

**Economic Development Council  
Tourism Committee Meeting ♦ January 19, 2017  
Pinetop-Lakeside Old Town Hall**

| <b>Members:</b>    |         | <b>(Absences YTD)</b> | <b>Planning Members:</b> |         | <b>(Absences YTD)</b> |
|--------------------|---------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| Adams, Sharon      | Absent  | 1                     | Williams, Matthew        | Present | 0                     |
| Christensen, Becki | Present | 0                     | Conway, Michelle         | Present | 0                     |
| Evans, Coral       | Absent  | 1                     | Franz, Judy              | Absent  | 1                     |
| Johnstad, Susan    | Present | 0                     |                          |         |                       |

**Guests:** Brian Bressel, General Manager at Sunrise Park Resort  
 Richard Heath, Executive Director, NAU Prescott Valley Campus  
 Keith Johnson, Town Manager of Pinetop Lakeside  
 Cyndie Shaffstall, Entrepreneur  
 Steve North, Business Development Coordinator, City of Show Low  
 Christine Ballard, Springerville-Eager Chamber of Commerce

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

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

Chairman Susan Johnstad called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM and welcomed everyone. She asked for a list of everyone attending in person in Pinetop as well as those on the phone. It was noted that a quorum was not yet present.

**2. Approval of October 27, 2016 and November 17, 2016 Minutes**

At 10:17 AM, Ms. Christensen arrived and the committee reached a quorum. Chairman Johnstad asked for discussion and approval of the minutes from the past two meetings. There was no discussion. Ms. Conway made a motion to approve both sets of minutes as presented and Ms. Christensen seconded.

**3. Chair's Report**

• **Membership Considerations.**

Ms. Drew clarified that Brian Bressel and Cyndie Shaffstall's applications had not yet been reviewed by the Economic Development Council (EDC), so they would not be voting members at this meeting. Chairman Johnstad stated that she has received applications for good candidates for membership. Ms. Drew confirmed that Mr. Bressel's and Ms. Shaffstall's applications had been forwarded to the EDC along with Ben Hooper's, Economic Development Director for Prescott Valley. Chairman Johnstad mentioned that Steve North and Rich Heath have been invited to submit their resumes, as well.

At Chairman Johnstad's request, Ms. Shaffstall introduced herself to the group. She moved from Denver to the White Mountains about 16 months ago. She owns a marketing and web development company and is a partner in five other companies, including one that is a business incubator for the under-resourced. She has a personal interest in helping the White Mountains and Northern Arizona gain recognition in search engines.

Chairman Johnstad also mentioned that several members have not attended committee meetings for several months, making it difficult for the committee to reach a quorum. She plans to contact each of these members individually and report back to this committee next month.

Unfortunately, Don Prince resigned from the committee after the City of Prescott eliminated the Office of Tourism Director position. Chairman Johnstad recommended that they accept Mr. Prince's resignation. She mentioned that the committee would benefit from finding another member with data analysis and research talent similar to Mr. Prince's.

#### **4. Regional Director's Updates**

- **Speakers**

Ms. Drew has been reaching out to potential speakers for the Tourism Forum in October 2017. She has received two verbal agreements from Debbie Johnson, Executive Director at AZ Office of Tourism, but is awaiting final confirmation. She also recruited David Drennon, Executive Vice President of Arizona Lodging and Tourism Association (AZLTA) to speak, and he agreed. This is a good opportunity for AZLTA to do a membership drive. Ms. Drew had a great conversation with Kimber Lanning of Local First Arizona, who also agreed to speak. She has an ability to draw a crowd, and Teri encouraged her to speak about Local First's weekend excursions and how other tourism organizations can partner with them. Ms. Drew also relayed a suggestion from Hunter Moore to ask the State Forester to speak.

Ms. Drew suggested that we not have breakout sessions and all stay in the same room. Mr. North suggested that we feature speakers from the host county. Ms. Drew suggested offering a panel discussion during one session on best practices in marketing, outreach or tourism generally, featuring local experts. She also suggested asking each of the two tourism groups in the county if they can provide a speaker. She asked Mr. North to provide suggestions for speakers and panel members, and he agreed.

- **Sponsors**

Ms. Drew thanked NAU for stepping up to be our first sponsor for the Tourism Forum at the \$1000 level. She also stated that APS had been interested and willing to sponsor in the past, but they have a new formal application process that required NACOG to submit only one application for the entire year. NACOG has included the Tourism Forum in its application, submitted it, and is awaiting the outcome.

