Beltane Fire Society Board Meeting Minutes

Date and Time:	Monday 11th March 2024, 7pm - 9pm
Location:	Beltonia, and dial in option on invitation
Invited:	All Board members, Blues, Contractors
Present:	Sammi Searle, C'tri Goudie, Mailis Marty, Ella Humphries, Lisa Maher, Brad McArthur, Sophie McCarthy, Steve Glover, Rob Thorburn, Tom Watton

Item	Time	Details	Item Lead
1. Welcome		SS: Thanks to everyone for making time, recognise it's a super busy month. Figured whilst contractors are actively working, it would be worth slinging an invite for a team-wide update. Sound good? [thumbs up from all] Apologies From Stew wilson, and Sara Thomas, and Mairi McKay, Luca Gallici Declarations of interest regarding any agenda items N/A	ALL
2. Review of minutes and action points		 Decision: approval of previous minutes Minutes from 12/02/24 Vote - all in favour, no abs Minutes from 26/02/24 Vote - 4 in favour, one abs Update: Review any previous action points 	ALL
3. Operations Issues [Operations]	19:23	Blues Update SG: Slightly out of the loop but when I checked in earlier no one had any updates to relay or questions that needed answers. SS: I have a quick thing for the Blues. I was chatting to a Tech GO earlier at Beltonia, and they mentioned a potential developing issue with a group tech needing more tech support members	BLUES

ACTION: Blues/Contractors to check in with tech requirements

SS: A'ight brilliant, thanks for that Blues/contractors.

Mailis will be in touch to discuss don't screw the crew rules surrounding longer-term volunteers (like MQ, Blues, Trustees)

Contractor Updates

SS: any updates or things you want to pass on?

LM: none from me

SS: In terms of the Beltane trips, we'll let you know once the logistics are nailed down.

TW: Thanks to Stew for lending tripod for the open meeting. Ticket sales wise and management process: we've sold 2115 tickets, which is about £29k of income. They've not been on sale a month yet, and last time we were on a Tuesday we were only at 500 sales by this point. Still not easy to project final sales, I think 6, 6.5 is realistic. We budgeted around 5k sales and still having a surplus, so looking quite realistic.

In terms of EPOG, we had a very successful meeting. The safety advisory group from the council were happy with one meeting and said they didn't require a second.

In terms of the hill, we had some close work with Friends of Calton Hill to do cleaning of the drainage gullies, and it's really nice that there's a closer bond there, and has enabled us to better time the re-turfing.

Chats about getting Hawthorn and Blackthorn in common break-in points, and the council is up for that, so that's going to happen around winter. Trying to get them to let us know when/ if they're planning tree plantings so they can be considerate of our usage of the space.

SS: can you keep me updated on tree planting as that's something I'm interesting in projectwise as a trustee

TW: yup

RT: In terms of Beltane, we have either got everyone in place, or have strong proposals.

There's some chat about charcoal props for the Acropolis which I plan a trial run of on Sunday.

EH: Stewards, lots of new faces. That's a good place to start from at this point in the timeline, not super worried. We did some workshops with more people on Sunday, collaboration with Tech went really well.

Open days at Beltonia are a bit hit and miss, mostly miss now. None of the projects are necessary, everything is made from last time. Alan Howse has a mentee whom he's teaching metalworking too, which is going great. TW/RT/EH/LM/ GS Might need some assistance with getting things on FB.

MM: If it's just getting info on the beltane share / updates for members, I can just throw that up there.

SS: I want to turn up to those but there's not been a good time vet.

Done? Huzzah!

1. GO meetings

CG going tomorrow

2. GRS

TW to get an idea of what groups still need covering and will relay that back to trustees.

3. Maipole update

MM: Maipole requests assistance with recruitment MM to communicate advice around costume and gender around recruitment

Might just offer them the Scottish Storytelling Centre as a Getting Ready Space.

If we do give them that, can we cover that? It's £100 and they're already paying for flights and accommodation. .

SS: I think we'll take that conversation onto slack and ensure our decision there gets minuted

SM: I love that idea, all the warm feels. From safety consideration there's already a bit of handholding and I worry that recruiting from the audience might tip that over from manageable to unmanageable. If that tipping point can be calculated and avoided. I don't want this to grow arms and leas.

TW: Agreed, in terms of insurance and safer spaces, I think it is possible, but it is a big commitment. It might be that we clear the space for the procession, but so long as it's in a good spirit of collaboration that can work.

