



**Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) Meeting
MINUTES**

Wednesday, July 22, 2020
Virtual Zoom Meeting

TAC Members Present: Brent DeRaad, Heidi Hanson, Judith Hector, Jeff Meyer, Linda Morgan, Deborah Ostreicher, Ben Stewart, Robert Uribe, Jennifer Wesselhoff

TAC Members Absent: Bruce Lange

Guest: Cesar Chavez

AOT Staff Present: Debbie Johnson, Becky Blaine, Alix Skelpsa Ridgway, Colleen Floyd, Josh Coddington Kiva Couchon, Laurie Lemcke, Mary-Ellen Kane, Tim DeClaire, Pamela Shand

Welcome & Introductions

Meeting called to order at 10:05 AM. Roll called and Debbie Johnson welcomed members and staff.

Meeting Minutes

Motion made and seconded to approve minutes from July 22, 2019. Motion passed.

Arizona Office of Tourism Updates

Office of Executive – Debbie Johnson

- **Governor’s Task Force** continues with engagement with Governor Ducey and senior staff on tourism related efforts, as well as Arizona Department of Health Services on guidelines.
- **AOT Audit** is a once every 10 year sunset audit and review that will begin soon. The full audit will be finalized by the Auditor General’s Office no later than October 2021. Auditors may reach out to the TAC members.
- **Leave No Trace** partnership incorporates seven principles through educational marketing materials on caring for our land. LNT information will be sent to TAC members to promote and share with their community.
- **Arizona Tourism Strategic Recovery Plan** is a 12 -18 month statewide recovery plan with indicators that can be adapted by each region of the state. The plan will focus on our tribal and rural areas and our urban markets. The final plan will be shared with TAC members.

Budget Update – Laurie Lemcke

For FY21 there is a projected \$4 million revenue shortfall from last year due to COVID-19. The estimated Prop 202 funding will see a decrease in revenue based on number of casino closings. Prop 302 funding is not expected to have monthly distributions until January 2021.

Debbie added that while there is a significant decrease AOT funding, AOT will apply for the Cares and EDA grant money and will continue to market and operate in an efficient and collaborative way.

Communications Update – Josh Coddington

- AOT public relations effort has generated over 800 television, radio, digital and online articles that resulted in 169% of our goal for the year.
- AOT’s effort has reached 9.5 million impressions, which resulted in \$1.5 million of free earned publicity through our social media channels, Tourism Tuesday, and regular monthly spots on Fox 10 and Channel 12.
- AOT is planning to increase communication with TAC members bi-monthly.



Government and Community Affairs Update – Alix Skelpsa Ridgway

- AOT is working closely with the Governor’s office and Arizona Department of Health Services to help facilitate recovery efforts through resources for our industry partners and communities.
- AVIC program has increased number of visitor centers to 49, including a partnership with Arizona State Parks and Trails.
- AOT will continue working with the Governor’s office, industry partners, elected officials, and the community to provide resources and support.
- Working with state and federal partners on potential opportunities to help alleviate impact of COVID-19 on industry across the state, including CARES Act Funding and EDA Grants.
- This year, AOT will be checking in with all communities virtually or in person to ensure we are providing any and all support we can.

Industry Affairs Update – Kiva Couchon

- AOT has connected with 66 communities through presentations around the state.
- We recently finalized our policy and procedure manual for the agency.
- FY20 Annual Report is underway and will be available August 2020.
- We have updated our industry database and as a result we will be able to build community reports to showcase our support. In addition, Tourism Tuesday will get a new look.

Marketing Update – Tim DeClaire

- Rediscover Arizona campaign has replaced our annual summer campaign.
- AOT has influenced 683,000 incremental trips and generated an estimated \$1.2 billion in visitor spending.
- ROI: An estimated \$381 in visitor spending is generated for each \$1 spent in advertisement. Also, \$30 tax revenue generated for every \$1 spent.
- In response to COVID-19 we created a phased approached campaign that is both scalable and flexible, targeting in-state residents and traveler sentiment. The campaign will expand to drive markets and target cities when the time is safe to do so.

Research Update - Colleen Floyd

- We have expanded our research offering for the rural co-op with more affordable mobile location data services.
- AOT completed the Mexico point-of-entry study earlier than expected; however, the study indicated \$3.5 billion total economic impact, supporting 38,000 jobs in Arizona from Mexican visitors.
- AOT is pivoting its economic impact reporting from annual to monthly for preliminary, but more timely, data by focusing on target markets, such as AZ COVID-19 cases, travel patterns, and traveler’s sentiment.
- AOT will closely monitor the windsocks metrics in the strategic recovery plan.

Strategic Partnerships – Debbie Johnson

- Our partnerships in FY20 included activations and marketing programs – such as Saks 5th Avenue and the New York Travel & Adventure Show.
- For FY21, we are creating partnerships that support the Rediscover Arizona campaign such as Cruise America, REI and others.



Trade/Media - Becky Blaine

- AOT is able to continue to meet virtually with our trade and media representatives.
- AOT visitation growth goal for FY20 was 3% and met our goal at 3.4%.
- AOT first joint sales mission with France, Japan, Australia and Colorado was well received by media and travel trade in those areas. We will continue this collaboration every other year.
- AOT wine promotion \$100k funds were renewed to promote winemakers in Arizona for FY21. Wine stakeholder met last year and will meet again later in the year.
- AOT is exploring virtual options for any fall sales mission with a focus on on-demand training platforms to include language translation app.
- AOT will increase its partnership with AAA and domestic travel agents.
- Brand USA Travel Week London will host a virtual meeting September 2020.
- IPW 2021 planning for in-person meeting in Las Vegas, NV. Rural market co-op participants will share booth.

American Indian – Becky Blaine

- AOT sponsored the Arizona Indian Festival with 11,000 attendees, exceeded 2019 attendance of 9,000.
- AOT will sponsor AIANTA virtual conference and has secured the conference for 2021 dates.
- AOT continues to provide technical assistance for tribal participation in rural co-op and other development programs, like Leave No Trace.
- AOT is flexible and mindful of the tribal community needs due to COVID -19 and support of the needs of each community.
- AOT increase marketing efforts of the Indian Festival and other tribal attraction when they're ready to reopen.
- Participate with strategic recovery team to identify AOT programs that support tribal recovery efforts.

Open TAC Discussion – Discussion was held on our industry recovery plan, cross-border tourism, visitor behavior, international marketing and additional federal pandemic support.

Call to Public - None

Adjourn - 11:20 AM