

Potomac Highlands Creative Economy Team Meeting

January 27, 2022

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, Ashley Rotruck, Jonathan Bellingham, Ben Duvall-Irwin, Jessica Waldo, Carla Kaposy, Cheryle Wolfe, Betsy Orndoff-Sayers, Robert Johnson, Katie Light, Logan Smith, Jolynn Powers, Elizabeth Satterfield, John Riggs, Michele Dayton, Tracy McCoy, Laura Meadows, Ennis Smith, Katie Wolpert, Cara Rose, Emily Wilson-Hauger, Patricia Halterman, Debi Layton, Ethan, Laura Brown, Olivia Miller, Beth Gill, Dawn Hein, Evelyn Hartman, Arthurdale Heritage, Stephen DeVita, Ron Tate, Lindsey Kazarick, Maria Bray

Meeting notes

Discussion:

Welcome - Lukas Ray - It is good to see everyone in 2022. Thanks to the Benedum Grant, we can extend participation in these meetings to all 18 counties in our area. Please give some thought to renaming the group to better reflect our expanded membership. There will be more discussion on this topic at a later date.

Phyllis Baxter – AFHNA tourism development mini-grant program

Reminder - 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 is posted on our website on the creative economy site page

<https://www.appalachianforestnha.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. Many of the inquiries are to see if a project is eligible and about the geographic distribution of the funds. In general, if you think it's a fit and you want to apply, please do so. The applications are not limited to one per county. This is a pilot project so we still have unanswered questions as well.

Lukas Ray - Sustainable Rural Tourism in West Virginia series

WVU is hosting a Sustainable Rural Tourism in West Virginia series, which is free with a new webinar every month at 11 a.m. Check out the offered topics in the link below and register for those you are interested in. What a valuable resource, and it's free!

<https://extension.wvu.edu/community-business-safety/tourism-hospitality/sustainable-tourism>

Reminder: The Grant Writing workshops offered by Eastern are ongoing. Please see attached flyer for details.

John Riggs – Ag Innovation

An update on AgWorkforce training that started in January. We have had 5 successful training sessions in farm business management and are looking to do the sixth one next Tuesday. In February we will kick off our Agro business diversification and value-adding as well as our horticulture and management training.

Megan Webb - To enroll in ag workforce training and certifications, view the 2022 schedule here:

<https://easternwv.edu/workforce-education/ag-workforce-trainings-certifications/> email, aginnovation@easternwv.edu or call 304.434.8000 ext. 9609.

We are working on some innovative training that will be offered in the fall. We are continuing to sell our products through the Potomac Highlands Producers Website: February Orders available now. Pick-ups, Feb. 1 - 7. Order here: <https://www.potomachighlandsproducers.com/>. For questions email: potomachighlandsproducers@easternwv.edu A plan for this program is to create an internship for students and tie that into agricultural studies.

We have an opening for a Director of Agriculture. John will be moving on to a position in his hometown. That announcement is on the employment section of our main web page.

CDL training enrollments are being accepted now. The first class is on March 28. WV HEAPS is contributing \$4K in tuition recovery. We are still actively recruiting for the 75-hour welding class starting in February.

Rob Burns – media marketing training

The creative Economy grant provided funds to do additional training.

Olivia Miller - works in marketing/communications at WVU. Over the next several months with be doing a series of marketing training that is free and available to everyone to help you grow your online business presence and connect with your audience. The first one will be available on 2/23 on Eastern's website.

Rob - contracted with Collen Dayton who will be doing a session in March on Business ownership and work-life balance. In April, she will be doing one on Promoting your Farming business. We have also contracted with the WV Hospitality Association to do additional training once a quarter. One is scheduled in April with Ritchie Heap and Frank DeMarco - Lodging Management and Best Practices during a Pandemic.

Management Planning - Phyllis

We are at the writing stage of the Management Plan. We are doing the initial reviews and will eventually make it available to everyone for comment on the draft review and then there will be an official 30-day public review. We are open to any suggestions. **Thank you** for the support letters and beneficiary letters for the EDA grant that has been submitted.