ACTION: Chat between them, MM, a Blue, and Tom, on the topic of audience involvement vs interaction with the procession.

To happen at the GO meeting tomorrow/ next week.

TW: Think it's important that we get this right, and learn their expectations and capacity for flexibility. Might even be worth having one meeting that just focuses on this one issue.

MM: I've asked Mairi and Luca to check on them at the first walkthrough.

SS: Do they need a translator?

SS

ALL

MM

MM: No, but a soft accent and patience might be necessary.

SS: Worth making an action to have a chat between Safeguarding, Maipole, and MM about how to get the equivalent of the disclosure process..
LM: that's going on my to do list.

4. merch/art sales

CG: last meeting we said we should funnel this to her and she could monetise the posters.

SS: can we check about the funneling of that?

TW: I think she has a plan to sell artwork after the festival is done, but might not be prepared for a direct connection to the size of our international audience.

TW: To catch up with Gabby and Hester about this

5. Reds crash mat update

TW: They've gone away to think about this but haven't come back to us on this

Decide and minute on reds subsidy amount

CG: where are we at with this?

TW: Nothing has been agreed on yet. If FLAPS are happy to volunteer on the night, this might be part of a larger donation to them as part of their mission statement. If a consent workshop emerges from that then we'll bring that back to discussion.

CG: thanks, I feel caught up on this.

comps

TW: Am I okay to issue comps out to this for the ukrainian centre, fabric store, and drum central, as we've done for years and years?

ALL: yes go ahead.

6. Court comps

Court member has requested comp tickets for visiting family.

ACTION: CG to get in touch with an update, explaining that we want to implement that properly and sustainably. In the meanwhile, these tickets are ring-fenced.

ACTION: make a decision around court comps

7. Bongo Usage

CG: Bongo situation, beatroots aren't fully utilising the space as they only rehearse there on Sundays, leaving the wednesday slot open.

CG: To take the costs to GO meeting tomorrow for soundsphere, and ask how the Beasties are using it on a wednesday.

TW/BLUES: touch space with Court. Even if other drum crews aren't using it, it could be of use for Court for stage rehearsals and such.

Board to discuss drum group subsidies outside this meeting and minute results.

Preparations for Samhuinn 24 Any updates

MM: call Out of the Blue about Open Meeting

ACTION: All trustees with time, assist Mailis with finding Open Meeting venue for Samhuinn 2024

2. Caves - afterparty

CG/TW: done, waiting for invoice to come through to pay

• AGM 24

SS: I can check back in with the charteris as I have that pencilled and if we're all happy to book that I can go ahead then? I think it's in the 200 range, but I'll check back in with you.

ALL - happy to go ahead with booking that for June 29th

• Student requests

SM: Basically I had 4 students contact me before the open meeting, they were invited to the public open meeting. SM has asked the students to CC her in and has made a spreadsheet tracker to try and nail this down. For the most part it feels under control. I checked in with the four students, but haven't heard back yet.

I've sent an email to the extras to be like "someone will be in contact, but please keep us as trustees in the loop", and that's all I've done so far.

The whole thing has indicated that we need a more robust policy for how we interact with researchers. It's not something that will go away. Having a "Press Kit" for students would be helpful, and make it feel more manageable. That would be my recommendation, to help the next set of trustees.

SS: So this is a situation with two sides to manage 1. What do we do with the current students who are outside of that channel?

2. Policy - which I agree, I think this is a good move.

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	SM: I 'II make a slack thread and solicit ideas from people for a press kit for students policy SS: Correct me if I'm wrong, there are 3 students still needing to be organised? SM: confirms yes SS: what do you need for these last three? SM: I think an email that says thanks for getting in touch, and explaining the delay. Being pre-open meeting made those 4 easier. SS: Anyone have capacity? CG & MM both raise their hands. SS: awesome, that can be arranged through slack and ye, and to underline, policy for this is a great idea.	
4. Governance Issues [Governance]	Trustee Assistant MM: to contact JG SS: other T.A have taken a step back as GOing Continuity idea SS: This is something I'd like to expand on, but I think we roll on until there's more time and take it out of this meeting.	ALL
5. Finance & Income Generation [Governance]	Beltane Budget TW: Real quickly, everything's coming together, prices are coming in within speculation. We're on target, ticket sales are looking well. We're looking at a surplus of about 13-14k for the festival. Importance of Fringe by the sea and Samhuinn run, to ensure we hit our target of £25k for our core expenses. CG has reviewed the budget ,and can probably comment. CG ACTION - to figure out how much we spend on core expenses in a year.	TW
	 Treasurer Update CG: have almost completed these for Feb CG: to finalise Feb accounts 	CG
	• Gas usage in december CG: it was double what we paid last year, any ideas? TW: we fixed the boiler, so costs are up. CG: that would do it!	CG
	Financial Assistance Policy	
	Ticket sales Already covered, going well.	TW
	 Melting pot SS: I had a mysterious pair of invoices come to my email from them which don't match with any trustee bookings. BM: This was No Joy! Please forward us the invoice 	SS

