

**Economic Development Council
Tourism Committee Meeting ♦ March 22, 2017
Teleconference**

Members:			(Absences YTD)			Members:			(Absences YTD)		
Christensen, Becki	Absent	*				Hooper, Ben	Present	1			
Conway, Michelle	Present	0				Johnstad, Susan	Present	0			
Evans, Coral	Absent	3				Shaffstall, Cyndie	Present	0			
Franz, Judy	Present	2				Williams, Matthew	Present	0			
Heath, Richard	Absent	0									

*Excused

Guests: Steve North, Business Development, City of Show Low

Staff: Teri Drew, Regional Director
Julia Sawyer, Executive Assistant
MaryAnn Deminsky, Administrative Specialist

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions

Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman

Chairman Johnstad welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 10:01 AM. She asked everyone on the conference call to introduce themselves as she called their names. Ms. Drew mentioned that Ms. Christensen’s absence is excused.

2. Approval of February 23, 2017 Minutes

Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman

Chairman Johnstad called for a motion to approve last month’s minutes. Ms. Drew mentioned that Brian Bressel should be added to the attendance portion at the top of the minutes and that he should be marked absent for that meeting. Mr. Williams made motion to approve the minutes with that correction and Ms. Franz seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Chair’s Report

• **Membership Updates**

Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman

Chairman Johnstad thanked the NACOG staff for their efforts, including cleaning up committee memberships. She informed the group that Sharon Adams has resigned from the committee. She also reported that NACOG staff mailed a letter to Brian Bressel after hearing that he had moved out of the area. He had until last week to respond to questions about the status of his membership. Ms. Drew confirmed we had not heard from him by the deadline or since. Ms. Conway made a motion to accept the resignations of Ms. Adams and Mr. Bressel. Mr. Williams seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Chairman Johnstad asked if there were any questions about the process. There were none.

Chairman Johnstad said she was happy that Ms. Franz was on the call, as NACOG had been attempting to contact her with an erroneous email address. Chairman Johnstad apologized for this confusion. Ms. Franz replied that she is happy to resume her participation in committee meetings.

Chairman Johnstad announced that she will continue as Chair of the committee until December, but will have to step down at that point because her job has changed. Ms. Drew expressed gratitude to

Susan for stepping up as Chair and committing to stay through the Tourism Forum and until the end of the year.

4. Forum Discussion

- **Sponsors**

Ms. Drew said she was pleased to announce that Forum sponsorships are still coming in. Year to date: Northern Arizona University (NAU) for \$1000, Bearizona for \$500, Sedona Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau for \$500, Town of Pinetop Lakeside for \$500, and APS' verbal commitment of \$1000, totaling \$3500. She said this gives a good sense of where we are, and that she expects more pledges in the future.

Ms. Drew also reported that since the committee last met, Pinetop Country Club (PCC) waived all fees for rooms, regardless of the number of attendees. This is equivalent to approximately a \$1000 in-kind donation, and she asked if the committee would be willing to list them as a sponsor. Mr. Williams and Ms. Conway agreed that this was a good idea. Ms. Drew asked if anyone was opposed, and no one was, so NACOG will add them to the list.

Ms. Franz committed to asking the City of Page for a sponsorship also.

- **Budget**

Ms. Drew stated that the budget is not ready to be sent out, but she shared base numbers with the group. She mentioned that the budget is never a final document, it is a plan. Currently, there is a little more than \$5700 in anticipated expenses. Anticipated revenue from registration is \$10,000. She mentioned that the committee had agreed on a \$50 fee for exhibitors, but that she later realized that meals for each person is more than \$50, so she would like to raise the vendor fee to \$75. She said it would be awkward to break for meals and not invite exhibitors to partake. Ms. Drew asked for comments about raising the fee to \$75 for 6 foot tables. Ms. Conway asked for clarification about how registration fees work with exhibitor fees. Ms. Drew responded that she would now suggest a \$75 fee for registrants and \$125 for non-registrant exhibitors. Ms. Drew also shared that she plans to travel to Pinetop Country Club for a tour of the facility relatively soon. She reported that counting sponsors and vendors, total anticipated revenue is approximately \$14,500. She added that as soon as other details are finalized by the committee, NACOG can finalize the budget.

Ms. Drew stated that she believed there was room for 20 exhibitors with one 6 foot table each if we use the hallway and some adjoining rooms. Ms. Shaffstall expressed concerns about room layout and wondered if we had room for extra people. Mr. Williams was concerned about putting some vendors in another room besides the main hallway, because we would have to find a way to drive participants to the other rooms. Ms. Drew suggested that each vendor offer a prize. She also suggested that committee members who live nearby go back to tour the PCC layout. Ms. Shaffstall and Mr. Williams volunteered to do this. She also reported that since the last meeting, PCC also said they can set-up chairs and tables for the entire Forum by using the larger dining room as the presentation and dining room.

