited: | All Board members and Trustee Assistant, Blues, DM, S&R Officer and Bradley McArthur |
| Present: | C'tri Goudie, Sophie McCarthy, Sammi Searle, Mailis Marty, Stew Wilson Mairi McKay, Tom Watton, Lisa Maher Bradley McArthur |

| Item | Time | Details | Item Lead |
|--|-------|---|--|
| 1. Welcome | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies Andy Tucker presents his apologies Declarations of interest regarding any agenda items N/A | ALL ALL |
| 2. Review of minutes and action points | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision: approval of previous minutes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes from 27/11/23 Approved Approve B+B & Contractor Debrief Notes Rolled on to next month Update: Review any previous action points Relevant points and discussion added to the minutes below. SM has been out of action due to life circumstances | ALL ALL |
| 3. Operations Issues <i>[Operations]</i> | 19:23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Festival Committee Update Nothing to update. Committee is off duty save for Tamsyn Ball who continues to field emails. Someone else has expressed interest in joining. Hurrah! MM wonders about asking a specific person to join, since they have been assisting in the same capacity already. Check in and assemble committee for imbolc/beltane season Blues Update Not doing much, hibernating, current Blues deciding whether or not to take a break. Possible plans about bolstering Blue ranks but not at present. | SS, SM & MM BLUES |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---------------------|
| | | <p>Court feedback from some of the community has had a negative impact, group expectations need to be managed.</p> <p>For now, so long as it's being kept in people's thoughts for things like GO meetings / GO weekends.</p> <p>Several points are raised about approaches, including a Court Open day. No one size fits all.</p> <p>Board available to support Blues in this.</p> <p>Mabon was a good example of a court-led solution to difficulties with finding a venue. SS suggests something a court member mentioned about having a budget for court-hosted events, to be included in the court-support pack.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Volunteer Feedback Survey Samhuinn 23 <p>We need a proper chat about if this is a good idea or not. We're not getting the engagement to justify it.</p> <p>Do we need to revisit the survey? Opinions from the community are mixed.</p> <p>Some low answers on "do the board have BFS interests at heart?" which may be attributable to not understanding the board.</p> <p>SS: As an action, review the survey's shape, purpose, and such before Beltane?</p> <p>MM: yes</p> <p>TW: A key learnings file in the GO drive / handbook, based on the survey and other such things?</p> <p>SS: Having a direct line for membership to reach out to us after the festival is very good and we should continue.</p> <p>LM: Was going to ask - are the surveys anonymous?</p> <p>MM: By default, yes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small Claims Court <p>TW: as a SCVO member we get 2 free hours of legal advice.</p> <p>SS: So with that in mind, do we proceed with that? Would also like to be paired with another trustee whilst actioning if so.</p> <p>TW: To be clear, think we have good case</p> <p>SS: We can also take some (SOME) time to think about this before we action it.</p> | <p>MM</p> <p>SS</p> |
|--|--|---|---------------------|

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---------------------|
| | | <p>CG: If we make a slack vote, we should vote now to approve on that now.</p> <p>VOTE in favour of following through on a decision made on slack 5 aye, 0 no</p> <p>LM: identifying and claiming damages is really hard normally, and the repercussions if they are able to arrange a blacklist of the society amongst other venues in the city.</p> <p>TW: we've invoices from the coach company, and a record of my time spent and hours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yule <p>Thursday! Charteris! Not entirely sure what else needs doing but jobs and such are divided up all ready.</p> <p>TW: I'll get labels and such. We have high-risk concerns from nut allergies.</p> <p>Everyone please bring nice /green things</p> <p>ACTION - advertise as nut free event</p> <p>CG: Will there be open-mic?</p> <p>SS: Everything we need for open-mic and catering is supplied. In terms of vetting content, all the content so far is songs and stories and we're not expecting repeat issues.</p> <p>MM: Can we have the gong back again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blether <p>Scheduled for next year 6th of Jan, also in the charteris centre. Focus will be "production" groups, like Tech Stewards etc...</p> <p>I'll also ensure that I reach out to anyone who's solo-GO'd in the last festival.</p> <p>SM: The day before my birthday, yay!</p> <p>MMcK: Just to raise the topic of Doing Keening Correctly, I don't think this is necessarily Blether appropriate - we'd like to do that chats with involved individuals instead.</p> <p>Broad agreement.</p> <p>SM: Perhaps the GO weekend instead?</p> | <p>SS</p> <p>SS</p> |
|--|--|---|---------------------|

