

**Economic Development Council  
Tourism Committee Meeting ♦ February 23, 2017  
Teleconference**

<b>Members:</b>			<b>(Absences YTD)</b>	<b>Members:</b>			<b>(Absences YTD)</b>
Adams, Sharon	Absent	2		Heath, Richard	Present	0	
Bressel, Brian	Absent	1		Hooper, Ben	Absent	1	
Christensen, Becki	Present	0		Johnstad, Susan	Present	0	
Conway, Michelle	Present	0		Shaffstall, Cyndie	Present	0	
Evans, Coral	Absent	2		Williams, Matthew	Present	0	
Franz, Judy	Absent	2					

**Guests:** None

**Staff:** Julia Sawyer, Executive Assistant  
MaryAnn Deminsky, Administrative Specialist

**1. Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions**

Chairman Johnstad called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone at 10:03 AM. She asked everyone on the phone line to identify themselves. She also asked members to refer to documents that had been emailed to them earlier.

**2. Approval of January 19, 2017 Minutes**

Chairman Johnstad asked for a motion to approve last month’s minutes. Ms. Conway motioned to approve and Mr. Williams seconded. There were no comments or questions. Members approved the minutes unanimously.

**3. Chair’s Report**

**Membership Updates**

Chairman Johnstad welcomed the committee’s newest members, who were all approved by the Economic Development Council (EDC) in February, 2017. They include, Ms. Shaffstall, Mr. Heath and Mr. Hooper. She pointed out that the committee is fortunate to have members with such a range of expertise.

Chairman Johnstad reported that another member approved by the EDC in February, Mr. Bressel, is apparently, no longer working at Sunrise Park Resort and may have moved out of state. She asked Ms. Sawyer to explain the process for removing him from the committee, if necessary. Ms. Sawyer reported that Ms. Deminsky had already tried to get in touch with him and that our next step would be to follow the EDC protocol. This involves sending a letter to him asking him what his intentions are. She said NACOG would send him a letter.

Chairman Johnstad mentioned that the committee has had difficulty reaching a quorum lately. She reported that she had reached out to Ms. Adams and Mayor Evans who had missed quite a few meetings recently. She requested NACOG staff send her a personal phone number for Ms. Adams, as she had not be able to reach her by email. She recommended sending a letter if she cannot reach her. Chairman Johnstad reported that Mayor Evans’ assistant had emailed that the mayor would not be able to attend today’s meeting, but asked for the dates and times of future meetings, indicating she would continue as a member. Ms. Sawyer explained that according to EDC protocols, NACOG should send

both Ms. Adams and Mayor Evans a letter noting their absences and EDC protocol. It was also noted that Ms. Franz has had several absences as well. Chairman Johnstad said she intended to email her regarding her status and asked NACOG to hold off on sending a letter at this time.

#### 4. **Tourism Forum Discussion/Action Items**

Chairman Johnstad noted that Ms. Drew was not able to attend this meeting, but thanked Ms. Sawyer and Ms. Deminsky for helping to keep the committee on track. Due to the number of items that needed action today, she asked that the committee table non-urgent issues such as seating and floor plan.

##### **Contract Status**

Mr. Williams obtained a draft contract from Pinetop Country Club (PCC) that Ms. Drew is reviewing. Ms. Sawyer reported on behalf of Ms. Drew that the contract was missing some important details. She also pointed out that the contract includes a lunch on Friday, 10/13/17, the last half day of the conference. Ms. Sawyer asked the committee if the lunch should be cancelled since the conference is planned to adjourn just before lunch at 11:30 AM. Committee members recommended that it be cancelled. Mr. Williams mentioned that the committee had been inquiring about optional activities on Friday afternoon at Sunrise and perhaps these could include lunch. Ms. Sawyer suggested on behalf of Ms. Drew, that we suspend planning efforts related to activities at Sunrise Park Resort because we have apparently lost our point of contact there. It was also pointed out that we could still advertise Sunrise activities, but not include them as activities sponsored by the committee.

Ms. Sawyer reported that Ms. Drew's second suggestion was that we change the contract to one continental breakfast and one buffet breakfast, instead of two continental breakfasts. The committee agreed with this recommendation and decided to specify when to schedule each breakfast at a future meeting. She said Ms. Drew would also like the snacks to be specified on the contract and had asked if there was going to be a bar during the registration period on Wednesday. Mr. Williams stated that there would not be a host bar, but that there would be a station offering coffee, orange juice, tea, lemonade, and water. Ms. Drew also asked if the charges for the meeting rooms should be noted in case we do not reach the minimum number of attendees. At this point the contract states only that there will be no charge for meeting rooms if we have at least 100 attendees. Ms. Drew was also concerned that we are not planning to have tables in our meeting room. Mr. Williams confirmed that there will not be room in the meeting room for tables, but he said we could inquire about having the presentations at the tables in the dining room, which is larger. Everyone was in agreement that the rest of the contract details should be ironed out by Ms. Sawyer on behalf of Ms. Drew and NACOG. Mr. Williams said he would send the PCC contact information to Ms. Sawyer, so she can be their point of contact. He also stated he would send contact information for Sunrise Park Resort.

