

**Northern Arizona Council of Governments
Economic Development Council
Tourism Sub-Committee
Thursday, September 08, 2016 at 10:00 AM
Teleconference**

Members:	Absences
Dr. Susan Johnstad, Chairman	1
Michelle Conway – Vice Chairman	0
Heather Ainardi	0
Matthew Williams	0
Don Prince	2
Judy Franz	7
Coral Evans	3
Becki Christensen	3
Brian Bressel	1
Sharon Adams	1
Steve North	1

Committee Members present: Michelle Conway, Heather Ainardi, Matthew Williams, Don Prince, Judy Franz

Staff Present: Julia Sawyer, Angela Devine

Public: None

A Quorum was not present.

1. Call to Order/Welcome

Michelle Conway called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM. Michelle is sitting in for Susan Johnstad who was not able to attend due to last minute scheduling conflict with NAU. Michelle thanked everyone for joining and identified each member present and determined that a quorum is actually not present and no actions can be taken on any items.

2. Approval of the Minutes for July 11, 2016 Tuscan Conference

The minutes from July 11, 2016 cannot be approved however Michelle noted a correction to be made in Section 5 wherein her name is written as Michelle Ainardi. Julia stated this will be corrected prior to the next meeting.

3. Chair's Report

• **Tourism update**

Vice-Chair Conway commended Susan Johnstad on how thorough her presentation to the EDC in August was, and that the Committee has received approval of their timeline, agenda, location which is the White Mountain area, and date, October 11-13, 2017. They would like the topics to focus on best practices, Economic Development, advocacy and how to engage partners across

the State. Michelle also highlighted where we need to guide the focus from here, like obtaining sponsors, identifying speakers, and securing community agreements.

- **Welcoming of new members**

Michelle welcomed new members however both Brian Bressel and Sharon Adams were not on the call.

- **Tourism Forum**

Michelle handed the conversation over to Julia Sawyer to provide the Committee with some updates on the Forum. Julia opened by stating Teri Drew could not make the meeting, and she is filling in on her behalf to discuss which took place at the July 11th meeting. Susan was going to check conflicting dates and marketing strategies, however these matters will be deferred as well in light of her absence.

- ❖ Bids- Mathew contacted Pinetop Country club and Hon-dah and has not received their bids as of yet. For lodging, he has received quotes ranging from Antler's Inn \$69 per night to Best Western \$85.99 per night. He is awaiting a quote from Holiday Inn. The rates received included a Friday night stay. Within the parameters of the hotel discussion, the question arose as to whether the food should be catered, or should the hotel provide the meals. Hon-dah was able to provide lunch for \$10/pp. Bids have not been received from Steve North for Show Low as of yet. Heather mentioned trying to get lunch sponsored in-kind from the Chambers. Matthew pointed out that at the Rural Policy Forum, dinner was a separate charge, as well as the activities. These factors will affect the cost of the registration so they need to be determined relatively quickly. Matthew did however request the bid from Pinetop both ways, with and without food. Matthew was also asked to make sure to secure a rate sheet when he gets the bid.
- ❖ Sponsorship – The Committee reviewed what types of sponsors and the levels, Julia pointed out that APS was the only sponsor last year, but we could seek out hotels, restaurants, Chambers, to assist with paying the expenses and funding the mini grants. Julia was able to provide those who were not in attendance at the Tuscan meeting, a brief overview to the best of her knowledge of mini-grants for small businesses within EDD Communities. Much of the information, as far as qualifications for the mini-grants, etc. was left to be determined. Angela Devine will send out the sponsorship used last year as a reference.
- ❖ Representation- Heather will reach out to Joyce Ligenfelter of Flagstaff for membership into the Tourism Committee as she has not yet had an opportunity to.
- ❖ Speakers – Julia Sawyer advised the committee of the confirmed speakers which are Debra Johnson of Arizona Office of Tourism who will be our feature speaker, David Drennon, of Arizona Lodging and Tourism Association, and Kimber Lanning of Arizona First, who needs to know the direction of the Forum, and Michelle to do a presentation on the website. Michelle would like to see by next October more detail as to what the speakers will be discussing. Although most know of David Drennon, they have not heard any presentations by him. Other suggestions for speakers were Paul Watkins, Jeff Hays of the USDA, and Casey Rooney from the AAED. There was a concern that White Mountain may need more representation as far as speakers. Heather Ainaridi pointed out that while these speakers are good, we need to assure we are not focusing so much on Economic Development that we lose the interest of those coming for the

Tourism forum. Although the committee cannot take any action, these are things to think about for the next meeting. Michelle mentioned that attendees should have “tangible takeaways” and suggested having someone inspirational or altruistic and motivational speak at the end, and who may be slightly outside of our industry.

