



Highlands Creative Economy Council  
Monthly Meeting  
April 27th, 2023, at 10 am  
[Link to recording](#)

**Thursday, April 27th at 10 am**

Agenda:

- Welcome!
- Eastern updates
  - Drone Training Opportunities – available for groups of at least 10, open to tourism and first-responders. AFNHA will be co-hosting a training in Elkins June 8&9, reach out to [maria@afnha.org](mailto:maria@afnha.org) if interested.
    - Eric Thompson (Access on the GO) - would be helpful to have materials ahead of time.
  - [Upcoming Agricultural Trainings](#) – beef quality assurance, stockmanship and stewardship, June 16 8:00 - 4:00 pm
  - [Farm to Table Diner](#) - Save the Date June 28 starting at 4:30 pm
  - July 12 - non-profit governance training, hazard training
- AFNHA updates
  - Appalachian Forest Volunteers - View upcoming volunteer opportunities or register your agency and submit volunteer needs at <https://afnha.galaxydigital.com/> . Open to anyone in our region!
  - Annual Stakeholder Meeting - May 22nd at Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg. [Register here](#).
  - Tourism Summit – We are planning on holding our annual Summit in early August in western Maryland. We are open to suggestions from the group for date and venue. Possible dates from poll results: 8/1, 8/2, 8/8, 8/9. We are looking the [Evergreen Heritage Center](#) as a venue, which is a remote “retreat” style venue as opposed to a more traditional conference style venue, but it has adequate facilities and their organization fits our mission. We will likely put together an additional tour or event in conjunction.
    - Eric Thompson – attendance will depend on access.
    - Maggie Blankenship (WV Dept. of Agriculture) - Just FYI most of those dates are during WV State Fair (August 10 – 19).

- Michele Moure-Reeves (Hardy County CVB) - The Governor's conference is Sept 10-13 which is earlier than usual. Scenic train from Cumberland to Frostburg for an activity.
  - Summer of Service – We are planning on hiring short-term AmeriCorps members to help with community projects and are taking applications for projects and members. More info at <https://www.appalachianforestnha.org/sos> or reach out with any questions to [logan@afnha.org](mailto:logan@afnha.org)
  - Open positions – we are hiring for Executive Director, Programs Manager, and Administrative Manager. See <https://www.appalachianforestnha.org/employment> for info and application.
  - America250 – planned blog series for under-told stories from our area in conjunction with national 250<sup>th</sup> celebration. Grant announcements coming soon.
- Guest Speaker
  - Ritchie Heath - WV Hospitality & Travel Association and WVACVB
    - Legislative recap – End of regular Legislative session which passed 333 bills. Governor signed 326 with 1 veto. Passed \$4.8 billion balanced budget (1 million higher than previous budget). Budgeted \$10 million for Dept of Tourism for branding and advertising, ¼ of that for Almost Heaven campaign. \$8 million for destination development.
    - Relevant Bills: HB 3147 created Upper Ohio Valley Trail Network Authority (mirror of mountaineer trail network). HB 3328 clarified Hatfield-McCoy Trail authority to ability to connect trails with businesses and private landowners. HB 3168 updated the Tourism Development Act which expanded qualified projects and costs for the act. HB 3036 expanded Build WV Act (tax credit incentives for workforce housing), removed cap on Build WV districts. HB 3092 creates food truck license reciprocity across county health departments. HB 3311 raised the alcohol limit on table wines to match other products. HB 534 allows municipalities to set up outdoor refreshment areas, allows limited privilege for off-premise sales from breweries, wineries, or distilleries at fairs & festivals. HB 3387 extended moratorium on forming new CVBs until 2026.
      - Nicolle Flood-Sawczyn (WV Scenic Trails Assoc.) – how can hiking trails get the word out? Start with Department of Tourism, Outdoor Economy at WVU, local CVBs.
- Attendee Discussion / Extended Networking –
  - Nicolle Flood-Sawczyn - New [website](#) and Instagram for Allegheny Trail. June 16-22 W5 Event in Elkins (Wood's Wacky Week of Work & Relaxation).
  - Alexandria Fliegel - Happenings in Webster County: <https://www.visitwebsterwv.com/events/>
    - Erbacon Ramp Dinner May 6<sup>th</sup>; Hacker Valley Ramp Dinner May 13<sup>th</sup>; Webster County Nature Tour May 5-7; Woodchopping Festival Memorial Day Weekend May 27-28
  - Annie Humes - Pendleton County Farmers Market in Franklin is looking for crafters, makers, artists, and other local value-added products. [Farmpendleton.org](http://Farmpendleton.org)
  - Michele Moure-Reeves – Lost River Trail Run on May 6 to benefit trail work at the Lost River State Park. Register to run or volunteer to help. IMBA has flagged

the beginner trail that is in progress which will be able to accommodate adaptive equipment. Info on Lost River Trail Coalition facebook page.

- Lyndsay Lazarick (Future Generations) - Out of the Woods webinar on May 18- [https://future-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_bXoPssdyQbqiA8Wyvv0oVQ](https://future-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bXoPssdyQbqiA8Wyvv0oVQ) and We will be set up at TroutFest in Franklin, WV on Saturday May 6 with a Kids Conservation Area 12- 2 pm
- Eric Thompson – Accessibility resources: <https://linktr.ee/AccessOnTheGo>
- Other announcements –
  - Jonathon Bellingham - Open House, April 30 at Capon Springs & Farms
  - Amber Higgins - employer registration is still open for the May 12th Career Fair at [hirepointllc.com/career-fairs](http://hirepointllc.com/career-fairs) All jobseekers of any skill, education, or experience level are invited to attend at no charge, and educational, nonprofit, and government agencies are eligible to register in advance for a FREE table.
    - Barbour County events - Wed, May 3: Open Mic Night, Molly's Ice Cream, Philippi, 7pm every Wed; Sat, May 6: Artefaktual Comics and Games Free Comic Book Day, Philippi, Barbour Community Yard Sale; Monday, May 9: Small Business Solutions, 5:30pm, 17 North Event Center, Philippi; June 1-4: Blue & Gray Reunion, Philippi; Sat, Aug 5: 3rd Annual Lurch Fest, Museum Street in Philippi, noon-10pm
    - David Cooper - Philanthropy WV & Tucker Community Foundation have a roundtable discussion on housing issue for the eastern panhandle June 7 (location TBD) 11am-2 pm.
- Save The Date! The next meeting is **May 25th, 2023**, at 10 AM on Zoom.
  - We will be discussing what we want to see in the future of the HCE program. Survey coming soon!

*This will be an open discussion; everyone is welcome.*