

Potomac Highlands Creative Economy Team Meeting

December 9, 2021, 2021

10 am

Zoom

Meeting called by:	Phyllis Baxter/Lukas Ray	Type of meeting:	Informal Discussion
Facilitator:		Note taker:	Maria
Timekeeper:			

Attendees: Phyllis Baxter, Lukas, Ray, Tina Ladd, Michele Moure-Reeves, Greg Greenwalt, Kimberly Byard, Robert Burnes, Megan Webb, Anne Beardslee, Cynthia Martel, Morgan Glup, Kelly Williams, Melissa Shockey, Ashley Rotruck, Jonathan Bellingham, Ben Duvall-Irwin, Jessica Waldo, Carla Kaposy, Laura Brown, Cheryle Wolfe, Eileen Johnson, Betsy Orndoff-Sayers, Rick Smith, Robert Johnson, Jesse Sites, Katie Light, Logan, John Riggs, Ethan Serr, Lindsey Kazarick, Geoff Merrill, Patricia Halterman, Rick Smith, Amanda Gross, Tracy McCoy, Robbie Babbitt, Emily Wilson-Hauger, Maria Bray

Meeting notes

Discussion:

Welcome - Lukas Ray - It is good to see new faces in the group. We have extended the invitation to this group to the members of our AFNHA region thanks to the support of the Benedum Grant. This grant will allow us to expand our reach and invite many other tourism leaders in the eighteen county region. This meeting will serve as both the November and December meeting due to the end of year holiday activities. We usually meet the last Thursday of the month on Zoom.

Rob Burns – Giving Tuesday

Rob is the Director of Non-Profits at Eastern University Technical College. We recently held a giving Tuesday campaign where we raised over \$1700 this year using class.org If you wish to do a campaign like this in the future, we can help you. Video presentation with Maya Paul discussing the value of her experience. See attachment in follow up <https://www.classy.org/campaign/giving-tuesday/c373179>

John Riggs – Ag Innovation

The Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge is a national business competition that showcases U.S. startups developing innovative solutions that address challenges facing America’s farmers, ranchers and rural communities. In the challenge students come up with an innovative idea and present those ideas to a panel of judges. We had twenty one participants. Some of the innovative ideas included

one from Alexis Irwin from Philip-Barbour county High School invented a blue tooth function pre-feeder which will allow the farmers to feed without being swarmed by the cattle. (Photos of winners shared). Approximately \$3,000 in prizes was given out this year. There was a great turnout with a lot of success.

Patricia Halterman serves as the Ag Workforce Fellowship and Student Training Coordinator. We are gearing up for our farm management program which will be starting in January. These classes include Hard Work and Harmony which is an online course about balancing the mental and physical struggles with running an agriculture operation. This is through Ranch Management Consultants. Then we have initiating and scaling up production, Managing financial risks, Managing Human resource risks, Managing legal risks, marketing risks and production risks. Dr. Beising Knight will teach those courses. She is an economic development professor. There is a full schedule on the website. Please contact her at patricia.halterman@easternwv.edu 304-434-8000 ext 9609 if you are interested in these offerings. <https://easternwv.edu/workforce-education/ag-workforce-trainings-certifications/>

We are working to improve the skill set of our agro culture workforce in the Potomac/Highlands region.

Megan Webb - Please feel free to take Eastern Workforce Education Public Survey: <https://easternwv.edu/workforce-education/> to guide our trainings and direction in 2022.

Rick Smith – Grant Writing Class

Rick teaches grant writing at the University of California in Riverside via online classes. He moved back to WV in May and is excited about teaching this class at Eastern because it is not just an academic pursuit. The goal is to have the people taking the class, by the end of the class, be able to submit their grants to be funded.

From Megan Webb to Everyone:

More information about the Grant Proposal Writing Workshop:
Tuesdays, January 18 - March 18 | 6 - 8 p.m.
\$500 + purchase of textbook
Instructed by Rick Smith via Zoom

Learn the mechanics of producing a grant proposal document that will be ready for submission upon completion of the course. Topics include grant research, planning, budget development, partnerships, document preparation, writing for the grant and proposal generation.

Guest speaker – Katie Light from the WV Tourism Office –

There are services we offer for promotional development for different business. I recommend that you sign up for the partner portal to access all of our services whether it be requesting travel guides, catching up on newsletters. Everything is housed on this portal and it is where businesses can upload business listings and event listings on our website. We work for them to gain more exposure when others are searching for something to do in WV. The event listings page is one of our most popular sites. <https://wvtourism.com/information-and-press/tourism-partners/industry-resources/>

Marketing services include a variety of things for industry partners. The list includes media relations, FAM trips by bringing in Press, influencer and media, email support, photography assistance, and international trade and public relations.

