

Furry Migration Charter

Preamble

This charter defines the scope and basic mechanics of a program run under the auspices of Minnesota Furs (MNFurs). Unless specified herein, operational decisions pertaining solely to the program in question are left to that program's appropriate leadership. If questions should arise about whether a given matter is covered by the charter or requires further consultation, it is expected that program leadership will consult with the MNFurs Board (herein also referred to as "the Board"), formally or otherwise, before proceeding.

This charter is in effect upon ratification by the MNFurs Board. This charter may be amended by the program leadership with approval by the board or cancelled by the MNFurs Board as necessary. Amendments must be published to the Board and program leadership no less than 30 days prior to ratification. The program leadership must be given an opportunity to comment for the record on any amendment, and in fact are expected to do so in writing.

Event Description

Furry Migration (herein referred to as "the convention" or "the event") shall be a multi-day convention focusing broadly on various aspects of the fandom including, but not limited to, art, writing, fursuiting, and gaming. This event shall be held in Minnesota annually unless cancelled by vote of the MNFurs Board.

This event shall not host any other public events unrelated to the running or management of itself without prior agreement from the Board.

Justification

Over the past few years the community has wished to put together a local convention in order to better connect with those within the surrounding states as well as invite friends from outside the Midwest. Doing so will further MNFurs' goal of promoting public awareness and education by fostering a safe and comfortable place for people to come to express their knowledge or display their skills in regards to anthropomorphic arts and culture. The convention is also an opportunity to bring in subject matter experts in related fandoms that may enrich and strengthen our community's skills and talents.

In doing so, we feel that the convention will provide a positive impact by raising awareness of MNFurs within our area, grow MNFurs' membership base, and strive to provide an alternative revenue stream so MNFurs may better diversify its activities and local support. Conventions include a level of risk associated with its operation. These risks should be mitigated with proper oversight and community involvement in the planning stages of the event.

Goals

This convention has two overarching goals -- financial sustainability and community fulfillment. Any initiative needs to be considered in terms of both goals before implementation. In addition, we have identified a few sub-goals:

- to provide a safe environment for all our patrons.
- to provide an educational environment.
- to provide bridges with other fandoms.
- to present an honest and positive vision of the furry fandom to those outside of furry.

The metrics for our success will include a review of financials, returning membership numbers,

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community feedback, incidence reports, and programming statistics.

Market

Our market demographics are defined very broadly. We have many examples of furry characteristics scattered throughout all fandom. Our focus will be directed primarily on the furry fandom, and its community. However, we do intend to introduce cross over between other fandoms where it would be healthy, productive, and further the community's goals.

We must acknowledge that we are not the only ones with a stake in this convention. Vendors (dealers and artists), adjacent conventions, and other local and regional partnering organizations share this interest. They may invest time, money, or materials to guarantee that we succeed and further not only our goals, but their own.

Leadership

The convention shall be headed by ConChair(s) whose duties are to ensure critical decisions and issues are communicated up to the Board, and whose internal responsibilities are to help structure, manage and resolve cross departmental issues. The ConChair(s) shall be selected by the Board using recommendations from board members and/or convention staff.

It is understood that appointment of a con chair is assumed to be renewed annually in accordance with the MNFurs bylaws, and that no chair should serve continuously for longer than 5 years. The ConChair(s) may choose to appoint convention staff, organize convention structure, and chain of command based on the needs and size of the Convention.

Conflict Resolution - Department

Internal conflicts are broken into two generalized categories. Legal or ethical issues (theft, bribery, etc) and Personal issues (relationship, private agendas, hardship, etc).

Legal or Ethical: In the event of legal or ethical issues a quorum made of the convention top level staff (ConChair(s)) and a delegate from the MNFurs Board will meet privately to review the evidence. If enough evidence is found the staff member shall be removed from their position, and the issue escalated to the MNFurs Board for final resolution.

Personal: In the event two or more staff members can not come to an arrangement it is their common manager's responsibility to assist in guiding a resolution and may draw in any resource from leadership to help work out the best solution possible. If an agreeable solution to an issue can not be reached between the program's leadership and an individual, the individual has the right to escalate to the MNFurs board.

Conflict Resolution - MNFurs Board of Directors

Any issues causing tension between the MNFurs Board and the convention shall be handled by an informal conversation between the parties to find an acceptable resolution. If no informal resolution can be determined it shall be brought before the Board and program leadership to determine what course of action, if any, is needed to resolve the conflict. If both parties are unable to resolve the conflict a third party mediator will be appointed to assist in conflict resolution.

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Conflict Resolution - 3rd Party

A conflict may arise between a customer and a staff member, or department. The department and its management should attempt to resolve the matter; failing that, the appropriate leadership should review the matter. The convention's finance team needs to be involved in any issue dealing with fiscal concerns.

All issues with customers shall be documented and submitted to the ConChair(s) or his/her delegate for archival purposes. See "Conflict Resolution - Internal" for legal questions. The convention and MNFurs are not a party to, or involve themselves in, private transactions between vendors or participants.

Processes Triggering External Review

The convention acts primarily as an independent entity, and is given freedom to implement policy, manage, and conduct itself as needed to fulfill this charter. However, certain critical decisions affect more than just the convention, and therefore requires input and guidance from the board. Events which trigger a review includes:

- hotel contracts
- other multi-year contracts
- participation bans
- critical staff selection (ConChair(s) and Treasurer)
- annual budgeting process (capital budget, operating budget, etc)
- major changes to or interpretation of branding
- selection of any outside charity
- any transactions which may be seen as a conflict of interest with a staff member (e.g. using friend's DJ equipment business without additional bids)

Other external reviews may be formally requested by either party if concerns arise.

Reporting Requirements

The ConChair(s) will be responsible for providing the MNFurs Board with a monthly report highlighting how the Convention is progressing. Additional staff may be called by MNFurs board as the situation requires. This report shall include, but not be limited to:

- A financial progress report including registration (percentage & historical comparison), hotel allocation (percentage & historical comparison), and third party sales status (dealers den, artist alley, art show, etc).
- An upcoming list of milestones as well as notes on missed or rescheduled milestones. (e.g. Art Show submissions open, registration closes, Guests of Honor, etc)
- Any additional issues which require notice of the Board.

At the end of each year the ConChair(s) will also be required to submit a final review of the convention which will include financial results, critical or odd issues report, noteworthy positive results, and a set of goals the convention will focus on in the upcoming year. This review will be a combination of the post-mortem, staff review, and public feedback via on-site and online feedback channels.

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Financial Controls, Assets, and Budget

The program's financial team will work closely with the MNFurs' treasury to ensure processes and procedures are followed in regards to financial transactions and acceptable business practices. It will fall upon the convention financial team to verify that the budget the ConChair(s) present meet all criteria and requirements set out. Any assets procured for/by the convention are the property of MNFurs, but the convention shall have priority for their use. MNFurs will act as the quartermaster during any off-convention Period.

A list of convention assets will be submitted to the MNFurs Quartermaster for check-in and check-out along with any notes related to problems or concerns with said assets. A complete budget (capital purchases, operating budget, and recuperation plan) will be submitted to the Board before any money will be spent. As part of the budget three items must be clearly addressed:

- Planned return to MNFurs
- Planned funds required to "start up" for the next year
- Planned funds required to supplement emergency/reserve funds.

At any time, the convention books shall be open for MNFurs' treasury to audit.

If there are questions relating to how budgets are being executed, an external review shall be triggered. Participating in that review shall be at least one ConChair, a representative of the convention treasury, and a delegate of the board to determine the seriousness and recourse needed to correct the issue.