- **Loose Ends**

Teri Drew, Regional Director

Ms. Drew asked for clarification of what was decided at the February meeting related to committee members adding their organizations' logos to Forum marketing emails. Chairman Johnstad clarified that Ms. Shaffstall offered to add the logos to an email template that members could email to their contacts. Ms. Drew stated that the only logos that should appear Forum materials should be our

sponsors' logos. Ms. Shaffstall clarified that she could add the members' logos to their email only, and not add it to the Forum materials.

Ms. Drew also reported that all featured speakers are now confirmed in writing. This includes Debbie Johnson from Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT), David Drennon from Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association (AzLTA), Kimber Lanning from Local First Arizona, and Dr. Costen from NAU. This makes it possible to release marketing materials.

Ms. Drew reminded everyone that the committee is prohibited from voting via email because this does not allow the public an opportunity to comment. Because of this, emails that went out to members regarding choosing panelists are considered surveys and recommendations rather than votes. She reported that the top recommendations for speakers for the 1.5 hour Navajo County Best Practices Panel on the afternoon of October 12 are Trisha Spear of J & T Wildlife Outdoors & Recreation Resource Management of America, Paul Watson of Navajo County and Real Arizona Development Council, and Norris Dodd of White Mountain Nature Center. She stated that this panel should include all of Navajo County, so she does not want to leave out Holbrook, Winslow, the Navajo Nation, the White Mountain Apache Nation or destination sites in Navajo County. She asked if anyone else should be added to the panel. Mr. North suggested adding a fourth person, ideally Nick Lund from TRACKS because he has a good story to tell, is a very good speaker and has truly carried out best practices. Chairman Johnstad, Ms. Drew and Ms. Shaffstall agreed that he is a great choice. Ms. Shaffstall said she had talked with Mr. Lund about this, that he was thrilled to be invited and wanted to firm up the date and time. Ms. Deminsky recalled seeing an email stating he was not available at the time of this panel, but Ms. Shaffstall and Mr. Williams thought he was available for Thursday, but not for Friday.

Mr. Williams reported that he had already spoken with Norris Dodd who said if he cannot attend, he will make sure someone else will represent the White Mountain Nature Center on the Thursday panel. Ms. Shaffstall offered to contact Mr. Dodd and also Mr. Lund again to invite him to Thursday's panel. Mr. North said he would contact Mr. Watson and Ms. Spear.

Ms. Drew asked that the committee finish planning the Friday morning panel also. She updated them that she had spoken with Chairman Johnstad and that the theme of this panel is Regional Destinations. She clarified that these panelists should talk about their destination without doing a marketing pitch. They should share their destinations' economic impact on their area, any road blocks they have faced, and customer feedback. She reported that Sean Casey from Bearizona is already confirmed as well as Mayor Evans, who Chairman Johnstad had contacted. Ms. Drew suggested that both Dawnafe Whitesinger and committee Vice Chair, Ms. Conway, be invited to speak. Ms. Conway accepted the invitation. Mr. North suggested that Dawnafe Whitesinger, Navajo County Supervisor and Board Chair of Sunrise Park Resort could talk about both Sunrise and Tribal Tourism. Ms. Drew stated that NACOG had been trying to identify a good speaker for the Grand Canyon, but had not yet found one. She asked the group for other areas of interest to fill one more panelist slot. Mr. North suggested that Brad Traver of the Petrified Forest is a good speaker who can talk about how the park expanded and increased their visitor numbers, and the committee agreed to invite him. Mr. North agreed to contact Supervisor Whitesinger and Mr. Traver. Ms. Drew observed and appreciated that now there were panelists representing all four NACOG counties. Chairman Johnstad stated that she liked the diversity of perspectives on this panel. She asked if there were any objections to this panel as proposed, and there were none.

Ms. Shaffstall asked how panels would be structured, such as if there would be moderators and time limits for each panelist. Ms. Drew mentioned that some of those details could be worked out at a later time and might be addressed in the next agenda item. Mr. Hooper volunteered to be a moderator for

the Destination Panel. He also stated that he welcomed being assigned committee tasks for Verde Valley or Yavapai County. Mr. Williams agreed to take a lead role in the Grand Finale and Raffle. Ms. Shaffstall volunteered to moderate the Navajo County Best Practice Panel. Ms. Drew asked that panelist confirmations be obtained within a week, by 3/29/17.