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | <p>SS: Yes, it was a thought raised in the Imbolc planning meeting recently.</p> <p>MM: Samhuinn is a time where it's more popular, whereas at Beltane it should be constrained to the MQ & White. We should consider not spending too much time on it at Beltane.</p> <p>SS: Even if we don't fully address it, having a space at the GO Weekend for talking about mental health and emotional wellbeing, and when things are or are not appropriate.</p> <p>MMcK - just wanted to highlight that I'm glad this has been decided upon as not for the Blether, but it might be nice to have something for upcoming GOs available collated from previous groups. I think it would be important to get that before Beltane, rather than Samhuinn.</p> <p>ACTION: Have a plan for keening chat/collated info before Beltane.</p> <p>TW: Check in with Blues etc... Before keening sessions is important and helps ensure people are prepared. Unprepared keening practices are where things can go wrong.</p> <p>LM: Can I get a quick recap on Keening</p> <p>MMcK: *gives a recap*</p> <p>LM: Do we also have mental health first aiders?</p> <p>MM: Some volunteers are, but we don't have dedicated mental health first-aiders</p> <p>LM: Getting people set up on those courses is relatively quick and easy, and might be worth looking into, especially if the charity can support training those individuals.</p> <p>ACTION: Plan about this concept</p> <p>SM: Making this a common point of GO weekends regardless of the festival might be good. Also having a space where people can feed into this conversation, and talk about Keening etc... would be helpful for people who are new, and whose only experience is seeing it and thinking "oh that looks cool" without understanding the difference between Keening and Cathartic Screaming. Would be good if we make space for more experienced members of the society to share about keening with newer members etc... without making it come from GOs only, who haven't only done that.</p> | |
|--|--|---|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | <p>MM: When do we want to have the keening chat?</p> <p>ACTION: Decide on a plan for this before Beltane, maybe a slack channel for ideas yeeting.</p> <p>MMcK: yes, could be led by blues with S&R support</p> <p>SS: I would like to bring us back to the matter at hand, namely the production blether. How do we want to organise this? One of the things that we really want to address is the solo-GOing rule for production groups.</p> <p>LM: Yes ideally we should make a rule and stick to it, even when it's inconvenient</p> <p>SW: The difficulty here is that the events we're here to organise won't happen if we don't have stewards / production support people. Idk if it's still true but there used to be a minimum requirement of BFS provided stewards without which the event cannot legally continue.</p> <p>SM: Just a note that we can amend rules when they no longer serve us - we should therefore change the rule instead of breaking the rule.</p> <p>BMcA: idk if we need a separate rule, but a blanket rule of "the idea is 2+ GOs, there may be exceptional circumstances that allows for other numbers based on the intensity of the group and other factors" - basically building the case-by-case nature of the rule into the rule. So long as when you make that decision, ensure there's a record of it and the reasoning behind it.</p> <p>TW: for the volunteer roles where you're leading a group (any more than 5 people) that should be the way. We've got to have people to look after each other in groups. And if we don't get a stewarding GO, the main concern is that there are numbers, and contractors can make up leadership positions if need be. Which is obviously not the preferred solution</p> <p>LM: From an outside perspective, totally agree with TW, but you need more than one GO in case of someone falling down dead. Genuinely aware of someone who got hit by a bus and it took out a planned group.</p> <p>MMcK: We need to reconcile the above agreement with the fact that without volunteers in those positions, we can't run the festival.</p> <p>TW: Or need to restructure groups to meet the requirements we have.</p> | |
|--|--|---|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | | <p>SS: I feel this is discussion that could be had at the blether itself, if Blues/Board can be present on the day and facilitate discussions</p> <p>ALL: agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Imbolc 24 <p>SS: MQ Alix has a plan for skill sharing workshops shared over a long weekend. A planning meeting for this has already taken place. Plans are ongoing, need to have a chat with TW about venues etc... but it's happening. And if we pull it off, it'll be amazing. It will require planning and thought - if you have capacity to chip in it would be very welcome.</p> <p>MM: should we rope in our Yule helpers and festival committee?</p> <p>SS: Yes, already underway. We've had extra interest in assistance after the newsletter.</p> <p>Much rejoicing</p> <p>ACTION - all to continue planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Beltane 24 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Date Skeleton</i> <p>GM Shoutout going out this week, deadline 12th of Jan GO Selection being planned for the 30th of Jan</p> <p>MM happy to take point on GO weekend with support from SS and SM</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <i>Afterparty</i> <p>Sorted, expecting proper confirmation in the new year</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. <i>Court Welcome Info from Board</i> <p>MM: No update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preparations for Samhuinn'24 <p>MM: What I want to have organised before Beltane starts is the Open Meeting dates. Every bit of feedback was that the run-up was too short, so we want to try dealing with the Fringe. If we go early, we can start contacting them early. Same with drum practice.</p> <p>Digital content to work in place of the open meeting might be really helpful if we want to aim for a hybrid model, especially if we can work with potential GOs before selections are made. (Specific reference made to the Goblin BE 23 song)</p> <p>SM: for context, this year's samhuinn was the 2nd of sept. GO weekend was the last weekend of august.</p> <p>TW: The earlier into August you take things, the fewer people you will have for all of it. If we can go for the 1st of sept open meeting, but if we move it any earlier then</p> | <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>SS</p> <p>MM</p> <p>MM</p> |
