

Attendees: Rick [sec], Linnea [co-chair], Ed Beecher (sloweddi) [reg], Rachel [prog], John L [treas], Dan R [co-chair], Coyote [reg], Don Glover, Patty Wells, Ellen Klowden [1:20], Ruth S [1:25]

Meeting began at 1:00pm.

Patty Wells – experiences from ConZealand with virtual panels. Don Glover also added comments.

Patty reported there was insufficient infrastructure for a full virtual con, and a lot was developed on short notice. A decision was made to make it single sign-in for ease of use on the attendees.

They looked at gotomeeting and decided no, it was not suitable. They looked at twitch, and that was ok, but used more bandwidth.

A key takeaway was that a virtual con required a heavy investment in volunteers. Every virtual panel needed someone trained in how to run that session and help naïve users (and there were plenty).

Discord was the medium chosen. A ‘how to use discord’ course was invaluable.

A strong and active webmaster is needed, since most of the exhibits were via web. A well organized “exhibits” page had valid links back to the artists and dealers participating, and purchases were accomplished thru their sites and mechanisms.

Don’t do back to back panels. Allow buffer times. Even though physically people do not need to travel from place to place, it can be time consuming to ‘clear the room’ for a following panel.

Masquerade was done by pre-recorded video.

Music licensing – artists were required to sign a form stating that they has licensed any music they used.

Warning – volunteers without training will be disappointed (and disappointing.)

A person to talk to about running a panel is Z! Patty can assist in connecting.

Linnea asked “Is a single signon really doable?” Response: initial efforts were a fail, just one week before con. Two volunteers from Boston were very useful acting as a help desk for technical issues for two days. But the conclusion was that single signon was not doable before con.

The overarching advice was “**Do what you can do well.**”

Z! recommends webinars to handle Q&A more sensibly. You’ll want two people to track each panel – one to monitor behavior and another to monitor and assist with the Zoom session itself.

ConZealand also have zoom room parties.

Question: did artists/dealers have a reasonable experience? How much help did the con provide?

Patty: not sure. Have to find that out.

Question: Are we putting stuff on a wiki? Or is this better suited for Gsuites (limit access)?

Patty: not sure. Morgan Hazelwood is the gold standard!

Ellen asked if interactive panels were successful, and the answer in general was yes. Yoga, yarn bombing, knitting, or craft posted ahead of time (so participants can gather materials). She asked how would people know what materials to bring without a list of registrants to send email to? The consensus was that attendees themselves would have to check the program the week before.

ConZealand did contract for live close captioning – it was okay but imperfect.

Chair remarks (virtual con)

Ruth knows of some people who might have access to training materials.

John checked online, and several tutorials are available online too.

Coyote and Rick volunteered for Discord training.

We still have open positions for treasurer (in 2021)

art show

hotel (in 2021)  
ops (in 2021)  
reg second

***At 2:17pm a 5 minute break was called.***

Programming – addressed earlier. Lee is getting access to the database (currently nobody has access).

Rick: hours of con? Linnea: still TBD

Rick: what if we recorded some things so they could be rebroadcast later? Logistics can be overwhelming. Ed suggested for certain things – readings, opening ceremonies – it might be possible.

Can kids attend (or be panelists)? Is there an age limit because of our medium? No answer.

Registration – report as of end of July

John: don't have names matched to the money paid, for refunds

Rick/Rose to provide web announcement regarding virtual con and refunds

Treasury - ~\$13,000 but that's likely to go down as refunds are issued.

Exhibits – dealer's room published

Accessibility – not present

PR – Holly coming up to speed

***At 3:32 a 5 minute break was called.***

There followed a discussion of how many Zoom rooms might be needed, and pricing for same.

Nothing definitive was decided; Linnea wanted to take that input and check Zoom pricing.

The meeting ended about 4pm.

Next meeting Sep 9, 1pm-2:30pm, virtual meeting on Zoom.