Ms. Drew asked the group if they would expand the definition of sponsorship to include anyone who contributes time and/or resources, even if they do not contribute funding. This would include Arizona Lodging and Tourism Association, Arizona Office of Tourism, and Local First Arizona. The committee agreed to this. Ms. Sawyer pointed out that she created a list of in-kind donations received. Sunrise gift certificates expire in May, and Mr. Bressel offered to update them.

Ms. Drew asked for ideas for additional organizations to reach out to. Ms. Conway said Sedona Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau will consider sponsorship. Ms. Christensen offered to ask the White Mountain Regional Chambers of Commerce, as well. Ms. Drew clarified that we will review a sponsorship form for approval later in this meeting, and that she will also bring it to the EDC and ask them to recruit potential sponsors. Members were encouraged to give Ms. Deminsky names of other potential sponsors.

Chairman Johnstad thanked NACOG staff for moving Forum planning forward. She also reminded attendees in Pinetop that Mr. Williams arranged lunch for members followed by an informal tour of Pinetop Country Club's facilities. Ms. Drew and Chairman Johnstad thanked Mr. Williams for hosting today's meeting, lunch and tour. Since several people missed attending in person due to the weather, Chairman Johnstad suggested those members visit Pinetop Country Club at a later date.

## 5. Tourism Forum Discussion/Action Items

### • Review Checklist and Assignments

Per Chairman Johnstad's request, Mr. Heath reviewed the draft "Tourism Conference Planning and Budgeting Check-List" that he updated and expanded for this year's Forum. Chairman Johnstad thanked him for his willingness to jump into this work recently. He reported that he met with Ms. Drew, Ms. Sawyer and Ms. Deminsky to review this list before the holidays. He pointed out that Tourism Forum planning is mostly on track. As of this meeting, these are the outstanding items on the checklist that are due by the end of February, 2017:

- Obtain necessary agreement/contract signatures with site
- Technology rates
- Determine objective of the meeting and develop program and budget outlines
- Determine if and how much exhibitors will be charged
- Finalize list of companies and entities in which to solicit
- Assign each committee members' solicitation assignments
- Begin preparing master invitation list (email and/or physical address)
- Determine printing company and sign agreement (if necessary)
- Determine where conference materials will be sent (NACOG, hotel, other)
- Draft conference schedule: Sessions, planned extra activities, meals
- Draft conference marketing materials (print and social media)
- Save-the-Date cards noting early bird registration
- Facebook Page/web page that offers online payments
- Conference Brochure
- Newspaper and magazine ads and radio spots
- Complimentary materials (ex. restaurants, things to do., etc.)

### • Finalize a Theme, Save-the-Date, and Registration

The committee agreed on the "Becoming Tourism Ambassadors" theme. Ms. Shaffstall suggested replacing the Save-the-Date call to action button with an image of a calendar and arrow because such an image is 30% more likely to inspire action in the recipient. Ms. Shaffstall offered to provide a graphic for this. The group also reviewed four design options and chose the vintage AZ postcard design. They decided to correct line breaks to ensure names of each organization and the phrase "Arizona's beautiful White Mountains" appear on one line. They also agreed to spell out Arizona rather than abbreviating it as part of organizations' names.

Mr. Heath asked if we have a master contact list. Teri Drew answered that last time we sent it out to all Arizona Chambers of Commerce, the Economic Development Council, and the Regional Council. We also asked AZLTA and AOT to send it out to their lists. Ms. Conway sent it out to Sedona Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau membership and Ms. Christensen forwarded it to the membership of White Mountain Regional Chambers of Commerce. Ms. Drew pointed out that this all worked well and we should do it again. Mr. North also suggested ensuring invitations are sent to tour operators around the state, including Phoenix and Tucson. Ms. Drew recommended sending it to all the other Councils of Governments in the state, and she pointed out that her colleagues in Greenlee County have expressed interest in attending and helping with the Forum. She said that we will rely on our partners throughout the state to help with outreach, including those providing speakers. Several members suggested we gather all lists and combine them into a master list.

The committee would like the Save-the-Date cards to go out the first week of February via mail and email. This should be repeated several times, including in April and June. They would also like to use

social media, and Ms. Shaffstall was asked to help with this. She agreed and also offered support with online registration, a landing page, etc.

Ms. Johnstad asked Ms. Sawyer to talk about the sponsorship forms (marketing slides). Ms. Sawyer suggested we replace the current postcard montage design with the vintage postage design to match the Save-the-Date. The page that describes the different levels of sponsorship is the same as last year, when the EDC reviewed them. Ms. Sawyer asked for suggestions on the form and recommended keeping the In-Kind Donations label but removing "for Gift Bags." Ms. Christensen asked if we had decided on moving forward with a silent auction at the Forum, but members confirmed we had not.

