

**Executive Committee**  
**Economic Development Council Meeting ♦ June 2, 2016**  
Doubletree by Hilton, Flagstaff, Arizona

<b>Members:</b>			<b>(Absences YTD)</b>			<b>Members:</b>			<b>(Absences YTD)</b>		
Rich Bowen	Present	0				Karalea Cox	Absent	1			
Jodie Filardo	Present	0				Casey Rooney	Absent	2			
Paul Watson	Present	1									

**Guests:** Heather Ainardi, Tourism Committee Chair  
Michelle Conway, Tourism Committee Vice-Chair  
Dr. Susan Johnstad, Associate Vice President, NAU  
Carol Curtis, Director, Coconino County Career Center  
Richard Heath, Executive Director, Greater Prescott Regional Economic Partnership

**Staff:** Teri Drew, Regional Director  
Julia Sawyer, Executive Assistant  
Angela Devine, Administrative Assistant

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

Vice-Chairman Jodie Filardo called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM.

**2. Approval of Minutes from April 7, 2016**

Vice-Chairman Filardo called for a motion to approve the minutes from April 7, 2016 after the quorum was established at 9:15 AM. **Paul Watson made the motion to accept the minutes from April 7, 2016, seconded by Rich Bowen. The motion passed unanimously.**

**3. Chair’s Report**

The Chairman was not present, therefore could not report. Vice-Chairman Filardo turned the floor over to the Regional Director, Teri Drew. Ms. Drew asked for introductions around the room, as there were several visitors.

**4. Director’s Report**

Ms. Drew began by discussing the opportunity for a Regional Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Grant. She recapped information regarding highlights and eligibility of the Economic Development Administration (EDA)-sponsored grant. The Seattle EDA Region, of which NACOG is a part, has \$850,000 in grant dollars available to stimulate training and jobs for dislocated workers. Apache County has already been approved by the EDC and Regional Council to submit their application to the EDA to conduct feasibility studies for bringing natural gas into the area, and Coconino County is in the process of applying for the POWER grant, for Public Works opportunities in the Page area in response to pending closures to the Peabody Coal Mine and partial shutdown of the Navajo Generating Station, a coal-fired energy plant. Their application included some areas outside of Coconino County, which led to the EDA conversation about a Regional POWER grant. Ms. Drew had researched regional funding with EDA as well, and was told that funding is not competitive, therefore would be possible to fund Apache and Coconino counties. Carol Curtis requested permission from the Vice-Chairman and Regional Director to speak on behalf of Coconino County. She gave a report regarding word they had received this week that, following the review of the pre-application submitted by Coconino County by the EDA, Coconino County has been “invited” to submit a full proposal for their grant application. Ms. Curtis remarked that they would be working with Navajo and Apache County to

also apply for a POWER grant from the Employment Training Administration (ETA). She spoke about the impacts to the layoffs at the mines and generating station, and in light of these many impacts and also the invitation to proceed, she requested permission to go ahead with the proposal, as they have already come this far. Ms. Drew encouraged them to go ahead forward with their application. Ms. Curtis was grateful for all of the help offered through the Seattle Regional representative, Jacob Macias, and Teri Drew. Some discussion followed regarding the potential of discussion with the other counties to perhaps work together with Coconino County if the grant is awarded, to utilize their training program that will arise from the grant dollars, and the potential with the ETA grant to provide access to dislocated workers in the neighboring counties for tuition for the education opportunities that arise from the EDA grant. Ms. Drew also noted the inclusion of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) funded resources, and the active involvement of the educational institutions in the development of workforce plans.

Ms. Drew thanked Ms. Curtis for her report of very good news, and reiterated to her that once “invited”, they are almost guaranteed the requested funding. She then encouraged all communities to look into applying for the grant dollars available to assist in growing their economies and replacing lost jobs.

Ms. Drew moved on to new membership considerations. She commented that the only vacancy that the Committee has had recently is a Navajo County public sector seat. Mary French-Jones, the Grant and Contract Administrator for the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside, was recommended for consideration following her application submission to the Membership Committee, and having received a letter of recommendation from her local mayor and community. Paul Watson shared information from the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside regarding the withdrawal of the recommendation by the Town for Ms. French-Jones, and the possibility of recommending Mr. Matthew Williams of Pinetop-Lakeside, Navajo County in her place. Mr. Williams was being considered to become a member of the Tourism Subcommittee, but is now being considered for EDC as well and will come with a recommendation from the Pinetop-Lakeside Regional Council member Dara Vanesian. Membership Committee Chairman Carol Curtis made a clarification for her report to be only for the renewal of Sharon Adams of Navajo County for the private sector seat to which she was originally appointed.

