

PDF Planning Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Sunday, January 11, 2015 at 3pm

Purpose of meeting: Begin planning for Spring 2015 Burn

Agenda summary: New business proposals and upcoming schedule

Roll call:

Owsla (leading meeting)

Karnak

Diana Smiles

Nathan Hotdog

Yeti

EmilyD

Toohey

Wendell

Aned

Rev Dave

Smartie Martie

St. Greg

Meeting called to order at 3:06pm

First Order of Business – New business discussions

- 1) Hauling truck rental – Submitted by Jill, read by Owsla
 - Consider rental of a large truck, and purchase of tow straps, for the purpose of hauling stuck vehicles out of the mud.
 - The Vets have done a great job but future availability of their equipment is uncertain.

Discussion:

Karnak - A Nissan Pathfinder truck is available to DPW for such use, but it's not the best truck for the job.

Owsla- Raises concern about truck rental because many rental places explicitly forbid such activities (both off-roading and hauling), so not sure what the viability is of this idea due to possibly not being able to find a rental place that would allow such activities. Suggests (after lack of response) that this issue be bounced back to Jill so that she could put a formal proposal together for consideration if she can address those issues.

Nathan - We definitely need some sort of tow-out method because we've had issues in the past with cars being stuck

Owsla - Asked if anyone on call was particularly interested in working with Jill to look into this issue and make a formal proposal (Result: no takers).

Yeti - In past the Vets have done the job, sometimes unenthusiastically when without compensation, but always happily when they were offered compensation

Owsla - Perhaps we should establish a practice with the Vets which is pay for towing; this way we would know before events that the equipment and personnel for the job are there, ready, and willing

EmilyD - Agrees that there are liability concerns with renting a vehicle for towing/hauling in that type of land and mentions that we'd likely have to rent heavy machinery to have permission for such activities, which is also likely to be expensive. She prefers the idea of working out an arrangement with the Vets; if it's a service they can provide that we can pay for then it's not a liability issue for PDF but rather a service from our landlords that can be used by participants as needed.

Toohy - Agrees as well that PDF doesn't want the liability of potentially ripping a bumper off of someone's car.

Wendell - In past people have been made to attach tow straps to their own vehicles to avoid such possible problems with liability.

Karnak - Suggests this is tabled until it's bounced back to Jill and turned into a more structured proposal.

- 2) Increasing the straw bale purchase – Submitted by Jill, read by Owsla
- Straw bale purchase should be increased from last burn's 50 bale purchase
 - Should we allow theme camps to buy into our main purchase so they have some to use in their specific areas? If so, by what process?
 - Or should the event cover the cost of all the straw everywhere?

Discussion:

EmilyD - Straw was great in the fall (and in fact last fall a theme camp member from Camp Justice League is the one who made the connection for PDF to make the purchase). Concern expressed about logistics of having theme camps or individuals purchase straw for themselves through PDF, as it would be a hassle

to collect payments for reimbursement to PDF. Suggests that if a person wants to front the cost and split the purchase and coordinate it themselves it would be better than having an existing coordinator take on that job.

Yeti - Is willing to coordinate the purchases and on-site distribution of straw for theme camps or individuals, but is not willing to front money for it.

Owsla - If we have someone (such as Yeti) willing to do that coordination, then it seems like it would be fairly simple to put aside individual/theme-camp purchases that were pre-paid, and pre-payment of bales seems like a better idea than having some individual front the money and then having people buy it on site.

3) Requirement of carts being used for shuttling – Idea put up on PONY by Jill & Karnak, read by Owsla

- Several competing ideas here revolving around the idea that carts should be required to help with shuttling when not otherwise in use. Uncertain issues include:
 - Will this pertain to all carts, or all carts except for MASH's, or all carts except for MASH's and Ranger's...?
 - Will this be in effect only during road closures at mud burns during exodus, or for general help transporting people in and out of the back field...?
 - Should a separate Shuttle Department and official coordinator position be created, including budgeting for carts that have the primary purpose of shuttling participants and their belongings?

