

**Oregon Lavender Association Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, October 6, 2015 7:00 -9:00 PM**

**Members present:** Chris Mulder, Carol Tannenbaum, Bonnie Rinaldi, Michael Lemmers, Dan Callen, Karalee Mitro, Melissa Van Hevelingen and Gene Schmidt

**Members absent:** Marilyn Kosel

**Board Meeting Minutes, September 8, 2015:** Minutes were unanimously approved by the board as written.

**Financial Update:** Michael explained why the 2015 photo contest expenses exceeded the income generated. Chris explained that the difference was partly due to the pre-determined prize money amounts that were used from last year's contest and also that there were fees added when the photographers paid the contest entry fee with their credit card, online. One check went to the wrong address and was returned. The idea is to break even or make a small profit on the photo contest; the thought is that contestants will continue to enter throughout the year and those monies will be added to the income. A bill was received from Mark Wilson, Seven Oaks Designs, for the additional website work that was requested regarding the photo contest and the association site. At this time there are approximately four hours remaining of website maintenance work under what is in the current budget. Michael suggested that website work be stopped at this time due to getting close to the end of the fiscal year and begin again in the next year. The board agreed.

**Action Item: Michael, with Bonnie's assistance, will explain the OLA finances at the membership meeting using the pie charts that Bonnie created as a way of further explaining the dues increase.** Michael will also have paper copies of the information available for members to look over in order to substantiate the dues increases. They will need about ten minutes to present the financial situation to the membership.

**Membership Update/New Members:** Bonnie reported current membership at 24 **Relax with Us**, 21 **Grow with US** and 28 **Promote with Us** members. All Promote with Us members are now expired and need to renew. OLA gained one new Promote with Us member. A short discussion followed about whether or not it is possible to line up the membership dues periods so that all levels are due at the same time. Bonnie explained how the computer is set up to regulate the membership dues. Carol questioned the possibility of members making partial payments at different times of the year. Carol brought up the idea of allowing new members to pay a pro-rated dues amount when they sign up and then have them pay the complete dues amount when the year renews. Chris will add this suggestion to the 2016 website improvement list. **Action Item: Bonnie will welcome and introduce new members and will present them with OLA bag of token gifts (provided by Chris) at the membership meeting and give a brief membership update.**

**Survey Review/Discussion:** Bonnie reported that eleven out of twenty five of the Relax with Us members responded to the survey. Many members requested more basic education. The survey proved that members want to continue including the maps in the guide. The general consensus was that most members were in favor of the “farm tour” versus “festival” weekend over all. Bonnie will complete the Promote with Us and Grow with Us survey reports and mail them to the board in the next week. **Action Item: Bonnie will send the remaining survey results out via email to members prior to the membership meeting. She will talk about the results to the membership and bring a few copies to the meeting.** Bonnie will spend about fifteen minutes speaking to the membership regarding the survey.

**Ballot for 2015-2016 Board of Directors:** Chris mailed out 74 ballots with self-addressed, stamped envelopes to members with instructions to complete and mail back, or return them at the membership meeting. The deadline for returning the ballots by mail is October 16<sup>th</sup>. There will also be time given at the membership meeting for members to complete the ballots. **Action Item: Melissa, Andy and Carol volunteered to tally the votes so that the new board positions can be announced toward the end of the membership meeting.**

**Marketing Update:** Dan reported that Amy assisted him in choosing three cover photos for the 2016 OLD Guide. Members will be invited to vote on these designs at the membership meeting. Dan is continuing to look at the priority list. **November 6<sup>th</sup>** is the deadline for the Oregon Events Calendar for Farm Tour Regional listings. The cost is \$45.00 for each listing, or \$270.00 for six listings. Dan reported that this publication drives much traffic to the OLA website. A suggestion was made to look into Travel Portland, which has a circulation of over 200,000 and which currently does not have any lavender related listings. The cost will need to be researched. The general consensus of the board was to continue with Travel Oregon going into the next year and talk later about other publications. The Oregon Events Calendar is distributed around the state and is still considered a reasonable cost.

**Bonnie made a motion that OLA continue to purchase listings in the Oregon Events Calendar, Carol seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to continue listing the Oregon Lavender Farm Tour in this publication.**

Bonnie suggested to Dan that previous members or non-members be approached and told about the new/improved website and given an invitation to join/renew OLA.

Dan reported that the website is getting lots of traffic and compares very favorably to the Sequim site. **Chris suggested that the website traffic overviews created by Dan should be shared at the membership meeting.** Chris asked whether OLA should continue to reconnect with Pinterest and Twitter. The board agreed to only be connected to Facebook at this time. **Action Item: Dan will prepare a simple, easy to understand explanation of the new website improvements. As neither Dan nor Amy will be attending the October membership meeting, the board members present at the meeting will report on the new website revisions.**

**Chris will bring copies of the publications that printed articles about OLA members' farms to show the membership examples of the publicity that OLA members received for participating in the 2015 Oregon Lavender Farm Tour.**

**Website Improvements:** Bonnie will present an education piece at the membership meeting about the website improvements, how to add farm information to the website and how to order OLA products on the OLA Square Market site.

**OLA Product Committee Update:** Michael strongly requested that orders coming in be connected with a payment every time! Bonnie stated that going forward members will be asked to order online using Square and to stop calling in orders from either Marilyn or Chris. **The correct ordering process will be presented to the membership.**

**OLA emails from public:** Chris reported about the grower from Australia who will be visiting Oregon this month and would like to connect with Oregon Lavender Association members/farms. Chris will notify the board when the date is more defined (sometime around October 20-21<sup>st</sup>) and set up a time. Karalee reported that OLA is receiving a good number of emails from new farms and interested parties. Many inquiries are seeking basic information about lavender growing and marketing. She invites these people to join OLA and provides information regarding the next membership meeting.

**Travel Oregon Agritourism Committee Meeting:** Carol will report to Chris after the next meeting.

**Finalize agenda for October 18 membership Meeting:**

- \*Michael and Bonnie will present a financial overview using the charts that Bonnie designed.
- \*Bonnie will also present an education piece showing members how to order products using Square.
- \*Bonnie will report on the new website improvements and provide instructions on how to add/edit member farm information.
- \*Bonnie will go over the survey results.
- \*The board as a whole will present a marketing update.

**Chris will have forms available for members to sign up to form new committees. These could include committees for: Culinary, Marketing, Membership, Products, Education, and other areas that are deemed important.**

**Action Item: Board members are to submit suggestions regarding additional jobs/projects to Chris prior to the membership meeting.**

After the major business portion of the membership meeting, Bonnie will need about five minutes for product updates. Towards the end of the meeting, the new and returning board members will be announced. Chris will remind the members that OLA labeled products are available and that they make nice holiday gifts. Members will pick up OLA items that have been pre-ordered and be able to purchase OLA products at the meeting. There will be a drawing for a gift bag of OLA products.

**Final Notes:** Gene suggested offering educational avenues within the association as a way to generate income. Carol brought up the thought that OLA could plan a workshop as a money generating endeavor rather than depending on an outside source. A short discussion followed these suggestions. This is will be discussed later.

**The next OLA Board Meeting is scheduled for November 3, 2015, 7:00-9:00 PM**

Minutes submitted by Karalee Mitro, OLA Secretary Edited by Chris Mulder