##### **Finalize Cancellation Fee & Timeframe:**

PCC requires 72 hours notice of cancellation, so Ms. Sawyer suggested on behalf of Ms. Drew that the registration cancellation deadline should be Thursday, October 10/5/17 by 5:00 PM. She suggested we charge a \$20 cancellation fee for those who cancel by the deadline and not refund anything after the deadline. Chairman Johnstad asked for a vote. Ms. Conway motioned to approve the cancellation process and Ms. Christensen seconded. The committee unanimously approved.

##### **Report back from 2/2/17 EDC meeting**

Mr. Williams represented the Tourism Committee at the February EDC meeting. He reported that the EDC was pleased with and approved both the Save-the-Date card and the Sponsorship Form. He had also provided an overview of the Forum and presented the names of the four proposed new members,

who were all approved (as mentioned by Chairman Johnstad earlier). He also stated that the EDC would like to hold their October EDC meeting at PCC just prior to the Forum. NACOG is moving forward with having the Save-the-Date printed, mailed and emailed out.

Chairman Johnstad thanked Ms. Shaffstall for providing both of the graphics used on Forum materials. She went over the various pledge levels on the Sponsorship Form and asked all members to help spread the word. Ms. Conway pointed out that the form's header was partially in caps and should be corrected to all caps to match the Save-the-Date card. Ms. Deminsky will correct it. Mr. Williams pointed out that the form had been made to match our theme before going to the EDC and that they also approved it.

Chairman Johnstad added that the EDC requested information on the registration form about optional rounds of golf. Per Mr. Williams' request, PCC provided information about reserving tee times that has now been added near the bottom of the draft form. This information was not added to the optional activities section of the form because NACOG is not coordinating or collecting fees for golf. PCC did not offer a reduced rate or help with facilitating Forum attendees playing together.

#### **Review and Assign Tasks on Checklist. Priorities:**

##### **Agenda Details**

Chairman Johnstad asked members to refer to the "Tourism Conference Planning and Budgeting Checklist." She pointed out that the information in black is original information that the committee reviewed at the 1/19/17 meeting and that information in blue has been added by NACOG staff. She pointed out that we need to accomplish many things in the next week.

##### **Speakers (Navajo County? State Forester? Grand Canyon rep?)**

Ms. Sawyer stated that we need speakers for the Forum's Thursday afternoon and Friday morning panels. She reported that the committee has struggled to collect names of potential speakers from the host area, Navajo County, but that just yesterday the committee received suggestions from several people. She emphasized that we need to confirm all speakers before we open up registration and begin to advertise the Forum, and that we had intended to do these things very soon. Members were directed to look at the "Tourism Forum Agenda Worksheet." She also reported that Steve North was willing to follow-up on his ideas for speakers, including Trisha Spears, who several members agreed could be a dynamic member of the Thursday afternoon panel.

Ms. Shaffstall suggested that committee members from the White Mountains area form a sub-committee to brainstorm and then recommend a list of potential speakers. The committee supported this idea and Ms. Christensen and Mr. Williams agreed to help with it. Ms. Shaffstall planned to invite Mr. North to help, as well. They agreed to vet a list by COB Friday 3/3/17 and then provide it to the full committee to vote on by COB Monday, 3/6/17.

Ms. Conway asked how the committee would guide the speakers to ensure their presentations are interesting to our audience. She asked how topics of presentations would be vetted. She was concerned that some speakers, especially from tourist attractions, might focus too much of their presentations on selling their amenities. Mr. Williams suggested asking speakers to focus on what works and what doesn't. Ms. Christensen suggested speaking on what goes into creating or enhancing tourist attractions. Ms. Shaffstall suggested asking them to present on successful campaigns. Ms. Sawyer suggested emphasizing our theme, Becoming Tourism Ambassadors. The group agreed that the focus of each presentation needs to be on how attendees can learn from each presenter, and not on presenters marketing their attractions and businesses. Chairman Johnstad asked that we plan to talk about this at the next meeting.