Closing - Lukas

A new year and a lot of new things going on. I will be sending out a couple of surveys for topics and speakers. We are working on and planning the Annual Tourism Summit for June and would welcome your input on topics and guest speakers. Do we wish to meet virtually, in person, or some type of hybrid? All these questions and more will be coming to you soon. Please keep a lookout in your email for announcements and surveys. Would one of you like to be a guest speaker and share with the group?

Next meeting – 2/24/22 at 10 am on zoom

Open Forum:

Cara Rose - Mountain State Maple Days - the 19th of February and 19th of March. This has evolved into a comprehensive campaign to promote the maple producers in the state of West Virginia. Looking for sugar camps that may be willing to offer tours. Also, if you have a supporting business that may be willing to offer maple-specific products on those days, please let Cara know to see how you might participate. Registration for the promotion is online. Sugar house and ancillary business registration (free): <https://wvmspa.org/maple-days-entry-form-2/>

Cara will be speaking this month at Out of the Woods: Enriching Your Maple Business. You can register at <https://www.future.edu/maple/> 2/27 at 7 pm.

Tina - Hampshire County - working on a grant for an outdoor show trying to figure out how to get visitors to spend the night. We do an annual Woods & Water Expo here in Summersville. It is taking place on March 25th & 26th at the Summersville Arena & Conference Center. Caperton Springs and farms have opened up the spa this winter.

Jonathan - Caperton Springs has had a spa open for six weeks and it has gone well. Upcoming special galantines events and the weekends are mostly sold out. This will likely be expanded next year. We are getting ready for our 90th anniversary and will open up more at Easter.

Michele - Hardy County - We had our first meeting with the public history program from WVU regarding our Heritage Trail Program. The first one is going to be Historic School Houses. We have four new board members. Lost River Trails coalition and Lost River State Park are moving forward with the development of the beginner trail, mountain bike trail, and plan multi-use trails throughout the park.

WV Department of Tourism - Please make sure your specific events are on the calendar.

Anne Beardslee - Randolph County - Ramp Festival is April 23 and will be outdoors. Fausnaught in Helvetia will be an outside event. The trains may begin in April this year - not yet final. Our Town is decorating the season. Last spring they offered wooden daises that were decorated by residents, Fall was the maple leaf, Christmas was a tree campaign, and this spring they will be doing Tulips. Our town will be doing the car show and fireworks. Thank you to all who came to tourism day. Pickens Maple syrup festival is coming up too.

Tracy - Somerville Feb 1st, will host a promotion with a weekend winter giveaway for anyone who lives over 50 miles from Somersville. There will be prizes including a two-night stay, a gift basket, and more.

Elizabeth Satterfield - Arthurdale - Event coming up on Feb 12 where we partner with Friends of Deckers Creek. Event <https://www.facebook.com/events/340958244333115> and the New Deal Festival is the second week in July (July 9th).

Ashley Rotruck - Mineral County - using this time to do strategic planning for the upcoming year. We would like to expand our outdoor activities and Heritage Tourism. Bringing back the Strawberry Festival after more than ten years.

Dawn Hine - Alleghany County - With Evergreen Heritage Center - working on creating a coal camp with a boarding house, blacksmith shop, and re-establishing a mine opening on the property. Opening in June. www.evergreenheritagecenter.org

Tucker County - winter is in full swing - The town of Davis is working on a short-term rental ordinance.

Maria - AFNHA - Story map - upcoming discussion - We can help if you are interested in posting your heritage locations on story maps. It is a useful tool for creating driving tours and thematic tours in your locations. www.theclio.com

Cara - brought up the issue of housing. Looking for ideas for solving or collaborating with other regions to start planning for permanent housing for people moving into the area and for workers.

The governor is planning to introduce a bill for a housing tax credit.

There was quite a response to this topic and may be our focus for the next meeting.