- ❖ Other Ideas- Most of the Committee preferred a booklet format for the program as opposed to doing something on the back of the name cards. Julia requested if anyone had a program template to please forward it to Angela Devine to format for our Forum. They also discussed using the postcards that the committee has been collecting as raffle tickets. As far as prizes, Matthew is going to speak to his Chamber about providing goodie bags, which usually consists of brochures and local area services and restaurant coupons. Julia asked Matthew to please bring a sample to the next in person meeting which will be October 13 in Phoenix. Judy Franz was going to get in contact with Forever Resorts to see if they can donate approximately 150 gift bags. The last idea presented to the Committee would be to have a member from each Chambers set up a booth at the Forum. Matthew discussed having a food station at each Chamber booth to encourage attendees to go to each booth. This will be further discussed at the next meeting.
- ❖ Committee was asked to consider if they want the cost of the “Sunrise Experience” to be separate, or included in the registration fee. Matthew Williams mentioned that at the Rural Policy Forum in August, the “Sunrise Experience” was separate and it appeared to be successful.
- ❖ Location- Julia Sawyer pointed out to the group how Pinetop Country Club is about 2 miles outside of Sunrise and Torreon is 5-6 miles outside of Show Low when considering where to hold the forum. Matthew mentioned something to consider is that Torreon is set back so may be harder to find. We can have signage put out to assist if necessary.

- **Retreat Discussion**

Vice-Chairman Conway advised the Committee that although there will not be a retreat in Springerville, we are planning an in-person meeting for Phoenix October 13. Angela Devine stated that as the response has been positive to meeting in Phoenix, the exact time and place are awaiting further clarification pending the return of Teri Drew. Additionally, the focus of this meeting is going to be more detailed planning of the forum.

4. **Web Site update**

Michelle Conway reviewed the website as to what was presented at the last EDC, and encourage the Committee to review the site as well. The only section that has not been completed is Economic Resource and Funding Organizations, however she hopes to have that section completed soon. A link to related conferences was also created on the website. The website was presented to the EDC with a goal of being a resource to the EDD communities and the business within them, in providing educations and facts about the region. Additionally, this is an ever evolving site with a constant feed of new information. The Committee was asked to forward any interesting tourism stories relative to our region to the website via a link. Additionally, Michelle mentioned some of the missing information from the site includes bios from Sharon Adams, Brian Bressel, and headshots from Susan Johnstad, Brian and Sharon. Julia also mentioned perhaps putting a link to presentations, videos and commercials that were aired for the local area. Michelle wants to make sure we do not however become too consumer oriented and we

remember who the end user is. Julia suggested featuring an area for a short period of time and Michelle suggested rotating the featured area periodically.

5. Regional Chamber (Show Low, Eagar, Snowflake/Taylor)

Michelle Conway turned to conversation over the Matthew Williams and his overview of Regional Chamber. Mr. Williams stated Regional Chamber consists of Show Low, Eagar, Snowflake and Taylor. Matthew has only been to one meeting which was this past December, and stated they do not meet very often, possibly quarterly. Part of the challenge in getting members together is how far apart the towns are from each other. With respect to a “consortium” which was referenced on a previous Tourism Committee agenda, the only thing he can think of is the White Mountain Partnership but Pinetop Lakeside is not a part of that.

6. Agenda Items for next Meeting

- How to Market/Promote the Web Site page
- Forum - agreements with venues, agenda, guidance of speakers, sponsorships, booths by Chambers

7. Member Comments

No member comments

8. Public Comments

No public comments

9. Adjournment

Vice-Chairman Conway adjourned the meeting at 11:11

NACOG EDC Tourism Committee Meeting Minutes – September 8, 2016
APPROVED: October 27, 2016