Ms. Drew then moved on to the Scope of Work for 2016-2017. She asked the Executive Committee for input, having reviewed the Draft Scope of Work. She reminded the Committee that the Scope of Work is the EDC's annual work plan, coming from the focus areas, goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Ms. Drew noted that she drafts the Scope of Work annually, based on her perception of the ability of the EDC to accomplish the stated goals, as it is the basis of the EDA performance evaluation for the EDC and the Economic Development District (EDD). The particular emphasis of this Scope of Work is on coal communities and the POWER grant. She made mention again that the EDD is a distressed area, which means that the EDA grant rate is 80% grant dollars and 20% matching funds. The NACOG District more than exceeds their required 20% match. The 80% grant opportunity is good for all of our communities, because it can be the determinate ratio for local match on projects as well. Ms. Drew noted that, with that designation, the EDC is asked to have particular focus on the distressed areas of the District, which are Apache and Navajo Counties. Ms. Drew briefly outlined the Scope of Work and the goals, encouraging the Economic Development District (EDD) to focus on strategies for Apache and Navajo counties to obtain match requirements for receiving the federal dollars available to them for recovering lost jobs. She spoke about the focus on collaborating with workforce areas in the Region to plan for changes in state designations for WIOA conformance, as the law states that the workforce areas must collaborate with the economic development regions. NACOG already complies with this rule. Comments were made in admiration of the Regional Director and the advocacy work she does for the region, even as far as Washington D.C. Ms. Drew expressed

appreciation for the comments and for the partnership throughout the District and in the EDC. She continued with the review of the Scope of Work. She noted that this is an action item for the EDC General Committee, and wanted to open the floor to the Executive Committee to add input to the Scope of Work prior to going to the General Board. Some discussion followed regarding the use of partnerships and the Tourism Committee to see the accomplishment of some of the focus areas on the Scope of Work.

With that, Ms. Drew concluded her report.

Vice-Chairman Filardo thanked Ms. Drew for her report. She then turned the meeting over to the Tourism Committee Chairman Heather Ainardi and Vice-Chairman Michelle Conway.

## 5. Tourism Committee Update

Chairman Heather Ainardi began by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to be at this meeting, and reviewed the last Tourism meeting held on May 12, 2016. She shared the discussion had at that meeting regarding the need for enhanced communication with the EDC Executive Committee and the consensus that having a member of the EDC as the Chairman of the Tourism Committee would be optimal for that level of communication. She then made a recommendation to the EDC Executive Committee to appoint Susan Johnstad, Coral Evans and Matthew Williams to the Tourism Committee. Ms. Drew noted that, per the Bylaws, these are appointed seats, appointed by the Chairman *or* by the Executive Committee, as was the case today as the Chairman is not present. Vice Chairman Filardo called for a motion to appoint these three candidates as members of the Tourism Committee, **so moved by Rich Bowen and seconded by Paul Watson. Motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Ainardi thanked the Committee for the appointments, and commented on the positive impact of these individuals with a relationship with both committees. She then moved to the recommendation of appointing Susan Johnstad to the Chair position of the Tourism Committee. She explained the chain of events leading to this new positional appointment, regarding the past Chairman stepping down as he was going to be moving to Georgia a few months ago. She had been asked to step in to chair the Committee in the interim of an Executive Committee appointment, and she also mentioned that Vice-Chairman Michelle Conway agreed to maintain her appointment as Vice- Chair. Ms. Drew added that Vice-Chairman Conway has also agreed to take the first available opening in Yavapai County on the EDC, so that she could continue in the chain of succession as Chairman at a future date.

There was some discussion about the recommendation by the leadership of Pinetop-Lakeside, confirming that they would like to pursue membership representation by Matthew Williams.

Vice-Chairman Filardo thanked Susan Johnstad and Michelle Conway for their willingness to serve on the Tourism Committee as Chairman and Vice-Chairman. She noted that Tourism leadership is a very important role for the entire region. She also thanked Heather Ainardi for her service in the interim. Vice-Chairman Filardo then asked for a motion to approve the appointments of Dr. Susan Johnstad as Chairman of the Tourism Committee and Michelle Conway as Vice-Chairman. **Paul Watson made the motion, seconded by Rich Bowen. Motion carried unanimously.**

Chairman Ainardi thanked Dr. Johnstad for being willing to take the role as Chair, and stated that she looks forward to seeing the Committee advance toward their goals in the region. Ms. Drew made a comment that they are not letting Heather Ainardi go anywhere, and she will continue as a member of the Committee.

