



Quarterly Meeting Minutes

October 19, 2018 • Hampshire County, WV

Members present: Explore Altoona (Jennifer Fleck), Central PA CVB (Andy Rupert), Visit Clearfield County (Josiah Jones), Destination Gettysburg (Rachel Wright), Greater Johnstown / Cambria County CVB (Olivia Bragdon), Discover Lehigh Valley (Kaitie Burger), Front Royal / Warren County Tourism (Felicia Hart), Lynchburg Office of Economic Development & Tourism (Krista Boothby), Prince William County Office of Tourism (Nicole Warner), Richmond Region Tourism (Erin Bagnell), Shenandoah County Tourism (Jenna French, French Price), Winchester-Frederick County CVB (Renee Bayliss), Hampshire County CVB (Jonathan Bellingham), MATPRA (Julia Harris)

Call to order: Kaitie Burger, Chair

Welcome/ Introductions: Jonathan Bellingham, Hampshire County

Hampshire is oldest county, largest county of West Virginia. Agricultural tourism is a big industry- people who left over the years have come back.

Membership Updates: Kaitie Burger, Chair

Currently, we have 66 paid members. Visit Philly approached us recently. An invoice has been sent and a check is expected soon. Daniel will be the contact for the organization once the contact once the payment is made. If anyone has a contact at Destination DC, it would be nice to talk with them. If you have neighbors in your area who aren't MATPRA members, please reach out to the board with an introduction.

Approval of Minutes: Kaitie Burger, Chair

Annual Meeting, September 25, 2018 in Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands

Motion: Jenna French

Second: Krista Boothby

Treasurer's Report: Nicole Warner, Treasurer

Marketplace expenses will be reflected in next quarterly meeting. There's a possible refund anticipated. AV troubles may be credited back. Of course, we don't ever expect a return, but if there are funds left over, they will be returned to the organization.

There were a few little things the organization spent here and there for Marketplace, but not the full \$3,000 budgeted.

Motion to approve: Krista Boothby

Second: Jennifer Fleck

Committee Reports

Social Media: Kaitie Burger, Chair

Aaron Jumper (current chair) sent an update and members can find more details in the membership email on 10/19/2018- immediately following Marketplace, SM Committee met to discuss to ensure all members are represented equally. Each member of the SM committee will have 13 members assigned. On assigned posting dates, members will post about those assigned DMOs. Assigned list will be shared in

10/19 member email and will be posted to MATPRA FB group. This assigned rotation begins Monday October 23. If you have media hits from MATPRA events, share with Aaron and post directly on FB group.

Media Committee: Jenna French, Committee Chair

If anyone's interested in joining the committee, now's a good time to do that. Outreach to media for Marketplace 2019 will happen over the next few months. We will need to finalize FAQs for Media application process. There will now be a separate application for editors/ staff writers and another for bloggers as the application favors bloggers right now. A conference call could be scheduled soon. Applications will open in early January. The returned applications will be reviewed the day before the April quarterly meeting. Acceptances following. Layout and structure will change a bit.

Professional Development: Kaitie Burger, Chair

Currently in limbo. Lyn Lewis is stepping down as chair and the group has only one active member- if anyone is interested in joining or helping out, reach out to board. Should we have Professional Development at Marketplace? Lots of feedback from both journalists and members. Joel coined Show & Tell, they will continue. We may step back to different topics of discussion as there are new members. If you have any ideas, reach out.

Website: Krista Boothby, Committee Chair

Four members of the committee- we would like one additional member. It would be a lot of back end changes. October 3, conference call and training- lots of changes have been made since discussion. We will make it easier for DMOs to get in there and make changes. Because Admin had entered the information, it was hard for members to access their page. Kaitie asked for a "cheat sheet" on using the website and adding information. Events- annual only please. No more than six events per DMO.

Marketing: Kaitie Burger, Chair

We have the big pull-up banners. Thanks to everyone who helped put them together. We did receive the tablecloth for future marketplaces. White tablecloth to make colors pop, but we do need to be very conscious of cleanliness.

Next thing the marketing committee is working on is marketing materials- trifold brochure- now a one-sheet- single page or double-sided- traditionally shared on pre-printed paper. We will share the piece with members for use in their press kits. There will be two separate pieces- one for DMOs, one for journalists. We are looking for testimonials- from writers and DMOs.

