



OREGON
**FESTIVALS
& EVENTS**
ASSOCIATION



PO Box 2248, Lebanon OR 97355

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Making Oregon festivals and events better through Resources, Education, Promotion, and Networking

OFEA Board of Directors Planning Retreat

Saturday, March 28, 2026

Sisters, Oregon

Present: Kerby, Ebner, Hamilton, Bledsoe, Nelson, Rice

Excused: Latham, Rowley

Staff: Ingalls, Ingalls, Christie

The board reviewed notes from 2025 retreat including what worked and ways to improve the organization including:

- More workshops and educational opportunities throughout the year
- More member engagement and outreach

LEADERSHIP

Board Composition – Board reviewed who is currently sitting on board and vacant seats. Importance of representation: types of memberships and regions. Board agreed that a 9-person board should include: 2 fairs/expo centers, 2 suppliers, 2 festivals/events, 2 organizations, and 1 government organization.

Future action: Review bylaws and possible update policy

MEMBERSHIP

Main focus is retention and growth. More work needs to be done to engage members. Personal touch is important. Need different pitch plans for smaller, volunteer driven events and larger, professional festivals. Creation of Engagement Chair to retain those that apply for board positions or scholarships. Cindy will be Engagement Chair.

Future action: Committee reach out the suppliers in the Spring (explains profiles, benefits, deals to members).

Membership drive in the Fall.

Create strategy to bolster retention.

Ashley will send scholarship/board application list for past 3 years to Cindy.

Update the committee descriptions to include Engagement

MARKETING

OFEA needs to market to event industry for membership and to public for our members. Facebook groups becoming more popular and online calendars getting less SEO. Organization needs new marketing strategies. Ideas discussed:

- Student Intern (take us on as a project)
- A current member (take us on pro bono)
- Future Action: Haley will reach out the Corban Business School

FINANCIALS

Board reviewed financial statements ending in Feb. 28, 2026 and overall 2026 Conference financials. Discussion of increasing SBA loan repayments. Board would like to increase payment up to 125% of minimum due. Board would like to grow conference sponsorship and conference attendance.



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Motion: Haley Hamilton moved that the Oregon Festivals & Events Association close all accounts at Chase Bank and open checking and saving accounts at U.S. Bank. Terry Nelson seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Haley Hamilton moved to remove all existing authorized signers at Chase Bank and to authorize new signers for US Bank to include Terry Nelson (Treasurer), Steven Bledsoe (Vice President) and Cindy Kerby (President) as signers on all Oregon Festival and Events Association bank accounts. Brandi Ebner seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

WFEA Extreme Travel Program presented to board. They agreed that OFEA would promote for and under the WFEA name but not interested in partnership. Possibility of doing smaller behind-the-scenes tours with our own member events. Discussed returning to the membership card and encouraging M2M visits.

Future Action: Finance Committee: review Ingalls Contact for next year budget. Look at Marketing budget.

Increase SBA loan repayment to 125% on minimum due

Close Chase account, reopen US Bank

CONFERENCE

A lot of positive feedback coming out of 2026 conference. Interactive, hands-on sessions most popular. AI also a strong topic. Review sessions did not work. Rates for 2027 will remain the same for now. Logo was chosen. Ideas to incorporate into 2027 planning:

- Recording sessions/Zoom
- Gathering speaker content
- Including more advanced sessions
- Pre-Conference: Building Event from the Ground Up
- Trading speakers with other conferences
- Ryan Kintz conference
- RFP to members for speakers
- Session: Getting most out of Memberzone / trade show booth / table at check in
- Talk about benefits at Annual Meeting

Scholarship Criteria – The Board discussed updated conference scholarship guidelines to be referred to the Policy Committee for further development. Proposed eligibility criteria include newly hired staff (within the past 12 months), newly elected board members (within the past 18 months), newly formed events (within the past 24 months), and organizations with demonstrated budget constraints.

Proposed selection criteria include demonstrated financial need, clear community impact or need for the event/organization, the applicant's potential for growth and leadership development, ability to engage with and commit



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to OFEA, and opportunity for relationship-building with the association. Consideration may also include prior scholarship recipients.

Application requirements will include a completed application and a letter of support from an OFEA member if the applicant is not currently a member. The Board will approve up to five scholarships per conference. All applications must be submitted one week prior to date of January board meeting.

WORKSHOPS/EDUCATION

Event Builders Connect Online Forums are not working. New strategy is needed. These will be put on hold until new plan is developed.

Spring workshop in Albany on April 14. Planning for Fall Workshop in Klamath Falls.

Future Action: Fall Workshop planning

BENCHMARKS

- Committees to meet this Spring: Policy, Finance, Membership, Conference
- Ashley will send out summaries before April Board meeting and send engagement list to Cindy
- See **Future Actions** above

BOARD APPLICATIONS

Board reviewed applications and would like to invite Karen Gress and Kerstin Motsch-Reiter to April meeting.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion: Brandi Ebner moved to elect Cindy Kerby as President, Steven Bledsoe as Vice-president, and Terry Nelson as Treasurer. Haley Hamilton seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

The position of secretary has been tabled until the April meeting.