5. How to Guide Content of Presentations

Michelle Conway, Vice Chairman

Ms. Conway noted that the Forum agenda is shaping up nicely. She asked the group to think about relevance, potential for overlap, and what presentations are covering. She suggested that it would be helpful to send speakers a sheet that spells out the objective of the Forum, the audience, and a checklist. She would also like to inform them who the other speakers and panelists are and what they plan to cover in their presentations. She had spoken with AOT about how they guide speakers and review their presentation ahead of time without offending them. AOT said they:

- Review feedback about what topics would be appreciated and also look at what larger conferences are offering
- Provide subject matter and note that presentations should not be used as sales opportunities
- Suss out what they want each presenter to address
- Give them guidelines, such as not using slang or industry terms, talking as if you are explaining a topic to someone who knows nothing about marketing while not being patronizing
- Review their presentations

She asked the committee for their opinions. Ms. Shaffstall agreed that this is a good idea because off-target presentations are disappointing for both the speaker and the audience. Ms. Drew said our customer surveys in the past showed we needed to improve content. She suggested we review old surveys at the next meeting. Mr. Williams said that we should review presentations beforehand, but we must be very diplomatic. Mr. Hooper thought it was a great idea, but pointed out that volunteers can only be pushed so hard to provide presentations ahead of time. He has had more success with directly communicating clear guidelines up front and choosing capable public speakers in the first place. Mr. North agreed with making it clear up front and mentioned that it is up to the moderator to keep panelists to the time. Ms. Shaffstall agreed with making a sheet ahead of time that includes the topic, who they will be sharing the stage with, etc. Ms. Conway said that this discussion makes her less concerned about reviewing presentations ahead of time, but more interested in communicating what they should be speaking about and what others will be speaking about ahead of time. The committee can still ask for presentation outlines or drafts ahead of time, but they should not count on them and they also should not critique them. These guidelines will help the committee know the content of the Forum also. Ms. Drew liked the idea of sending out a punch list with a written confirmation to speakers sent out by NACOG staff. She clarified that the committee did not need to approve a motion to move forward with this. Ms. Conway said she was happy to get a punch list started and submit it to the committee for review.

Chairman Johnstad commented that the committee had a lot of great ideas. She thanked everyone for jumping in and getting things done. She then moved to the next agenda item.

6. Forum Follow-up

• Optional Dinners and Activities

Chairman Johnstad thanked everyone who jumped in to help plan and Forum and especially those Navajo County members who took leadership there. She said she was intrigued by an event at the White Mountain Nature Center, but she was concerned about adding a White Mountain Nature Center

event to the Forum schedule and handling logistics for it. She asked if it made sense to forego the nature center event, especially since we had committed to a dinner in Show Low on the same night. Ms. Shaffstall reported that she had priced dessert and coffee for that event at \$7 per person and had arranged a paleontologist to speak. Ms. Drew suggested listing the Nature Center as an activity only. Ms. Shaffstall said she is not committed to hosting an event at the Nature Center, and liked the idea of creating a list of activities instead.

Ms. Drew stated that both she and Mr. North had looked into hosting the Show Low Dinner at Cattlemen's Steak House which offered prime rib and salmon for \$25 per person, all inclusive. Mr. North reported that they can accommodate 40 people in their banquet room and 125 people in the dining room. Torreon's dinner bid is \$30 plus tax and gratuity. Councilman John Leech told Ms. Drew he preferred hosting at Cattlemen's because it is in the center of Show Low, whereas Torreon is in the outskirts and significantly farther from Pinetop. Mr. North stated that either option would be fine. Chairman Johnstad suggested we move forward with Cattleman's and the committee agreed. Ms. Drew said NACOG staff would contact Cattleman's to obtain a contract.

Ms. Shaffstall asked for members' thoughts regarding transportation. Mr. North said a couple of potential options are the local bus system and asking Jimmy Applegate from the local Chamber of Commerce how they had planned transportation in the past. Ms. Drew would like to look into vans or busses from a local organization. Ms. Shaffstall said an organization had used the Blue Ridge High School bus previously. Mr. Williams offered to look into various transportation options. Ms. Drew asked how many seats are available in these buses and for an estimate of the minimum number of seats needed. Several people thought one bus with 20 seats would be sufficient. Mr. Hooper recommended giving attendees the phone numbers for both Uber and taxi services.

Chairman Johnstad restated that she wondered if it was too ambitious to plan both the Show Low Dinner the Nature Center event in the same night. Ms. Shaffstall said she was fine either way. Chairman Johnstad asked if there was a possibility that information on optional activities be sent out at a later date. Ms. Shaffstall suggested coming up with an activity fee, but several people said it would not work because some nonprofits and companies wouldn't pay activities and also attendees would likely prefer to select individual activities than have a mandatory fee. Ms. Drew pointed out that the registration form would need to go to two pages to accommodate more activities. Chairman Johnstad suggested sending out "optional activities info to follow." Ms. Shaffstall volunteered to send a follow-up email listing activities and offering a better sales pitch. Chairman Johnstad liked this idea. Mr. Hooper thought it might be annoying to receive a second email with other activities. Mr. Hooper didn't think additional activities should be added at a later date if not everyone will receive the same offers and information about activities. Ms. Shaffstall paraphrased what she thought the committee had decided--that a second email could go out as long as everyone gets the same info and several people agreed with this. Chairman Johnstad asked if anything about this needs to be added to the registration form. The group agreed that the email address should be a required field on all versions of the registration form.