Chairman Ainardi then began discussing the Tourism Scope of Work for the coming year, remarking that the only change to the previous Scope of Work that had been approved by the EDC is the Tourism Forum planning, which will take place in 2017 or 2018. She reviewed the focus areas for the Scope of Work for the committee, some of which goals had already been met and were ongoing. She spoke about the resources that are being prepared for reaching out with tourism information utilizing the NACOG website. She asked for a recommendation from the committee. Teri Drew commented that it would be better if these types of items are recommended by the Executive Committee prior to going to the General Council.

Vice-Chairman Filardo began a discussion about the demise of the last Forum to ask what might be done to prevent that from happening again. Chairman Ainardi thanked her for bringing the discussion up. She noted that the Tourism committee began planning the Forum in August of last year, and spent 8 months working on the agenda and planning of the Forum. She shared that the Tourism Committee had the same discussion, feeling that they did not want the same thing to happen again, and asked the Executive Committee for input on the planning end, but then to trust the Tourism Committee to finish the work. There was some discussion about the perceived lack of communication at times between committee members and the host community representatives. It was agreed that communication between the planning team members from all sides needs to be open, and the Tourism Committee members are willing to put aside the past in an effort for both committees to work side-by-side in bringing resources together to plan for a successful Forum.

Chairman Ainardi followed up with the points that the Tourism Committee desired for the two committees to collaborate on for the next Forum, which would not be completed in this program year. If a Forum is going to be planned for 2017, these are the topics of desired discussion with the Executive Committee:

- Timing – fall or spring of next year
- Location – the Tourism Committee feels that they would like to remain with Pinetop-Lakeside as a location
- Duration – 1 ½ days, or shorter/longer, keeping budgets in mind
- Focus – keeping focus on the Tourism portion of the CEDS

She then asked for a discussion to these points. Paul Watson commented that Pinetop-Lakeside would be happy to host a Forum. A question was raised regarding choosing a resort to base the Forum in. Ms. Drew reminded them that there must be a bidding process because of the federal funding involved. She also mentioned that the Tourism Committee discussed the need for host-community involvement in the planning process. Timing was discussed, the spring of 2017 or the fall. Mr. Watson mentioned that for Pinetop-Lakeside, fall is the better time of year, showcasing the area more effectively, as well as being more economical financially for those attending. It was also mentioned that the public sector would be in a new budget planning year at that time, and would be more receptive to planning for the expenses of attending the Forum. Richard Bowen noted that the Forum should focus on tourism across the region as a whole, pitching tourism offices and groups to encourage the tourism providers to be there. Vice-Chairman Conway mentioned that fall is the peak season of the year for Sedona, and will be more difficult for them at that time. However, she also recognized that it makes sense for the host-community to utilize the season that works best for them, and with enough planning, it could probably be managed for everyone.

Chairman Ainardi noted that the ideas being brought up regarding the Forum focus audience were good and in agreement with the Tourism Committee's ideas. Discussion followed on those points, to be diverse yet able to support each region's tourism industry. Ms. Drew mentioned comments that had been made by EDC member Coral Evans and how bed tax dollars are used, and Ms. Evans had mentioned that they use them for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) in the City of

Flagstaff. Ms. Drew commented that there was also discussion at the last tourism meeting on building career pathways and workforce development with those tourism dollars as well. Discussion followed regarding involving state legislators and tourism groups in the planning, and also how much competition there is in bringing tourism awareness throughout Arizona. Education and highlighting the area in which the Forum takes place were noted as the two key factors to the success of the Forum. Ms. Drew commented on a tourism survey from the past that revealed how many people don't travel out of their own communities, so the Tourism Committee wants to create and encourage the tourism experience.

Chairman Ainardi wrapped up by re-capping the discussion about timing and location and focus. She also touched on the discussion about reaching out to the Arizona Office of Tourism about getting their plan for the coming year. She agreed that looking at the fall of 2017 would be beneficial for providing support for the tourism industry. Some more discussion followed regarding ideas for speakers and activities, and having a year and a half to plan.

Vice-Chairman Filardo thanked everyone for their input, and suggested the Tourism Committee come up with a tentative 2-day agenda at their next meeting and bring it to the next EDC meeting so that the discussion can move forward.

**6. Member Comments**

Vice-Chairman Filardo called for member comments. There were none.

**7. Public Comments**

Vice-Chairman Filardo called for public comments. There were none.

**8. Adjournment**

Vice-Chairman Filardo then called for a motion to adjourn the Executive Session of the EDC. **The motion to adjourn was made by Rich Bowen, seconded by Paul Watson. The meeting adjourned at 10:14 AM.**