Membership Committee Discussion

- **Jeremiah Jones**- We don't have a membership committee. Do we have one? Kaitie- In the past, it's been very word of mouth, there are have been discussions about talking about info packet. Perhaps ready by the January 2019 meeting. Lawyer recommended not put the procedures in the bylaws. That information has been pulled aside- schedule of quarterly meetings, how group releases work, membership emails procedures, Marketplace rules, etc. Please advise Kaitie and board if you have any questions about what to include. Currently, we have had trouble getting people to participate in committees now, so to add another committee is a problem. Membership could be led by Chair-Elect or Past- Chair
- **Jennifer Fleck**- Maybe it could be on the committee to update new members. On website, it had everything in what to expect at marketplace. Do any new members have specific questions? Call for questions at each meeting

- **Jenna French**- When she joined MATPRA, there was a screening process to ensure you are a DMO. She didn't recommend that much, but verification would be helpful
- **Winchester**- When Justin came on, he wasn't aware of MATPRA. Some of the smaller offices may not be aware of MATPRA. If you know there's going to be a turnover, perhaps someone from the board could call to solicit membership.

General Conversation about Committees

- **Nicole Warner**- There will be committee expectations so folks know what was expected of the members.
- **Jenna French**- Suggested testimonials from committee members to help solicit more committee members.

Marketplace 2018

- We sent post-event surveys to journalists and DMOs. 31 journalists responded; 36 DMOs responded. Journalists were sent a reminder.
- **Anna Weltz**- Thank you for responding to the survey. It was nice to have the feedback.
- This is a summary of responses. Some mixed feedback- some people enjoyed having everything all in one place, you'll see a mixed bag.
- Anna flipped the layout of how Marketplace happened- opening reception followed by a group dinner. Positive feedback. It helps separate reporters from their friends- more intimate settings help foster conversations.
- **Erin (Richmond)**- In 2019, there will be a big group event planned for the first night, second event would be dine arounds
- **Krista Boothby**- **People are coming in at different times.**
- **Media Exchange- (Journalist Survey response)**- Kaitie had sent out a headshot guide of all of us to journalists. PDF to journalists ahead of time- in some years, DMO lists have been sent, haven't been sent other times. The reporters said they had a chance to do preparations. Journalists say they were more prepared than previous years.
 - **Jeremiah Jones**- The time is fine. 10-15 writers are left in the last hour. You may get some stragglers, but some smaller markets don't get the conversations.
- **Jenna French**- With more DMOs, it's harder to get around to everyone. Able to pack it up a little earlier. We have a very short turnaround between marketplace and fam tours. If you're going to do it for two hours at one time and then another two hours later, then you're also asking the facility to hold the room. That's not always convenient
- **Jennifer Fleck**- The time between marketplace and FAMs does need to be addressed. Some people feel rushed.

Anna Weltz- We've really got to diversify and freshen up the attendee list.

Kaitie Burger on Flash Drives- We won't do the flash drives in 2019 to save money but rather a Dropbox folder of the PDFs that can be distributed ahead of time.

General Ideas:

- If you've got someone who lingers at your table, it's okay to move them along. People do not move along as the event started. Be cognizant of the flow of the event so there's not a lot of backup
- People trying to sell things at DMO tables writers selling to DMOs need to be brought to the attention of the board.

- Perhaps we could place an estimated travel time on the fams – Weather could be a factor, but that's the game you play.
- Box lunches on buses are some things to consider.
- Physical preparations- 11-mile bike rides, ropes courses before zip lines were a bit surprising. Maybe we make a bulleted list of explanations about what happens on the Fam tours and suggested physical limitations.
- Mini-disclaimers- Put them in the descriptions of FAM tours offered to reporters and DMOs upon registration. This is great for people with phobias. Make it clear up front in comparable way.
- Dessert- Good feedback on dessert itself, not great feedback on the speaker. He did not give outline that was being shared. It was a long day to bring the group back together. Some people had a long day to include a speaker. The overall reception was well received. Some journalists still joke about it online. Maybe have a brief limit on the time that speaker shares his or her message. People really loved Rick's giveaways. They thought it was fun.
- Thursday- panel- some mixed feedback. Professional development at marketplace is something to take a hard look at. Side conversations were disappointing – getting people to listen and participate is still a problem. Maybe the final lunch could be wrap up and final conversations with DMOs instead of panels. Maybe there could be a panel where people hear from DMOs. Style two different sessions?