11 libraries are participating with Eastern to use a 3D printer for entrepreneurial projects. There is an upcoming competition "Break Challenge" will be held outside of Davis WV the first week in May

Chat Notes:

10:03:14 From Phyllis Baxter to Everyone:

I've been calling us "Highlands Creative Economy"

10:03:34 From Lukas Ray to Everyone:

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

10:06:04 From Lukas Ray to Everyone:

<https://extension.wvu.edu/community-business-safety/tourism-hospitality/sustainable-tourism>

10:10:50 From Patricia Halterman to Everyone:

email patricia.halterman@easternwv.edu for more information Agriculture training

10:11:25 From Melissa Shockey to Everyone:

Melissa.Shockey@easternwv.edu

10:12:30 From Patricia Halterman to Everyone:

email potomachighlandsproducers@easternwv.edu for information about to Co-op monthly food boxes or how to join as a producer

10:14:19 From Megan Webb to Everyone:

Potomac Highlands Producers Website: February Orders available now. Pick-ups, Feb. 1 - 7. Order here: <https://www.potomachighlandsproducers.com/> . For questions email: potomachighlandsproducers@easternwv.edu .

10:15:18 From Megan Webb to Everyone:

To enroll in ag workforce training and certifications, view the 2022 schedule here: <https://easternwv.edu/workforce-education/ag-workforce-trainings-certifications/> email, aginnovation@easternwv.edu or call 304.434.8000 ext. 9609.

10:15:49 From Robert Burns to Everyone:

Any CE Training Questions: Robert.burns@easternwv.edu

10:27:02 From Lindsay Kazarick to Everyone:

future.edu/maple

10:27:36 From Lindsay Kazarick to Everyone:

www.wvmspa.org

10:28:41 From Cindy Martel to Everyone:

Sugar house and ancillary business registration (free):

10:28:46 From Cindy Martel to Everyone:

<https://wvmspa.org/maple-days-entry-form-2/>

10:29:56 From Ron Tate to Everyone:

Does anyone have information about the Acidified Canning License through the Fall Ag Conference?

10:30:21 From Cindy Martel to Everyone:

Interactive map--

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/embed?mid=1tveAAmWcfZGoED3YJfZQmluC4OZAoHGL&ll=38.665675607525245%2C-80.272293125&z=8>

10:31:36 From Cindy Martel to Everyone:

Better Process Control School-Acidified Foods-

<https://agriculture.wv.gov/2022/01/19/wvda-offering-better-process-control-school/>

10:33:03 From Tracy McCoy to Everyone:

Tina Ladd- We do an annual Woods & Water Expo here in Summersville. It is taking place on March 25th & 26th at the Summersville Arena & Conference Center. If you'd like to contact me for more information regarding what we do and to address the concern of how to encourage visitors to stay overnight, please do so. tracy@summersvillecvb.com or 304-872-3722

10:33:22 From Tina Ladd to Everyone:

Thanks, Tracy!

10:33:40 From Tracy McCoy to Everyone:

Very welcome, Tina!

10:36:33 From Cara Rose to Everyone:

thanks to the awesome training/webinar opportunities from Eastern and in collaboration with WVHTA and WVU!

10:37:14 From Ben Duvall-Irwin to Everyone:

Yes

10:38:03 From Ben Duvall-Irwin to Everyone:

Also the Pickens Maple Syrup Festival will be March 19th and 20th I believe

10:39:54 From Cara Rose to Everyone:

love the Pickens Maple festival!!!! many fond memories going over there!

10:42:55 From Ron Tate to Everyone:

Was unaware of Helvetia Festival. We've been celebrating Fasnacht Day since our opening. Make fresh all day.

10:44:35 From Phyllis Baxter to Everyone:

congrats on the new job, Elizabeth!

10:44:53 From Elizabeth Satterfield--Arthurdale to Everyone:

Feb 12 Event <https://www.facebook.com/events/340958244333115>

10:44:59 From Elizabeth Satterfield--Arthurdale to Everyone:

Thanks, Phyllis!

10:48:59 From Dawn Hein to Everyone:

www.evergreenheritagecenter.org

10:58:38 From Ron Tate to Everyone:

I would love more info on that Emily and Jess. I've been working on that here at my building and another property here in Davis. Have been able to get the ball rolling, but was unaware of these other programs.

10:59:21 From Megan Webb to Everyone:

Follow the Potomac Highlands Producers Facebook page for your chance to win Valentine's day giveaway basket: <https://www.facebook.com/PotomacHighlandsCooperative>

10:59:49 From Robert Burns to Everyone:

Bright Challenge contact: Robert.burns@easternwv.edu