Chairman Johnstad pointed out there are additional vacant spots on the Forum agenda for Friday, 10/13/17 and that there was a list of potential presenters at the bottom of the "Tourism Forum Agenda Worksheet." Ms. Johnstad suggested we decide on topical themes for Friday's presentations. Ms. Conway reminded the group that last year they had planned to offer a panel consisting of Tourism Committee members, focusing on their areas and what is working from a marketing and tourism standpoint. The committee liked this idea and was inspired by Ms. Christensen's successes with museums in Apache County. Ms. Conway also pointed out that the current agenda starts with the big picture, with state level organizations presenting (Arizona Office of Tourism and Arizona Lodging and Tourism Association) and then the focus changes to Navajo County in the afternoon. She pointed out that Friday's themes could be more tactical, presenting tips that the audience could walk away with. Ms. Shaffstall mentioned that at many conferences, the last day is not well attended. She suggested the committee choose one of the strongest speakers to present last. The committee agreed with these suggestions. Ms. Sawyer asked that committee members talk with potential speakers soon to get them to commit to our Forum. Chairman Johnstad, Ms. Conway, and Ms. Sawyer agreed to meet via conference call on 2/28/17, draft a proposal for the Friday morning agenda, and send it out for a committee to vote on.

Mr. Williams suggested offering a grand prize raffle last on Friday to encourage people to stay for the whole event. He offered to ask the Executive Director of the Pinetop Chamber of Commerce for help in obtaining prizes. Ms. Shaffstall added that we could offer swag bags with gifts from the local area. The committee members liked these ideas.

#### **Optional Dinners and Activities**

Ms. Sawyer restated that it is not prudent to advertise optional activities at Sunrise at this point, as we do not have a contact person or agreement in place. Chairman Johnstad asked about planning transportation to the Show Low dinner on Thursday evening, 10/12/17. She reminded the group that Mr. North had emailed the committee an update on his dinner planning efforts on the previous day. Ms. Shaffstall reported that the local bus does not go to PCC, but that the Town of Pinetop Lakeside offers a safe ride service for those who have had too much to drink. Mr. Williams offered to look into other transportation options, but he and other committee members assumed most attendees would want to drive their own vehicles, therefore this planning was tabled.

Mr. Williams shared the \$25 per person plus tax quote he had received from Charlie Clark's Steakhouse for a welcome dinner for Wednesday evening. He also said that they normally do not have their Orchard open during that time of year and thought it would probably be too cold. They will want to know the final count prior to the dinner. Ms. Sawyer clarified that this dinner would not be free to registrants. The group agreed it should be an optional activity with an additional fee for registrants and any guests they bring. The committee agreed that we should charge \$30 for any early purchase of this dinner (registrant or guest) to cover the taxes. They also agreed to charge \$37.50 at the door and to note all of this on the registration form.

Ms. Sawyer asked if there were any other optional activities to include for a fee on the registration form. There were none. Ms. Shaffstall clarified that hikes led by TRACKS on Wednesday would be free. Ms. Shaffstall asked if we could add activities later, and Ms. Sawyer answered that we could not because we need to finalize the registration form soon.

Ms. Shaffstall asked if it would be a good idea to plan a Trail Photography class with TRACKS for the weekend and Ms. Sawyer clarified that it would be best for the committee to only plan optional activities within the timeframe of the Forum, from Wednesday afternoon through Friday morning.

Chamber of Commerce-sponsored and other activities that we are not involved in planning could be advertised at the Forum.

Ms. Shaffstall suggested planning an optional event at the White Mountain Nature Center, which is 10 minutes from PCC on Thursday night. The committee agreed that offering an event after dinner on Thursday night featuring exhibits, speakers, coffee and dessert (no alcohol) would be value added. Ms. Shaffstall volunteered to inquire with caterers and the Nature Center. Mr. Williams asked if it would compete with the dinner in Show Low, and Ms. Shaffstall said it would not. Chairman Johnstad asked Ms. Shaffstall to report back on this via email, so the committee could vote on it prior to the next meeting. Ms. Shaffstall suggested we encourage registrants to bring hiking and mountain biking gear to use during their free time, if they wish.

At 11:32 AM Chairman Johnstad asked if members could stay on the teleconference late, so they could continue making progress on the agenda. Members agreed to do this.

#### **Prizes and/or Silent Auction**

Chairman Johnstad recommended against planning a Silent Auction due to the committee's workload. Ms. Sawyer reported that this was Ms. Drew's opinion, as well. The committee agreed to not plan an auction and to plan and promote prize giveaways instead. Ms. Shaffstall pointed out that an auction is the type of activity the committee could add to the event later, if they wish.

#### **Registration Form**

Mr. Williams asked if the EDC needs to approve the registration form again because the details about the optional Show Low dinner are not yet known or included on the form. Ms. Sawyer suggested the committee approve this dinner, without specifics such as location and price. Ms. Conway made a motion to approve the Show Low dinner without specifics. Ms. Christensen seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Brochure**

Chairman Johnstad reported that NACOG staff had clarified that a separate brochure is not needed. The committee simply needs to format the final Forum Agenda into an attractive program and describe presentations in an enticing way. She reminded the committee that they agreed to finalize the agenda within 1.5 weeks. She asked for a volunteer to work on the formatting and verbiage once the agenda is finalized.

