

**Economic Development Council
Tourism Committee Meeting ♦ April 20, 2017
Teleconference**

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

*Excused

Guests: None

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 called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM. She asked everyone on the conference call to identify themselves. She noted that the committee did not yet have a quorum, but most discussion items on the agenda did not require a vote.

2. Approval of March 22, 2017 Minutes

Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman

Chairman Johnstad skipped this initially, but Mayor Evans called in a 10:12 AM, so the Chairman stepped back to approving the minutes. Mr. Williams motioned to approve the minutes and Ms. Conway seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Chair's Report

Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman

Chairman Johnstad said she made a Tourism Committee report at the last EDC meeting. She told them the committee is planning for the Fall Tourism Forum, and she distributed sponsorship and registration forms to them.

Ms. Johnstad announced that Ms. Deminsky's last day with NACOG is today. She and other members wished her the best. Ms. Deminsky stated that she enjoyed working with the committee. Ms. Drew announced that Ms. Sawyer will be the contact for this committee moving forward, and the Chairman added that the committee will be in good hands.

4. Forum Discussion

Teri Drew, Regional Director

- Updates**

Ms. Drew said there is more work to do on the Forum, but it will not be quite as busy for a few months. Because of this and members' other responsibilities, she suggested the group meet every six weeks rather than monthly. She would like continue scheduling them on Thursday's at 10:00 AM, if possible. Members agreed to this, and Ms. Sawyer will email a proposed schedule for feedback. Ms. Conway asked if we will go back to meeting monthly as we get closer to Forum. She

stated that monthly conference calls were effective for getting things done, and Mr. Williams agreed. Ms. Drew agreed that monthly calls should probably resume in August, September and October.

- **Forum Program/Agenda**

Ms. Drew reported that the Forum Program is beautiful, and she thanked Ms. Shaffstall who did a great job of designing it. It was emailed out to the marketing list on 4/14/2017. Two people registered within a few days. Because the committee had long sought a Grand Canyon area representative, Ms. Drew recommended inviting Laura Chastain of the Grand Canyon Chamber of Commerce (a recent referral) to be a part of the Destination Panel. The other Destination Panelists are Sean Casey of Bearizona, Mayor Evans of Flagstaff, Michelle Conway of Sedona Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau, and Dawnafe Whitesinger of Navajo County and Sunrise Park Resort. Chairman Johnstad, Mr. Williams, Mayor Evans, and Ms. Conway all agreed this was a good idea. Ms. Drew announced that after confirming Ms. Chastain as a panelist, the program will be closed with the exception of any changes outside of our control. She also said NACOG will send out the program and registration materials every 3-4 weeks going forward. Ms. Conway asked to have the program and registration materials re-sent to her and Ms. Sawyer obliged during the meeting.

- **Budget Discussion**

Ms. Drew reiterated that there are currently two registrants for the Forum. She also noted that there had been some problems with the NACOG website and payment cycles, but Ms. Sawyer has resolved them, including making a credit card reader available. At this point, projected Forum expenses are \$6,862 including adding meals for sponsors and presenters. The card reader charges fees: 3.5% plus \$0.15 per manually entered transaction. She also presented tentative preliminary numbers for materials and supplies. With Mr. Williams help, NACOG has contracted with Fat Chance Band for \$250 for two hours at the welcome dinner. Charlie Clark's Steakhouse was happy to allow us to include the band. Mr. Williams said they do a great job.

Anticipated revenue is \$13,500. She reminded the group that they had previously talked about using some of the revenue to award mini grants to the NACOG Economic Development District membership only. She suggested discussing this further at the next meeting. Chairman Johnstad asked for a proposed timeline for mini grants. Ms. Drew would like to propose to the EDC that they award \$10,000 for tourism-related projects, as the income was generated from a tourism event. The group could also choose to expand eligibility to economic development-related projects. She proposed announcing eligibility guidelines and the application process at the Forum in October when NACOG will know the event's final revenue and then awarding them in December. This would be in time for organizations' marketing processes.