We also offer industry development systems for existing businesses and work closely with development offices to recruit new tourism assets. There is quite a bit of research data that we make available to our partners. Welcome center services for distribution of brochures to welcome centers and rest stop areas.

Please make note of the Governor's conference on tourism which occurs annually and allows the tourism partners to come together to promote West Virginia and participate in training opportunities. It was held on line in 2021 but we are hoping to hold it in person for 2022.

Our cooperative advertising program allows our partners to advertize destinations, attractions, and events on a larger scale. We work with an advertising agency and our partners to collaborate on advertisements. They may be digital, print, and any type of media available. Participation in the program makes partners available for bonus incentives.

Phyllis Baxter – AFHNA mini grant program

With Eastern's partnership, we were awarded a new Benedum Grant this fall that will run for the next two years. As a part of that, we budgeted some funds for tourism enhancement grants and we are matching that with some of our heritage area funds so that we have a total of \$60K available for grants. We are looking for asks from around \$1K up to \$5K for projects that enhance or sustain tourism and we are asking the applicants to provide a 50% match which can be in kind. The application will release today as a Google document you can copy and download (please do not type on this version)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/18ySNxJFphBsng4P1akx3xQsIsxcru5aD/edit?usp=sharing&oid=117863229703949428561&rtpof=true&sd=true>

It will also be posted on our website in the next week or two on the creative economy site page that is not yet live <https://www.appalachianforesthna.org/creative-economy>. The applications are due by **March 1st** and we are willing to work with you and review drafts if they come in early enough. Please contact Lukas or Phyllis. These projects should be something that is adding to a tourism attraction or an experience. If it is for an event, it should be for something new in the event not just for operating funds for ongoing events. Interpretation projects, anything that extends opportunity, addresses challenges, relates to COVID recovery or resilience, improves accessibility or increases diversity (either in the stories or the audience). The applicant needs to be a non-profit or government entity, private businesses can partner with a nonprofit and be involved in a project. These funds are not primarily for promotion.

This is a pilot project so we welcome your comments, suggests and ideas. We are expecting our funding to go up and hope to offer this program on a larger scale with a broader scope.

AFHNA is working on an EDA tourism grant to help grow our creative economy and get more boots on the ground with more staff and to provide technical training and assistance around our area. WE will be working on this through December and Phyllis will be sending out requests for letters of support specifically to CVBs and EDAs. We will also be seeking beneficiary letters that declare this will help create jobs.

Next meeting – 1/27/22 at 10 am on zoom

Open Forum:

Cindy of Future Generations – 12/17 National Maple Syrup Day. There will be a 12 hour maple marathon with hourly content. Working on grants for AgTourism and doing some coaching as well.

Main Street Magic in Franklin with holiday activities

Laura Brown – there will also be carriage rides in Pendleton County. We are working on biking trails in Sugar Grove. The navy base has been purchased and will be converted into a legacy therapeutic school for autistic students. Positions for the school are being posted for applicants.

Tina Ladd – Hampshire.com Holiday open House at Tygart Hall with Winterfest

Michele – Hardy County – Moorefield Holiday Parade. Meeting with the National Parks Service and planning a mountain bike trail. The CVB has received funding for construction of the visitor's center.
Ashley – mineral county cvb – last weekend was their holiday celebration. The cvb is looking ahead to see about events for overnight activity. Mineral county day is coming up where they go to Charleston to meet with the legislators about local issues.

Anne Beardslee – Randolph County CVB – Christmas is our main theme and we have already held our parade. The Gnomes are back in town and we have added small Christmas trees painted by community members. Christmas light contest has been expanded to indoor lighting. Some businesses only decorate inside and are opening their doors to visitors. There is a map on the Chamber of Commerce site. Gandy Dancers are presenting a Christmas show. The organization, Travel Waits, votes Elkins in the top ten WV towns that make you feel like you are in a Hallmark Christmas movie. Lights are up in town. CVB is working on the Ramps and Rail festival set for April 23rd.

Carla Kaposy, Grant co CVB – Hometown Christmas event this Saturday with live nativity, face painting, games. The local theatre group is hosting the Best Christmas Pageant ever, visits with Santa and a Wine Tasting. We recently received an LEDA grant for a walking/biking trail.

Tourism Day at the Capital is 1/19/22. You need to register with the division of tourism. It is at the Capital and provides an opportunity to meet with delegates.

Kelly Williams – Moorefield – the movie theatre is the first in the state to offer large screen gaming leagues so families can participate. They are starting construction on a cold storage facility to support farmers. This will include retail space to sell local products.

Jonathan Bellingham – the spa at Capon Springs will be open this winter on the weekends along with the new escape room

Lukas – our planning meeting is coming up the end of this month. Please share your ideas with Megan and Lukas for speakers and activities in the 2022 meetings for the creative economy group.