Ms. Drew reminded the group that they had considered having vendor booths for Chambers of Commerce, and perhaps the silent auction could happen simultaneously. Ms. Conway suggested we also invite other types of vendors such as advertiser/media companies. Mr. Williams asked how much we should charge for each vendor booth. Several members noted that the last AOT Governor's Conference on Tourism was laid out well for both vendor booths and a silent auction. Ms. Conway agreed to ask AOT what they charged for booths so we can use their rate as a benchmark and reduce our price accordingly, given that our event will be smaller. Mr. Bressel suggested offering a reduced fee for a roaming vendor/sponsor. The group liked the idea of including registration for one attendee in each vendor's fee. Mr. Williams mentioned that vendor space will be limited and that the group taking a tour of Pinetop Country Club after the meeting would further assess the space.

Mr. Heath asked Ms. Drew if we know our budget. She replied that the group needed to approve items on the agenda today before a budget can be developed. These include registration fees and sponsorship levels. Currently, we have \$5k (\$4k in bank and \$1k from NAU). NACOG will contract with the facility and take care of deposits for meeting rooms, food, etc. Funds carried over from this year's Forum can either be used for next year's forum or offered as mini grants to organizations who wish to apply at this year's Forum.

Mr. Williams reviewed the catering options at the County Club. The lowest option was \$48 per person for two continental breakfasts plus two boxed lunches. The other option was \$64 per person for buffets at all four meals. Pinetop Country Club does not allow us to bring food in from other vendors. The group asked Mr. Williams to ask the site to price out the lower cost breakfasts combined with the higher priced lunch buffets.

Members liked the idea of planning a dinner out on Wednesday night 10/11/2017. Charlie Clark's Steak House in Pinetop offered a nice barbeque dinner in their back patio for \$25 per person for a recent Rural Policy Forum. Kimber Lanning planned this sold out event, so we can ask her for details. Ms. Drew suggested having the 10/12/17 optional dinner excursion in Show Low so we can also showcase that area, which is only 15 minutes from Pinetop Country Club. Mr. North said there are many restaurants, including Torreon and Cattleman's. He was asked to look into options and also group transportation. The committee would also like to explore the possibility of an optional dinner and activities at Sunrise Park Resort on 10/13/17. A similar outing after the Rural Policy Forum was very popular. Mr. Bressel will provide a quote to Mr. Williams for a Native American themed buffet and activities, which could include zip Line, chair lifts, and/or summer tubing (weather permitting).

Several members suggested that the registration form should allow registrants to pay for the registration fee and also easily tally fees for any optional activities and dinners they choose. The registration process should also offer an option for attendees to pay for their significant other or a guest to attend the optional dinners. Online registration would ideally offer a line item shopping cart process. Ms. Drew recommended the group keep the registration fee at \$100 for early birds and \$125

for later registrants, as it was in several previous forums. The committee agreed to this. The group agreed to push the early registration deadline to April 21, 2017.

Lodging rates were also similar for previous Forums. Pinetop County Club does not offer lodging, but we have quotes from three local hotels that offer conference rates. Mr. Williams will provide the third hotel's information to Ms. Deminsky for inclusion on the form. Mr. North will look at lodging rates in Show Low.

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

- Forum Agenda
- Ms. Conway asked that we discuss offering a photographer free registration in exchange for capturing images for future marketing. Ms. Christensen would like to ask Brenda Crawford from White Mountain Magazine to do this. Mr. Bressel and Mr. Williams also know photographers who can be invited.

## **7. Member Comments**

- Ms. Drew suggested having a rolling PowerPoint slideshow of tourism photos going at all times.
- Keith Johnson committed to welcoming those assembled on the morning of October 12 or inviting the Mayor of Pinetop Lakeside to do this.
- Mr. Bressel also suggested inviting the White Mountain Apache Tribal Chairman or a designee to welcome the group, and he agreed to make this request.
- Ms. Shaffstall recommended organizing a free hike starting at Springs Trail so attendees can enjoy the fall foliage. She suggested asking local TRACKS members if they will lead the hikes. Members liked the idea of offering several timeslots for this on 10/11/17 after participants register.

## **8. Public Comments**

Ms. Johnstad invited anyone who is not a member of the committee to share any comments they have. There were none.

## **9. Adjournment**

Mr. Williams motioned to adjourn and Ms. Conway seconded. Chairman Johnstad thanked all attendees and then adjourned the meeting at 11:22 AM.