Ms. Conway asked for a status update on sponsors and the goal amount the committee would like to raise. Ms. Drew stated that the committee should raise as much money as possible to grow mini grant opportunities and also because the committee can put it in the bank for future Tourism Committee events. Ms. Drew announced that APS confirmed their \$1000 sponsorship in writing and that other sponsors include NAU at \$1000, APS at \$1000, Bearizona at \$500, Sedona Chamber at \$500, and Town of Pinetop Lakeside at \$500. The financial sponsorship total is \$3500. Pinetop Country Club is also an in-kind sponsor at the \$1000 level. Ms. Drew also asked CableOne recently, who showed interest in both sponsorship and a vendor table. She suggested the committee also ask the Arizona Office of Tourism to sponsor.

- **Loose Ends**

Ms. Drew said there are no other loose ends.

- **Survey Summary from 2013 Forum**

Ms. Drew asked members to look at the survey summary that was sent to them and noted that even though the committee did not review the summary before planning the Forum program, they had addressed most of the suggestions, other than offering a presentation by the Film Commission. The summary showed interest in economic impact, lodging and tourism, national parks, why tourism matters, and Native American tourism, which will all be covered in at least one presentation or panel. Several respondents also suggested offering the Forum in the fall. Feedback that still needs to be incorporated includes ensuring that directions to events are well communicated and offering tips for organizations with small budgets. Ms. Drew suggested adding a request to cover ideas for small budgets to the Speaker Guidelines documents. Attendees' responses to the question about their top three goals could also be used to develop mini grants. Overall, 2013 attendees were pleased and described the event as fun. Ms. Drew encouraged Mayor Evans to present about Flagstaff's use of its bed tax for a STEM program.

5. Forum Follow-up

Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman

- **Registration and Outreach**

Chairman Johnstad said we have done a lot of work for this and that we need to put our attention on spreading the word about the Forum. She also encouraged all members to register themselves for the event and make their hotel reservations. She asked that everyone report on what they have already done and what they think they can do for marketing. She reported that she can reach out to NAU and the community colleges in the region. She also plans to encourage Mr. Heath and Mr. Hooper to coordinate on reaching out to economic development organizations and municipalities in western Yavapai County.

Ms. Conway will include the registration form and program in her organization's e-newsletter, which comes out every Monday morning. She'll post it weekly until the early bird rate ends (May 19) and then resume posting it later in the summer. The e-newsletter goes out to several thousand people, including 1000 chamber members and government contacts. She will make a concerted effort to individually contact good candidates for sponsorship also.

Mr. Williams plans to register himself and also personally share materials with some local officials and staff. He also plans to share it via his e-newsletter blast and social media. He stated that he had to leave the conference call early because of another meeting.

Mayor Evans will forward the materials to her media contacts and will also ask her Tourism Department to send it out to their lists and post on their website.

Ms. Shaffstall speculated that her company may not have the same level of outreach as other organizations represented on the committee, but she has approached the local chamber of commerce and they will include our materials in their weekly emails to about 500 people. She also posted it to the White Mountain's Regional Calendar. She will keep an eye out for other opportunities. Ms. Drew asked Ms. Shaffstall to contact REAL Arizona, but she suggested Mr. Williams contact them since he is on that board.

Ms. Conway suggested the committee touch base as a group 7-10 days before the early bird deadline to review how many people have signed up, the list of names, etc. She added that members can then personally contact people who have not yet registered. The group decided to carry out this check-in via email. Chairman Johnstad asked if NACOG staff could facilitate this, and

Ms. Drew answered yes. Ms. Drew expressed appreciation for everyone pushing these materials out to their contacts.

- **Task List**

Ms. Johnstad brought up the task list Ms. Deminsky had emailed the group as a follow-up to the last meeting, which included confirming speakers. She reminded the group that Ms. Franz was planning to obtain swag bags and giveaways from the Page area. The group had not received updates about this.

- **Floor Plan & Seating**

Ms. Drew reminded the group that they had a question about how many six foot vendor tables would fit in the designated area at Pinetop Country Club. She and Ms. Sawyer are planning to take a trip there at the end of May. Chairman Johnstad and Ms. Conway would also like to do a walk through, perhaps at the same time as Ms. Drew and Ms. Sawyer. Ms. Shaffstall stated that she and Mr. Williams also intend visit the venue soon.