From the chat:

10:00:35 From Robert Burns to Everyone:

Robert Burns

10:05:52 From Robert Burns to Everyone:

Robert Burns, Robert.burns@easternwv.edu

10:07:37 From Robert Burns to Everyone:

<https://www.classy.org/campaign/giving-tuesday/c373179>

10:10:20 From Patricia Halterman to Everyone:

<https://easternwv.edu/workforce-education/ag-workforce-trainings-certifications/>

10:10:32 From Patricia Halterman to Everyone:

Patricia Halterman

10:10:46 From John Riggs to Everyone:

john.riggs@easternwv.edu Director of Ag Innovation feel free to reach out about any of Eastern Ag Innovation offerings.

10:11:16 From Patricia Halterman to Everyone:

patricia.halterman@easternwv.edu 304-434-8000 ext 9609

10:12:43 From Eileen M Johnson to Everyone:

Please resend information on the grant writing class - is registration still possible, cost?

10:13:13 From Megan Webb to Everyone:

Please feel free to take Eastern Workforce Education Public Survey:

<https://easternwv.edu/workforce-education/> to guide our trainings and direction in 2022.

10:17:26 From Melissa Shockey to Everyone:

Yes, we are currently enrolling in the Grant Writing class. You may apply online at:

https://easternwv.edu/wp-content/uploads/WF_application.pdf

10:19:45 From Megan Webb to Everyone:

More information about the Grant Proposal Writing Workshop:

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\$500 + purchase of textbook

Instructed by Rick Smith via Zoom

Learn the mechanics of producing a grant proposal document that will be ready for submission upon completion of the course. Topics include grant research, planning, budget development, partnerships, document preparation, writing for the grant and proposal generation.

10:24:39 From Phyllis Baxter to Everyone:

Tourism grant application -- please download or copy, do NOT edit or fill out this original

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/18ySNxJFphBsng4P1akx3xQsIsxcru5aD/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=117863229703949428561&rtpof=true&sd=true>

10:24:59 From Lukas Ray to Everyone:

<https://www.appalachianforestnha.org/creative-economy>

10:29:55 From Laura Brown to Everyone:

Can I ask a question

10:33:24 From Kelly Williams to Everyone:

I would be happy to do a letter, email me at: sbranchn@hardynet.com - Kelly Williams - South Branch Inns

10:33:51 From Tina Ladd to Everyone:

Phyllis, I'll do a letter, too! I'll email you in a bit!

10:36:06 From Tracy McCoy to Everyone:

Hi everyone! My name is Tracy McCoy and I am the new Executive Director of the Summersville CVB. Unfortunately my camera/mic is not working but I just wanted to take a quick moment to say Hello!

10:38:05 From Cheryl Wolfe to Everyone:

Sorry, I have another meeting and will have to leave. I appreciate the opportunity to participate and hear what others are doing.

10:38:57 From Robert Johnson to Everyone:

Annual 'Hometown Holiday Marketplace' will be held in Richwood, Nicholas County, WV, on Saturday, December 11, 2021, from 10 AM until 3 PM in downtown. Stores are open

10:41:26 From Tina Ladd to Everyone:

Hampshire County CVB is holding a Holiday Open House with Fort Mill Ridge Foundation and Hampshire County Development Authority here at Taggart Hall this Saturday as part of Romney's Winterfest Events! Romney will have Breakfast with Santa, Gingerbread House Building, a Christmas Parade, a Kristkindl Market and horse/sleigh rides!! www.cometohamshire.com

10:41:47 From Tina Ladd to Everyone:

And don't forget the North Pole Express! Book tix now, they're almost sold out!

10:41:59 From Robert Johnson to Everyone:

The Preservation Alliance of West Virginia, has yesterday listed its 'Saving Historic Places' grant program, which will dedicate \$485 k in funding. Application deadline is March 18, 2022.

10:46:42 From Tina Ladd to Everyone:

North Pole Express tickets can be purchased at www.potomaceagle.com It's a wonderful, magical trip! There's an event barn, too, that is open to the public while the train is running!

10:54:37 From Rick Smith to Everyone:

A reminder about the Grant Writing. The goal and expectation is to have you understand the process and to author a grant proposal for submission for funding by the end of the class. I want to help you and your agencies develop capacity.

10:56:24 From Ashley Rotruck to Everyone:

I need to hop off. Everyone have a great holiday! Take care!

10:58:42 From Megan Webb to Everyone:

Eastern's Foundation still has the Advancement Specialist position opening, <https://easternwv.edu/wp-content/uploads/Advancement-Services-Specialist-100721.pdf>

10:59:48 From Kelly Williams to Everyone:

Kelly Williams - South Branch Cinema 6 Gaming and South Branch Cattle And Meat Company - sbranchn@hardynet.com

That is great Jonathan!

11:00:54 From Jonathan Bellingham to Everyone:

Capon Springs spa opened this winter

11:01:16 From Megan Webb to Everyone:

Hope you have a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!