Ms. Drew stated that Mr. Williams had been looking into booking a band for about \$250 for the Charlie Clarks' Welcome Dinner to make it more of an event.

Mr. Williams asked when registration will end and Ms. Drew said it will be two weeks prior to the event. Mr. North asked if Mr. Williams had connected with anyone at Sunrise. Mr. Williams had and found out that they can offer activities similar to those that were offered via the Rural Policy Forum for \$32 per person.

- **Outreach, Registration Form, and Agenda/Program**

Chairman Johnstad asked if there was more the committee needed to discuss about the registration form and agenda that would be going out next week. She noted that the Early Bird deadline had been extended to April 28th. The registration form will be in .pdf format and online.

She reported that NACOG had sent Save-the-Date emails to a number of different groups, including EDC (40 people), Regional Council (40 people), AOT, AzLTA, Local First AZ, and Greenlee County Tourism. They asked them to push it out to their connections also. NACOG staff have created an additional mailing list for Chambers of Commerce, Tour Providers, etc. with 85 organizations on it. Ms. Conway reported that Sedona Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau had included the Save-the-Date for two weeks in a row in their Chamber E-News with about 2500 contacts. Ms. Johnstad stated that she had emailed it to NAU and that she will also send it to community college partners. Mr. Williams sent it to 175 people on the Town of Pinetop Lakeside's biweekly newsletter via email. Ms. Franz planned to send it out in the City of Page's e-blast later that day. Chairman Johnstad emphasized that it is up to the committee to spread the word on all aspects of conference. Committee members were encouraged to share the Save-the-Dates and upcoming registration materials via Social Media also.

Members were asked to please register for the Forum when registration is open.

Ms. Conway asked about sending the sponsorship form. Ms. Drew requested that members have conversations with potential sponsors and not send those materials via email blasts. Ms. Drew said that NACOG staff would re-send the sponsorship forms to committee members.

- **Floor Plan & Seating – Report Back from 1/19 Tour of Pinetop Country Club**

This agenda item was not addressed.

- **Prizes**

Chairman Johnstad said that this is ongoing conversation, but asked if anyone had obtained any commitments for prizes. Ms. Franz said she can get 150-200 swag bags from Forever Resorts and can also obtain donations of tours.

- **Photographer for the Event?**

Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman

Ms. Christensen had reported at the last meeting that she was already talking with a photographer but needed to get confirmation. Ms. Drew reported that we have not gotten a status update on this since she went on leave. Mr. Williams and Ms. Shaffstall also know photographers they can ask, if a back-up is needed.

5. **Member Bios**

Michelle Conway, Vice Chairman

Ms. Conway encouraged members to look at the EDC Tourism web page on nacog.org that Ms. Sawyer had set up. It includes bios of committee members. She mentioned that we need to remove Don Prince and add Judy Franz, Rich Heath, Ben Hooper, and Cyndie Shaffstall. Ms. Conway said she will check in with Ms. Sawyer about this. She asked that anyone who had not yet submitted a bio and/or headshot to please submit these to Ms. Sawyer. She suggested looking at other members' write-ups as a guide. She also asked that members look at the Tourism Marketing Quick Tips and Case Studies sections of the web page and contribute to those areas when possible. She said the committee has some time to get this done and she will assign a deadline as the Forum gets closer.

6. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman

Chairman Johnstad announced that the next committee meeting is Thursday, April 20, 2017 at 10 AM. She asked everyone to submit agenda items for that meeting to Ms. Deminsky. Mr. Williams said he will not be able to attend that meeting, but will send anything updates he has. Ms. Drew asked that we discuss having meetings every six weeks instead of monthly, since the larger portion of Forum planning was complete.

7. Member Comments

Chairman Johnstad asked if members had any additional comments. There were none.

8. Public Comments

This item provides Committee members an opportunity to hear public comment on agenda items. Comments not specific to agenda items, according to open meeting laws, will not be addressed by the Committee. At the Chair's discretion, public comment may be limited to five minutes or less.

Chairman Johnstad asked if there were any members of the public who had comments, but there were none.

9. Adjournment

Chairman Johnstad asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Mr. Williams motioned, Ms. Conway seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 11:38 AM.