|--|--|--|---|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--------------|
| | | <p>you'll clash with some of the southern festivals. It is difficult (And always has been) just because of the city we're in.</p> <p>SM: Same boat as TW, when we're having blethers about production groups, it feels counter-productive to put things into a timeframe where our production professionals will be working through the fringe.</p> <p>CG: We should be encouraging simpler group concepts for Samhuinn, not expanding the run-up. ALL - agreement</p> <p>SS: The two points to make here is that knowing dates in advance as far as can be reasonably expected is excellent and we can still strive towards that in the here and now. Also we need to really reaffirm that Samhuinn is a different event from Beltane.</p> <p>MMcK: We want to avoid events growing arms and legs and exhausting ourselves, see Lughnasadh, Yule, Imbolc - and be careful with all of them.</p> <p>MM: Mostly lets avoid making things stressful for the next set of trustees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library Chat <p>MM: There is a library in falkirk who asked if "we" could come and have a talk to their members about the festival. We think this would be lovely, and are aiming to have this happen in May. Providing a general overview of the celtic festivals, what BFS is, what the roles are, a bit of the history of the locations etc...</p> <p>MM: Is asking if there would be a cost for the talk, or travel expenses. My instinct is "if we can help with travel expenses that would be great</p> <p>CG: Between us and the library, we should ensure no volunteers are out of pocket. We should ask for assistance towards travel expenses, and any donations from their members is welcome, but not required.</p> <p>TW: Can we offer them a group discount to the festival?</p> <p>** Everyone Likes This **</p> <p>MM to respond</p> | MM |
| 4. Governance Issues <i>[Governance]</i> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beltonia Leaks Already covered, Tom has been up the roof. Will monitor how it goes • Safeguarding and Resolutions | SS SS |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--------------|
| | | <p>1. Welcome Lisa!</p> <p>** Lisa is welcome**</p> <p>LM: A couple extra things that we wanted to bring up with the board. Some general ideas we wanted sanity checks on (not just a board thing) The two specifics are the conversations about the 3 year cut off for any complaints. Because presently there is a backlog and some of it is more than 3 years old, SS and LM felt that this was a comfortable cutoff after which it's not practical to investigate anymore. Coincides with the membership lapsing, is a logical number. After a certain point you're just bringing up old trauma.</p> <p>LM: Secondly, if someone is to email in, safeguarding/resolutions@ we will reach back out to them. If we don't hear back from them in 6 months, are the board happy to consider that as a paused / archived for the sake of those involved.</p> <p>CG: I have concerns about a fixed statute of limitations and people getting away with things by keeping their victims silenced.</p> <p>LM: The way I'm viewing this, that timer starts from when the complaint is opened, this specifically relates to really old cases and getting those closed off. It's more about closing off dead things.</p> <p>SM: When that gets written up, can that be made explicitly clear when it gets written into policy? If that's not recorded clearly I worry it will be perceived as such.</p> <p>TW: At the moment we are currently advertising that we have a statute of limitation of 2 years. By and large if it's a trivial matter we expect it to be sorted in 6 months.</p> <p>McK - happy that the safeguarding is moving in this direction</p> | |
| 5. Finance & Income Generation <i>[Governance]</i> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treasurer Update <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Update Money roughly even after Samhuinn Proper reports proving this to come soon. Outstanding invoice Business Stream haven't got our exemption properly logged (We think) and are seeking payment for an invoice. TW and CG have reached out separately to try and get that resolved. | CG SS |
| 6. Community Issues <i>[Board only]</i> | | [REDACTED] | ALL |
| 7. Board Project Progress | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity and Inclusion Update | SM |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|
| [Strategy/Operations] | | <p>1. EDI training Sophie to give update via slack before end of year</p> <p>2. Accessibility Sophie to give update via slack before end of year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fringe by the Sea/Lughnasagh TW: They're very keen for something fire/drums/torch related. Scale to be determined. Looking positive, will involve the north berwick community and tie in their traditions, and opportunity for us to do cool things. The North Berwick Law race where they run up the hill and back from the harbour is a tradition from the first wednesday in august. Really cool community tradition and we'd like to factor that in. <p>CG: what about the torchlit procession?</p> <p>TW: After this meeting I'll be sending out The Information now that I have it all, after a meeting today. Tech and Torchies are about to be caught up, expecting the money at the end of the week, and will cover much of our annual rigging expenses.</p> <p>Get your Torchlit procession tickets!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee Newsletter and Minute Updates SS: Went down really well. Have already created a template for the second and preparing for that. Translation Projects SS: Gonna roll that on until Andy can talk about it | <p>SS</p> <p>SS</p> <p>AT</p> |
| 8. AOB | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-opting SS: Exciting! Not sure how to lead this section <p>CG: Let's trustees and Brad each go away and decide if it's right for us respectively and then if we both are in favour of it, we can take it from there with a proper voted and minuted decision in a one-point meeting.</p> <p>SS: Excellent</p> | SS |
| 9. Close of Meeting | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm date of next meeting 15th of January | ALL |