Krista Boothby- could Marketplace it be longer? It felt like Erie brought people in on Tuesday night, two days of activities, leaving Friday.

Jennifer Fleck- We used to separate DMOs and Journalists for breakout professional development

Erin Bagnell- Would it be an option for media to do another Fam tour and DMOs to do professional development?

Nicole Warner- Could the DMOs have professional development at the annual meeting?

Kaitie Burger- We can get bigger people in the door because of Professional Development and panel discussions. It's important not to lose the loophole that enables us to get these people in the room

General discussion

- Could there be three separate audiences for professional development? Bloggers, journalists, and DMOs. Maybe lunch could be shortened and do a professional development session before the lunch. Perhaps the Media Committee chair could be on the panel for journalists to help fill in the blanks?
- Could there be some space built in for socialization time?- DMOs and Journalists- together and separately
- Perhaps a facilitator could be hired to moderate professional development sessions- they would be a neutral party and help foster discussion
- Several journalists expressed interest in receiving a newsletter from MATPRA- include upcoming events and announcements about new organization members

DMOs Survey Results

General Discussion

- Hotels- A couple of people stayed off property
- Annual Meeting- Some people felt it was really rushed- it was likely due to the planned blackout. It's never been as in depth as a quarterly meeting, generally an overarching year-in-review, usually done in an hour. Several people expressed concern about the timing- it was hard to get to Nemaquin by 3 p.m. Members should remember that attendance at the annual meeting is mandatory for Marketplace participants. Annual meeting could be used for general housekeeping.

- “Late” set up times for Marketplace- the DMOs that set up in the evening after dinner had tables in spaces that were being used in the dinner room. The hotel needed to turn the room over.
- Layout of the room- Good feedback. Many people said the room set up easily allowed people to ask for neighboring tables.
 - o Krista Boothby- could we use signs to show where certain states are in the room? Taken under advisement.
- Crowding at the first tables early on- Could we consider a starting assignment for each journalist as they walk in the room. Perhaps start by state? You start in Virginia, you start in Maryland?
- A map would be very helpful to guide the journalists- send it in advance and have handouts at the entrance
- Are panelists required to attend the entire event- media Marketplace? FAM tours? – No, not really. Scheduling and their travel were mentioned as factors. Several people commented that they bonded with panelists who did participate in the events.
- Keynote Speaker- high level writers- they loved how much fun they had with MATPRA members. Everyone was approachable and friendly. It felt like a “family reunion” for some panelists.
- DMOs felt “guilted” into taking Fam tours- Anna had to eat the cost or MATPRA had to eat the cost for the people who skip. No one is making you do it. Are these new members who haven’t gotten into the “family”? Membership could help newer members see the benefit of fully participating, even co-pitching with local DMOs. **Nicole Warner**- Suggested assigning a MATPRA mentor for new contact- introducing new members, sharing member expectations for Marketplace and meetings, sharing a welcome packet. **Jenna French**- Suggested hosting a half-hour meeting ahead of the Annual Meeting for new DMOs or new contacts at DMOs

Marketplace 2019- Richmond, VA: Erin Bagnell, Host

Richmond is in this interesting position as the CVB is really a regional organization representing the City of Richmond, Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover Counties- now Powhatan County and town of Ashland. Will possibly include Goochland County- very different things going on.

Hilton Short Pump will be the hub- Short Pump is a shopping mecca. Could be about 20-minute bus rides. We need to be careful with our messaging- you are not going to be in downtown Richmond as you know it. You will be with new partners- we need to be careful with this messaging.

Hands On experiences- Could be farms in Powhatan County. Brewery tours. Even space activities. Golf course. History aspects in Hanover County-possibly something with Patrick Henry. Ashland could be small town tour. Beer Lab could be part of the Ashland tour- making beer.

