

Potomac Highlands Creative Economy Team Meeting

May 26, 2022

10 am

Zoom

Meeting called by:	Phyllis Baxter	Type of meeting:	Informal Discussion
Facilitator:		Notetaker:	Maria
Timekeeper:			

Attendees: Phyllis Baxter, Robert Burns, Kimberly Byard, Jennifer Rexroad, Greg Greenwalt, Cheryl Wolfe, Lindsay Kazarick, Megan Webb, Amber Higgins, Ben Duvall-Irwin, Samantha Peet, Ashley Rotruck, Jessica Waldo, Cindy Martel, Maria Bray

Meeting notes

Discussion:

- Welcome! Phyllis Baxter, Executive Director AFNHA opened the meeting.
- Education Opportunities at Eastern - Megan Webb
 - Free, Healthcare Workforce Education - https://easternwv.edu/wp-content/uploads/WF_application-Filable-2.25.2022.pdf
Through the Department of Education, Eastern applied for and received a Perkins award. This award will allow Eastern to grow and expand its Workforce engagement in the healthcare aspect. See attached flyer that talks about careers in healthcare. We are diligently working with area career tech and High schools and we are sharing in case there are any mechanisms that you know to reach out to Juniors and seniors in High School. For the first time, they can enroll for medical assistant and phlebotomy technician training. We can supply 20 and 15 certifications, respectively, for free. These certifications can be expensive and students who are under 18 years of age do not qualify for federal aid. However, with this support and this award, they do. Currently, we are offering free dual enrollment in the CNA program which helps give students a leg up when they go to apply to Eastern's nursing program. Contact Melissa Shockey for help with the admission application.
 - Free FAA Drone Training Services to be available - <https://easternwv.edu/workforce-education/drone-training/> Over the next year and a half we can offer over 60 certifications for free (traditionally \$1000 each) to receive FAA drone certification. We are looking for groups of ten students at a time. We work with first

responders, and EMT groups to receive specialty training to focus on first responder needs but this can be customized for those in tourism or agriculture.

- Free community training resources - Robert Burns
 - Student Scholarship & Farm to Table Event, June 29 <https://bit.ly/EasternF2T> See the attached flyer for the event on June 29th at 4 pm. We are bringing in a gourmet chef, Todd Seligman, to cook a four-course meal with appetizers during that evening as well as having fundraising events and other activities such as a farm fellows reception starting at 5:00, a silent auction, and other raffles inside. Please take a look at the link. It is a fundraiser for the college. We use these funds for operations as well as scholarships. Please share the information with people who like to eat good food and have a good time. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out. Don't miss the "grazing Bar" to sample items that are locally grown and produced.
 - We are accepting silent auction items to support our students. We are also trying to do "Best Of" baskets for each of the six counties in our region. We are always looking for new and interesting products from our counties so that we can highlight them appropriately. please send them in by June 10th.
 - The college received a \$20,000 donation was received from the Black Hawk Winn Energy Center to start a scholarship for win tech people. Watch for an upcoming announcement about partnership and additional courses.
 - We received a grant donation for an individual to offer CDL driver training scholarships in the workforce as well as academic scholarships.
 - Introduction to Jennifer Rexroad, Eastern's Advancement Specialist - Rob Introduced Jennifer Rexroad. She is new to the college and is helping out with title III on the education side and the foundation itself. She has a background in fundraising, working with colleges as well as other non-profit groups.
 - New Heritage Distillery event is tonight at 737 William Avenue, Davis, WV from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. Please email if you have any questions, Robert.burns@easternwv.edu
 - We have a new schedule for the Kelley TaylorDayton event on Business ownership and work-life balance. It has been rescheduled for June 16th from 5 to 7:30 pm at the Southside Depot in Petersburg. During the event, they will also be doing a bit of wine tasting and food. "The life of a small business owner and entrepreneur is typically so much more hidden than the public realizes.
 - Olivia Miller - works in marketing/communications at WVU. Over the next several months will 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 next post is tomorrow. These are on the website as well and will be updated at the end of every month. <https://easternwv.edu/advancement-innovation/ireed/economic-development/marketing-trainings/>
 - The lodging panel should be posted by the end of the month
 - Stockmanship & Stewardship - If you are collaborating with any culturalists or even youth in the Ag industry we are accepting youths 10 years of age and older for this program. Registration is due by June 3rd for the event on June 17th at the Petersburg area at the Tri-county fairgrounds. This is an all-day event with a complimentary breakfast. The cost is \$30. The speaker is Dr. Ron Gill.
- AFNHA Management Plan - Phyllis Baxter
- Introduction - Samantha Peet is our new communications manager. She served as an Americorps with AFNHA from 2015-to 2017 at the Elkins Depot Welcome Center. She has worked at a local marketing agency and is looking forward to meeting all of you.