Discussion:

Aned - Likes the idea of getting carts into the back field and getting more transportation around to help people out

Karnak - Suggests that since we all agree that all carts should be used for shuttling that we just vote on it next meeting, so we can get it out to the coordinators list and those with an issue can call in next meeting

Yeti - Cars have about 200 HP and if they can't make it through the mud then a cart with 40-50 HP isn't going to make it either with a similar load. Speaking as DPW Coordinator, if he's relying on having a cart then when he needs his cart he needs it right away. So what's the fix for that if that cart is being used to shuttle people? For medics and rangers, of course it might seem like a cart is just sitting around but when the cart is needed it's needed now, and now doesn't happen when the cart is off somewhere else. And if Yeti had a cart but was forced to use it to shuttle people then he'd probably not even budget for a cart so as to avoid

that issue. If he were to shuttle people around they would need to understand that at any point whatsoever they may need to kick everyone out immediate where they are because the cart is needed elsewhere. Also, there are 6 carts and over 1200 people, so running those carts for shuttling is not going to serve most of the people. Also, do we have people skilled enough to drive bigger vehicles?

Owsla - Disagrees with Karnak's statement that "we all agree" that all carts should be used for shuttling, and thinks it's very premature to put it up for a vote next meeting since there are so many questions unanswered about how this would actually be implemented or work. Who will be driving the carts? When will they be used for shuttling? Which carts are to be pressed into service? How will this affect the departments relying on those carts? Suggests that perhaps a better idea is to think about renting different carts for the purpose of shuttling, and having a separate volunteer pool of people willing to do said shuttling instead of just adding to the work load of existing departments and volunteers. However, also this may not be a direction that we want to go at all since it may just encourage people to bring more stuff into the back field that they aren't prepared to move on their own.

EmilyD - This could be a simple policy change of saying that when carts are not in use (with possible exceptions for MASH and Ranger carts) by their departments then they need to be used for other transportation issues, such as shuttling during mud burns, or carting Lea (the Volunteer Coordinator) around to find more volunteers, or whatever would benefit from a cart at the time. We are trying to prevent coordinators from joyriding, which is a frustrating thing to see.

Karnak - Ideal is not to put together a whole new department, because we just don't want joyriding. We want a policy that says that if someone sees joyriding then they can say I'm sober so I can take this cart and help with shuttling.

Nathan - At back gate when someone comes up and has a disability issue then they call Parking and get someone to come with a cart to help with that, and sometimes that takes a very long time. It would be good to have carts at back gate (at least one) readily available to truck in people who have disabilities and need help moving things. But no, not everyone should have their own private shuttle to their theme camp.

Diana Smiles - Has had experience using a cart to haul people and personal equipment in and out of the back field, so is more confident than Yeti that they could do the job. In her experience people are very quick and happy to get out and unload their stuff very quickly when a call comes in that requires the cart to go elsewhere.

Toohy - Did a lot of hauling in/out on the cart last fall but noted that there's not much room on those carts, so perhaps it would be more efficient to get a trailer or a tractor and trailer to haul larger loads

EmilyD - There are towable trailers that possibly could be towed (if they can attach to the carts), and then perhaps it would be faster to just disconnect the whole trailer if the cart is needed elsewhere

Wendell - What about an ATV rental as the mud burn hauler?

Owsla - All of these ideas and questions are exactly why this needs to be discussed more (probably on the PONY) and to have a formal proposal be put together. In response to the trailer idea, we just need to be very sure they and the carts would be able to make it through the mud with that added load. Gas powered carts are already needed (vs. weaker electric ones) to get through the mud, and added load means even more power needed. Raises the questions again of who will be driving the carts because not everyone is authorized to drive a cart, also how will we track who is authorized to take and drive carts?, and if someone from outside a department wants to borrow that cart we need to ensure communication so that if the department needs it back they can get a hold of it. These are just a few of the issues that need to be thought about and addressed before we can put a formal proposal together.