Summary of Agreed Actions from Meeting on 18/12/23

| | | |
|--|-----|------|
| Confirm the 15th January for next Board Meeting agreed | ALL | ASAP |
| Board to vote on whether to proceed with REDACTED by vote on Slack | ALL | ASAP |

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Select Samhuinn'24 GO w/e and Open Meeting Dates | ALL | Before next meeting |
| Pursue co-opting alongside Brad | ALL | Before next meeting |
| As an action, review the volunteer feedback survey's shape, purpose, and such before Beltane | ALL | ongoing |
| Organise logistics of blether in January | ALL | Before 6th Jan |
| Imbolc:continue planning | ALL | ongoing |
| Have a plan for keening chat/collated info before Beltane. | ALL led by Blues | Before beltane |
| Check in and assemble committee for imbolc/beltane season | Mailis Sammi Sophie | Before next meeting |
| Build a welcome pack for court members from the Board MM & SW will aim to have something in place for January to share with other trustees and Blues. SS can provide further info too. | Stew & Mailis (info from Sammi) | Rolling - MM to pick this up after survey |
| See whether leak issue resolves and contact landlord if required | Tom | ongoing |
| SS to post up AGM minutes from 2023 AGM | Sammi | ongoing |
| Contact solo GOs over blether | Sammi | Before blether! |
| Share the B/B/Contractor debrief notes it with everyone who isn't Sara Thomas Needs actioned, roll on | Sammi | ASAP |
| Investigate tiered donations for afterparty tickets for the future Needs actioned, roll on | Sammi | Before Beltane |
| yule - advertise as nut free event | Sammi | Before yule |
| Work on setting up EDI committee Roll on | Sammi and Sophie | Once training is received |
| Complete collation of volunteer survey info and send to GOs and Board | Mailis | asap |
| MM to collate info for the Blues and send through Blue nominations sent, rest pending completion of survey analysis | Mailis | asap |
| MM will send Samhuinn feedback to the relevant people for discussion Ready to send | Mailis | Asap |
| Confirm Samhuinn '24 dates and begin venue scouting | Mailis | ongoing |
| Respond to library request | Mailis | ongoing |
| Post Samhuinn meeting to formally begin redrafting AoA's Sophie to pick this up | Sophie | ongoing |
| Set up EDI training roundtable. Skipped / roll on | Sophie | Sophie to give update via slack |

| | | |
|---|------------------|--|
| | | before end of year |
| Have a chat with Gabby about what her plan for the busk <i>would be</i> . Skipped / roll on | Sophie | asap |
| Chat with Tom about updating the AoAs that were voted through Skipped / roll on | Sophie | Before 6/11/23 |
| SM to chase TW for council funding options post festival Skipped / roll on | Sophie | After Samhuinn |
| Look into redrafting accessibility statement Skipped / roll on | Sophie | Sophie to give update via slack before end of year |
| Implement Court & Hardship funding for Samhuinn Partially done, writing things into a policy document is to be done after Samhuinn with SM Roll on | C'tri & Sophie | After Samhuinn |
| TW and CG have reached out separately to try and get Business Stream invoice resolved. | C'tri & Tom | asap |
| Liaise with Tom on Soldo cards Soldo is now to be implemented post Samhuinn, no fraud actioned this month. Roll on | C'tri | After Samhuinn |
| Reduce merch stock info on Open Meeting count <i>MM to help with the inventory post Samhuinn</i> January task / next open meeting | C'tri and Mailis | After Samhuinn |
| Send Beltane Steward GOs feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could not find feedback from Beltane. - Feedback and relevant documents created by Sarah Barr to be located/collated to be sent ahead of Beltane'24 SW found feedback, polishing in progress. | Mailis & Stew | After Samhuinn |
| AT to take lead with translation project once SS has forwarded email Needs further discussion | Andy | Before next meeting |