- Powerpoint link
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Vsb4RggdbErbBc8e_C7atwUujluzLAIA/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=117863229703949428561&rtpof=true&sd=true
- This plan is a work in progress over the last two years. We have completed public meetings, and fieldwork, and have had three task groups active. We have developed a list of assets and held an in-person community exchange (last summer), the rest have been virtual. We have been working on drafting the plan. A first draft went out at the end of March and we are now working on the next version that is now available for review.
- The mission statement has been updated and simplified.
- The stories are based on our themes. The Abundant Forest Theme focuses on biodiversity and natural resources. The Crucible of Isolation talks about how our history evolved here in the mountains and how it was impacted by the mountains and how this developed the distinctive Appalachian culture. The Logging boom was a dramatic event where the railroads came in, the industrialists came in, and the workers cut the trees with handsaws and devastated the landscape by cutting down the whole forest. The next theme, the Resilient Forest talks about how the forest has regrown and the evolution of scientific forest management to manage the forest in a more sustainable way for ecological stewardship, recreation, and the sustainable harvest of forest products. Given those themes, we had established goals to talk about how we are going to work in our area. The first goal is to identify, preserve, conserve, and enhance the assets and resources: natural, recreational, historical, and cultural and to expand awareness of these resources. The second goal is interpretation to share the stories based on those themes. The next goal is to support sustainable tourism and economic development. Another goal is to develop and connect partners and develop a network of collaboration and working with partners and provide direct support and engage in outreach. The final goal is how as an organization we can manage, promote, and sustain this work.
- Please take a look at the partners' list to make sure that we have your organizations listed and listed correctly. You are welcome to provide information about what you do. If you have some type of comprehensive or strategic plan that you would like to share, please let us know so it can be included.
- Next steps: we are going through a preliminary review by our partners and by the National Park Service. We have an updated version of the draft now available for review (see link). We are collecting photos and quotes to include. It will then go to the designer for formatting. This should be done towards the end of June. It will then go to a formal 30-day public review. We will hold two public review meetings. One is in-person on June 28th at Adaland Mansion in Barbour County outside of Philippi. That will also be our AFNHA stakeholder meeting for the year. We will also do a virtual presentation on the afternoon of June 29th at 2 pm. At the end of the 30 days after we have collected and responded to all of the comments and gathered the support letters, then we will formally submit them to the National Park Service and be ready to move on to implement the plan..
- How can you help? Please take a look, read, and comment on the plan. You are welcome to attend one of the public meetings to learn more about it. Please send us either your edit suggestions or your comments. We are asking all of the organizations that we work with to send us a support letter. The link below also contains documents that will help draft the support letter. Please write a support letter and send it to us by the beginning of July.
AFNHA Management Plan PRELIM DRAFT
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1XIFZ5EgXgrtw1fYKZfLidCeWldwqXgHd?usp=sharing>
- New Logo - Phyllis shared a glimpse of the new Logo for AFNHA. This updated version is about to be launched in the newsletter.

- Thank you for sending support letters and helping with submitting the EDA grant application last winter. We were not awarded that grant but we are still moving forward with the Creative Economy activities thanks to funding through the Benedum grant. The support letters that we are now requesting are for the management plan. It is a different letter.
- Upcoming Tourism Summit Planning - Planning for August, watch for the June survey. We are tentatively planning an in-person meeting in an indoor facility in Tucker County. If anyone is not ready for an in-person event, please let us know (it will be a question on the survey). Please share your preferences for programming. (ie., speakers, workshops, topics, etc.). We will confirm the details at our next meeting in June.
- Attendee Discussion (Open Forum, County Updates, etc.)

Ben at Beverly Heritage Center - Randolph County - There are concerts and Cruise-ins at the town square Our Town concerts and Cruise-ins: <https://www.ourtownelkins.com> There is free live music and a classic car show every Thursday hosted by Our Town and the Mountain State Street Machines. July 4th weekend will have a bigger show. At the Beverly Heritage Center, we are opening a new Escape Room. <https://beverly-heritage-center.square.site/s/appointments>. On June 19th we will have a new exhibit on local African-American history. On July 23 we will have our annual Beverly Heritage Days. It is a family-friendly, free event. We are still looking for reenactors. <http://www.beverlyheritagecenter.org/calendar/events/BevHeritDays2022/2022%20Beverly%20Heritage%20Days%20Reenactor%20Handout.pdf>

Ashley - Mineral County - The Strawberry Festival is coming up on Saturday, June 4th from 10 am to 8 pm. Music, food, a pageant pie-eating contest and so much more. Just had the first of three Heritage Weekends it was very well attended. The next one will be in October and it will be the same weekend as the Apple Festival.

Jessica - Tucker County - Art Spring is happening with street performers, live music, and the farmer's market. There are art exhibits planned and each state park has its own activities. Canaan is starting their free live music every Friday. Canaan Mountain Bike Festival is in June.

Cheryl Wolfe/Amber Higgins - Amber is new to the Development Authority. Philippi is planning concerts on June 16, 23, and 30th from 6 to 9 pm at the Gazebo in Courthouse Square. The Annual Blue and Gray Reunion is next weekend, June 2 through June 5 See www.BlueandGrayReunion.org for specific details. Currently planning the 2nd Annual Lurch Fest on August 6th.

Kimberly Byard - Hampshire County -The Potomac Eagle season started May 6th and is off to a good start. There is a sunset dinner trip through the canyon on Friday and Sunday.

Next meeting – 6/23/22 at 10 am on zoom