Yeti - Points out that people may think a cart is just sitting there unused, but that cart is part of the functionality of the department, which is why that department budgeted for it in the first place. Stuff happens all the time requiring immediate use of a cart. Medics and Rangers obviously need their carts accessible to them at all times to respond to immediate issues with people, but other departments too may have needs that would require a cart to be at the ready for them. As an additional issue, last burn Gate was the only department that budgeted for extra gas on site, but when they went to use it that gas had already been used up by other departments and carts. So gas, too, is an issue to consider with all the extra cart use. Also raises the issue of who would be responsible for the carts if they're being borrowed by other people for shuttling? And what happens if the cart is then damaged? States a preference for either not having shuttling carts at all, or just continuing as we do now where sometimes people with carts do help out (but there's not a requirement for hours of work). Reiterates that when his department has a cart and is relying on it, then later is not a good option for when the cart becomes available (though currently they don't bother with a cart).

Owsla - Puts out the question of whether it may be simpler to just budget for a couple of extra carts to be used by Parking and Gate for this purpose, and would the Parking and Gate coordinators be willing to take on this added responsibility and expand to take on volunteers that would be shuttle drivers?

Smartie Martie - Whoever made the proposal should have a clear plan of how it is to actually be executed on the playa. Such as how do you decide who gets to use the carts? Will there be a sign up list like for parking passes? Will people get in line and take a number? How will it be made fair to everyone and not be elitism? How will it be organized? There needs also to be a vetting process for the drivers to ensure sobriety and ability; how will that be handled? Also what about potential damages to the carts? Hatter very specifically said the carts could not have heavy loads on them because of wear and tear and potential greater damages that PDF would then have to pay for. Then would departments who damage carts be allowed to have them again next burn? This idea needs to be much more thought out and organized. Also, it's not fair to just decide that a department needs to take on more work. Perhaps having a separate department for shuttling is better than just asking existing departments to take on more work.

Owsla - If no one else has more input now, I'm going to bounce this back to the PONY for further development.

Nathan - (In response to Owsla's idea of having Gate or Parking possibly take on more volunteers to do shuttling), he suggests that the Greeters are often available and could be so for shuttling, that they could certainly make a system to check sobriety, and that Greeters could be put on to shuttle duty and thematically it seems to him to be appropriate for Greeters to also help people get in.

4) Solicitation for proposals for any major changes to ticketing or event operations; these changes need to be proposed now (i.e., submitted prior to February's PC meeting) in order for discussion, voting, and implementation by the Spring Burn

Second Order of Business – Ticket sales

1. Tentative ticket sales dates (to be confirmed ASAP):
 - Round 1 – Sunday, February 8 at noon
 - Round 2 – Wednesday, March 4 at 9 PM
 - Reserves open – Sunday, March 22
 - Reserves close – Tuesday, April 21

Discussion:

EmilyD – The tentative dates are definitely confirmed for 2 of the 3 people directly involved in ticket sales (and those two are the ones that actually run the ticket sales), and the dates are confirmed enough to publish.

Third Order of Business – Coordinator changes

1. Greeter Coordinator update – Damien is stepping down as Greeter Coordinator to focus on BOD and child rearing duties. Current assistant coordinator Nathan Wright will be taking over as Greeter Coordinator beginning this Spring Burn, and will be joined by Nyk Giove and Devon Mendolia as assistant coordinators. No action necessary from PC.
2. PC Coordinator update – Owsla is taking over as PC Coordinator as Emily D transitions out. For this spring planning cycle Owsla will be the co-coordinator. A quick vote is needed by the PC to make this position official as it comes with a reserve ticket.

Discussion:

EmilyD - Vote will be in February, and is needed because this is a temporary co-coordinator position that's being created just for this one cycle during the transition.

Fourth Order of Business – Planning committee reminders

1. Upcoming PC meeting schedule:
 - Saturday February 7 – Begin discussion of budgets and vote on any old business; discuss new business
 - Sunday March 1 – Vote on previously proposed budgets; vote on previously proposed business; discuss new business and budgets

Meeting closed at 3:49 pm