	CG: I'll do that	
6. Board Project Progress [Strategy/Operations]	Diversity and Inclusion Update 1. EDI training SS: I have arranged to talk to SM and BA on thursday 2. Accessibility	SM
	SS: same Fringe by the Sea/Lughnasagh 24 TW: Got a map coming together, things are looking good. I want to start a steering group that might be fortnightly before GO meetings, to ensure that stays on course. TW: to start a steering group and keep trustees in the loop on this	TW
	• Policy audit SS: Brad and I are beginning a policy audit, whoever wants to be involved, we're going to start an audit of our policies and make sure we've not lost things that should be there, what with the Shared Drive migration, and the lack of continuity between this board and the board of 2 years ago. SS/SM/BA to meet on thursday	SS
	 Newsletter SS: A new board newsletter is coming together, if you have things you want to add, send them to me. TW: some Fringe by the Sea copy? SS: good shout. 	SS
7. Community Issues [Board only]	[REDACTED UPDATES]	ALL
	Afterwards:	
	BM: Community related: I probably just want it formally minuted of a concern I want to raise. There was a conversation over the fact that we legally do have a duty of care for events that are community run events? I have huge concerns about that, because at these events there will be substances, etc which would jeopardise many trustees' ability to be a trustee and their careers.	
	CG: [explains things] ((explanation here added after the meeting)): From recollection of how it was communicated to me, but not having seen the advice first hand - this was in response to a specific complaint being investigated by the safeguarding team when I became a trustee.	
	We sought legal advice in general and were advised that we absolutely could investigate occurrences outside of specifically organised rehearsals and events. I don't believe it was ever communicated to me that trustees were responsible for anything outside of specifically organised rehearsals and events.	

The advice was very much centred on the admissibility of evidence from outside of BFS events, for the purposes of properly pursuing a complaint. ((end of after-meeting backfill))

SS: so to summarise, we're not obligated to police these events, but are empowered to investigate them?

CG: yes

BM: part of my concern was because I'm aware of the people that were involved, and their communication style. I think seeing what was said by the professionals would be very helpful, especially because we've had the previous conflicting advice.

In some ways the previous mindset made sense from empowering the board to set boundaries about what they investigate, and what they're *required* to investigate.

I think getting that understanding then being really clear with BFS members is the way forward, and how we can communicate safeguarding to members, and how we explain the difference between an organised After Party that we've organised vs an after after - and communicate when the board will investigate, vs when it might not.

LM: I can share the legal rules for England, and will need to check with the rules in Scotland. There are grey areas, and in BFS it's greyer than usual.

If you are working under the insurance, trustees are legally responsible for anything that happens under that time. If it's not being covered, like an after after after then legally we do not have a responsibility. Ethically and morally, very different but purely on a legal standing, we don't

Ethically and morally we have a duty of care, and ability to look into things that are outside of BFS time. From my PoV which is very black and white (and I will double check), is it BFS insurance vs is it not.

SS: if it's that clear, that would be great!!

LM: I would say that we do have a duty of care and that whilst I've been on board we've been investigating both in BFS time, the grey area, and outside.

SS: I'm aware that we are getting over time here, so I would make this an action to get this researched and cleared up outside of this meeting and get the result minuted at the next one. Happy with this?

ALL: happy with this

	SS: Awesome! We did it! [a group hug occurs over web-cams, many fingers crowding the lens]	
8. AOB	N/A	
9. Close of Meeting	• Confirm date of next meeting SS: April? Aaaahh time. I think next month will be the 15th of Apr, so pencil that in. MM: Is that between walkthroughs? TW: Yeah, sounds like a good time. SS: Yeah. Don't feel like we're in need of fortnightly meetings at this point, ye? [thumbs up] SM: how about we pencil in fortnightly just in case? SS: Agreed, let us all live in fear of the emergency disaster meeting. Let's pencil in the 25th of march and we'll take a temperature check in the week before I'm in favour of people being able to breathe.	ALL