- **Prizes**

Chairman Johnstad reminded the group to continue working on obtaining prizes such as hotel stays, excursions, activities and other items that show off tourist areas in our region.

Ms. Shaffstall reported that she attended an ad and promo meeting where the Interim Operations Manager from Sunrise Park Resort shared that they have changed company policies and now will only allot \$1000 monthly for giveaways. The Interim Operations Manager was reluctant to give contact information for such requests. Ms. Drew asked about arranged activities, and Ms. Shaffstall clarified that Sunrise still has an outbound sales group that would be happy to arrange fee-based activities for groups.

- **Photographer for the Event**

Ms. Deminsky stated that Ms. Christiansen emailed confirmation that she had secured a photographer who will provide photos in exchange for free registration to the Forum.

- **Optional Activities Information Sheet**

Chairman Johnstad reminded the group that at the previous meeting, they had talked about simply creating a list of available activities in the area rather than the committee embarking on organizing more group activities and being responsible for collecting the fees. The suggestion was to distribute a single sheet in advance in each registration confirmation. Ms. Johnstad asked if Sunrise should be included on this list. Ms. Shaffstall recommended they still be included as it's a big draw and does cater to groups. Chairman Johnstad suggested this sheet be created prior to May 19 and asked how the information would be collected. Ms. Shaffstall offered to draft a list of recommended activities and asked if anyone wants to see it before she finalizes it in .pdf format. Ms. Drew asked her to send the draft to Ms. Sawyer. Chairman Johnstad thanked Ms. Shaffstall.

Ms. Conway asked to discuss exhibitors/vendors and also recommended soliciting potential vendors soon. Ms. Drew reminded the group that paying for a vendor table is an option on the registration form. Ms. Drew agreed that individual committee members should reach out to potential exhibitors. This includes chambers of commerce, destinations, tour operators, the Forest Service, etc. Ms. Conway also suggested contacting marketing organizations who can offer their services to tourism professionals. Ms. Sawyer will also send out who has signed up for vendor tables in the email check-in that will be scheduled 7-10 days prior to the early bird deadline.

5. Proposal for Vendor Passport and Prizes

Cyndie Shaffstall, Committee Member

Ms. Shaffstall suggested we create a passport-like document listing and describing each vendor and give it to each attendee to take to each table. Vendors can then stamp each passport. When the passport is full, the attendee can enter it into a prize drawing. This would give an extra incentive to visit every vendor table. Members liked the idea and Ms. Shaffstall volunteered to create a draft when the list of vendors is complete. Chairman Johnstad commented that vendors would be very pleased.

6. Punch List for Forum Speakers

Michelle Conway, Vice Chairman

Ms. Conway said this was sent via the Dropbox link emailed last week. On the first page of the document, she provided background information by describing the mission and goals of NACOG, the EDC, the Tourism Committee, and the Forum. The second side describes the Forum audience, other speakers, and then guidelines for preparing a presentation. It shows them how they are relevant to the Forum and why the committee is excited to have them present. She said it is ready to go to the speakers, and she asked if anyone had questions. Ms. Drew and Chairman Johnstad stated that she had done a great job. Ms. Drew added that the only change needed was to correct the contact name to Julia Sawyer. Ms. Johnstad asked how it would be sent to the speakers, and Ms. Drew answered that NACOG staff will send it.

7. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman

Chairman Johnstad asked for agenda items for the next meeting. She reiterated that Ms. Sawyer will send out the new meeting schedule. Ms. Conway asked that the group revisit and flesh out case studies and marketing quick tips for the Tourism website. She would like this to be a recurring agenda item.

8. Member Comments

Ms. Johnstad asked for member comments, but there were none.

9. 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.

Ms. Johnstad asked for public comments, but there were none.

10. Adjournment

Chairman Johnstad asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Conway made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Shaffstall seconded. The motion carried unanimously.