- Night One possible activities- Mill at Fine Creek- event space- wedding venue; added a brewery and cottage spaces. They could do it all (reception at the brewery, seated dinner)
- Second Night- Dine around in Short Pump- locally-owned restaurants from Richmond now have spaces in Short Pump
- Stay tuned for information and deadlines from the board
- May be an opportunity to spend some time in actual Richmond for FAMS (pre and post)

Old Business

Much of the business has been completed.

New Business

Media List- while we are tired of seeing the same faces at Marketplace, we need members to recommend media. Next member email there will be a call for all members to offer new names- possibly 2-4 for smaller DMOs

- **There are some people currently attending Marketplace who need to be blacklisted.**- Selling- if you experience anyone at Marketplace try to sell you for locations at book signings or advertising, please email leadership. Some of these people no longer come to the event.

Group Press Release- Holiday Happenings- form is in today's email.

Next Quarterly Meeting- January 18, 2019- PA's Greater Americana Region- basically Reading, PA; more information is coming from Lisa. Hotel details will be in next email. Please note that the April meeting is a week earlier because of Easter.

Professional Development

Back to Basics- hosting journalists and best practices for press trips

- **Some do group trips, some do individual only trips-** Mostly small markets do individuals
- **Do you accompany writers?- Are you taking people places or just handing over the tickets?-** Some are hosted breakfast through dinner.
 - o **Jennifer Fleck** usually asks while the tours are being booked.
 - o **Jenna French** said many tell her now.
 - o **Kaitie Burger** always offers, but very rarely, do they take her up on full-day accompaniment
 - o **Do you find that they actually go to each spot?**
 - o **Can't always give an option of when they're going to have a meal with the writers-** A lot of times it has to do with alcohol (government). Gift cards or comped meals, though some aren't allowed to give them because it opens the door for alcohol. **Are all meals covered?** It depends on who they are. And how long are you with the person.
 - **Nicole Warner** spells out the expectations of her comped amenities during the planned trips. Gift Cards- it is spelled out on the gift card- we will pay for the meal up to \$XX. Sample menu is listed through. Gratuities and taxes must also be spelled out. Sometimes if a meal is comped, the writer should be taking care of gratuities.
- **Transportation- how do you handle?** Some DMO reps are not allowed to drive reporters around in their private vehicles (you could be liable if you're in an accident while driving your personal vehicle). Some suggested renting a vehicle or using a civic car to avoid liabilities
 - o **Uber & Lyft-** Transportation is always an issue. Richmond has a business account- before the writer comes, they give the email tied to ride account and the DMO could pay for the transportation
- **Do you treat people differently based on their outlets and assignments?** You may do different things based on what the story is – if someone's on one specific assignment, put in one extra thing that could spark a story idea later.
 - o **Bloggers/ social media/ influencers-** may want the world. The expectations need to be laid out
 - o **Do people ask for payment for Press Trips- Pay-to-play-** It's not earned media at that time. In the influencer community, there's a lot of testing the waters at the moment. You can decline paying for content (like, if they take photos and want to sell those products to use for your website), and they can decline the trip. People who say "I will only come if you pay," watch those. You could pay the blogger to post a few photos, but do you really want that?

- **Are you vetting people ahead of time?** Application on website; Gettysburg has a great form on their website- use the Matpra facebook page for questions about specific conversations. Take negatives offline, though
- **Group Trips-** How far out do you start a planning process? Invitations- 7-8 months- put it on people's calendars
 - o **Inviting families?** Maybe, maybe not. How do you do it in a gentle way? Working writers only because the space was at a premium. One guest is sometimes allowed. Kids aren't really welcome because then mom or dad isn't working
 - o **Sweet spot for group trips- 4-6 attendees.** Many DMOs prefer individual trips as you can then recycle itineraries and call for smaller number of comps (lot easier to get 2 than 20)
- **How do you get produced stories?-** Make sure they're not just there for the trip, they need to write!
 - o **Once someone's produced something, what do you do with that? – Blog it? Share with social? Tagging the writer back?** Tag the locations and ask them to share it. If you got someone going to an attraction, do you give the attraction the contact info? Not always. Typically, share the media three separate times based on how the algorithm works- 2,000 people, 2,000 new people, email to partners

Adjournment:

Motion: Josiah Jones

Second: Andy

Meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.