

Local Clay Minutes
November 18, 2016

Members present:

Ziggy Blum
Karen Washburn
Molly Buckles
Avi Harriman
Cecile Haworth

Initially the discussion, lead by Cecile Haworth, revolved around the ideas of transitioning from primarily managing the wildly successful ceramic sales event, Clay Fest, to expanding on the original stated intent and mission of the organization. For those whose original vision was to create a clay arts show it was done and beautifully. However for others who have no particular interest or time to be involved in a show or are amateurs and just like clay and want to interact with like minded people the organization did not offer much. The suggestion is it is time to change that.

The original stated mission intent was: (to paraphrase) "Promote an exchange of knowledge and information regarding all types of ceramic arts, to provide educational opportunities, mutual support and encouragement. In addition to establish a professional outreach strategy for the purpose of acting as liaison to public arts agencies, galleries and publications." The big question before us is whether we would like to re-organize Local Clay to have a more multifaceted underlying activity base both within the community of potters and clay artists as well as bringing more people in the arts community together. Expanding and strengthening Local Clay also supports and strengthens Clay Fest.

The discussion also focused to a great extent on how many of those currently active and involved have been for many years and are giving their all. We talked about how we need a way to: 1. Tap the interests and talents of current members who are not involved but would be willing and 2. Attract new members from the community of people who love and come to Clay Fest as patrons and/or have an interest in clay as a creative medium. Really anyone supportive of Clay. That they already support the show by their attendance and purchases suggests a percentage of them would step up to join Local Clay and thereby provide support in other ways. Cecile reported that in talking to customers during this past show many of those people are thinking of pottery as a fun and interesting hobby and would like to know where or how to start. Some percentage of those may become professional potters and eventually be a vendor at Clay Fest themselves. All of those people can be very valuable in providing ideas and manpower to strengthen the organization in general. We

already have a direct connection with current and recent members but not so much with the community at large. We need a marketing strategy to make that happen.

Several ideas were suggested as to how to begin this process including flyers at Clay Fest, Saturday Market, Holiday Market and other venues they present themselves; promoting Meet up activities through establishing a presence on a Meet-Ups platform that allows announcements to be sent to members; reaching out to young people at Lane Community College, Erb Memorial Union arts and crafts center on the University of Oregon campus, Maude Kerns Art Center, Emerald Art Center in Springfield, Clay Space and other other arts and crafts centers catering to people with an interest in clay at any level to provide a clear message about who we are and how they can be involved.

Another suggestion was that the language in the membership application could be less restrictive and more inclusive in order not to discourage amateurs and hobbyists.

A motion to move forward on these ideas and suggestions was put forward and seconded.

Further business included nominations for the proposed board for the coming year. The proposed board is as follows:

President:	Ziggy Blum
Secretary:	Molly Buckles
Treasurer:	Robin Sanchez
Program Chair:	Avi Harriman
Clay Fest Chair:	Karen Washburn
Webmaster/Outreach Chair:	Cecile Haworth

For anyone who participated or was thinking of participating in the October mask show for clay and glass artists it was decided not to pursue that show for this coming year. Participation was down in part due to the date proximity to Clay Fest such that many potters are focused on that as well as other regional shows. In addition we want it concentrate on our transition for this coming year. We may revisit that topic in the future.

Though Robin Sanchez was unable to join us for his meeting she did provide a statement regarding her views about the Clay in Education endeavor in past years. To summarize: While it is a worthwhile activity we all feel good about and want to support there are few who have the time or interest to actually go out into classrooms and teach. According to the books there was only one project actually organized last year and only two the year before. On that basis it would

not seem to make sense to raise money to continue with an endeavor that attracts so little participation. I suggest we do a survey of members before we do a lot of planning in that direction for the coming year.

The next meeting is the annual open Pot Luck scheduled for Wednesday January 18th, at Clay Space 7:00 to 9:00.