#### **Mailing Lists**

Chairman Johnstad asked every committee member to gather contacts within the next week and forward them to Ms. Deminsky, but the group decided it would be better for members to send the emails to their own lists, rather than submitting their contacts to NACOG. Ms. Shaffstall pointed out that many organizations will not provide their email lists to third parties due to privacy concerns and because when recipients opt in to lists, the list owner usually agrees not to share the list. She offered to create a standard email template to distribute to members so they can forward the email. This would ensure brand consistency and messaging. The group supported this idea. She also offered to include organizations' logos, if they wish, and offered to give out her contact information so she can serve as technical support. Ms. Conway agreed that these were very good ideas and might garner better responses. Chairman Johnstad told Ms. Shaffstall that the committee is very glad she has joined the group. Chairman Johnstad asked that each committee member send out the marketing email to their contacts in 2 weeks.

Ms. Sawyer said that NACOG would send the Save-the-Date by email by the end of February to the EDC, Tourism Committee, and Regional Council and ask them to forward it to their contacts. She stated that the Sponsorship Form and Registration should be sent together. She also said that we will post this information on social media and the NACOG website, which will also offer online registration and payment. She clarified that NACOG will send 100 direct mail Save-the-Date cards, and will focus on email for everything else.

## **Budget**

### **Vendor Booth Fee**

Ms. Conway reported the information she had gathered from Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) regarding the price of their vendor booths at last year's Governor's Conference on Tourism. Their rate was \$1250 for a 10' x 10' booth with walls and two tables. This rate was far above what the group thought they should charge, because the Tourism Forum would offer less exposure, vendors would only be present on one full day, and our tables are much smaller. Ms. Sawyer shared the price structure Ms. Drew had recommended. For each 3' X 3' table, Ms. Drew proposed a \$50 fee for registrants and \$100 for those who had not registered. There would be up to 20 tables and vendors could have the option of renting two. Mr. Williams motioned to approve this price structure and Ms. Conway seconded. The committee unanimously approved.

Ms. Conway also asked AOT if they can share their vendor list and will ask how they market to vendors. She also suggested that the breakfast be placed near the vendors. Mr. Williams pointed out that there may not be enough room for this.

### **Sponsorships**

Chairman Johnstad asked if there is there a deadline for sponsoring. Ms. Sawyer explained that we will need all Forum materials finalized 3-4 weeks ahead, so it would make sense that we know who our sponsors are before then so we can publicize their support. Ms. Shaffstall suggested informing all potential sponsors of the benefits of signing up earlier. Ms. Conway suggested the group come up with a goal date for securing all sponsors and the committee decided that would be 9/1/17. Ms. Sawyer announced that Ms. Drew had texted that APS had verbally pledged \$1000 and written commitment would follow.

### **Offering photographer free registration**

The committee approved the idea of offering a photographer free registration in exchange for photos of the Forum. Ms. Christensen had already asked Brenda Crawford to do this and will inform the committee if she accepts. If Ms. Crawford declines, Ms. Shaffstall would like to ask Judy Bassett.

## **5. Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

Ms. Sawyer asked if the committee was willing to reschedule the March meeting to accommodate Ms. Drew's schedule, and they agreed. Ms. Deminsky offered to finalize a time via email. *(This did happen within a few days and the new date and time is **March 22, 2017 at 10:00 AM.**)*

- Report back from 1/19/17 tour of Pinetop Country Club, including floor plan and seating.
- Ms. Conway suggested that the committee discuss further how to guide speakers and their presentation content.
- Ms. Christensen should report back on whether a photographer has committed to attending
- Chairman Johnstad asked all members to forward other agenda items to Ms. Deminsky

## **6. Member Comments**

- Chairman Johnstad and Ms. Sawyer thanked Mr. Williams for hosting the committee's meeting in Pinetop last month.
- Chairman Johnstad asked Ms. Deminsky to help her to put together a list of tasks that need to be completed prior to the next meeting. Ms. Deminsky agreed.
- Chairman Johnstad also reminded all members to send anything requiring committee feedback to Ms. Deminsky for distribution.
- Ms. Shaffstall announced that she and her team have launched the White Mountains Arizona Conventions & Visitors Bureau with the support and endorsement of some local towns and counties. They are still in the engagement stage, and have yet to present to all of the towns or Apache County, but it is going very well.

## **7. Public Comments**

Chairman Johnstad asked if any members of the public had joined the call and offered them the opportunity to comment. No members of the public identified themselves.

## **8. Adjournment**

At 12:14 Chairman Johnstad asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Christensen motioned to adjourn and Mr. Williams seconded. All members voted to adjourn. The Chairman thanked all attendees.