



### **Quarterly Meeting**

January 21, 2021 Virtual - Covid-19 Pandemic

#### **Call to Order**

Anna Weltz, Chair

#### **Attendance and Introductions**

Christine Temple, VisitErie; Patty Williams, Lexington/Rockbridge Area Tourism; Nicole Johnson Bedford, VA; Linda Sones, Columbia-Montour Visitors Bureau; Jana Carter, Kent County Maryland Tourism; Brantley Ussery, Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau; Tina Coleman, Southern Delaware; Meghan Gearino, Visit Richmond VA; Cora Gnegy, Giles County, VA; Aaron Jumper, Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau; Nicole Warner, Visit Prince William County, Virginia; Sandy Turner Cecil County Tourism; Mindy Bianca, Allegany County, The Mountain Side of Maryland; Linda Devlin, Allegheny National Forest Visitors Bureau; Laura Torpy, Fauquier County; Shane Terry, Wytheville, Virginia; Tiffany Hernandez, Butler County Tourism & Convention Bureau; Caroline Secrest, Visit Alexandria; Jenna French, Visit Shenandoah County Virginia; Jenny Landis, Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau; Buffie Boyer, Juniata River Valley Visitors Bureau; Jennifer in Callison, Visit Waynesboro, VA; Vanessa Junkin, Wicomico County Tourism; Justin Kerns, Winchester-Frederick County CVB; Jennifer Bell, Harrisonburg Tourism & Visitor Services; Patty Williams, Lexington and Rockbridge Area Tourism; Jennifer Boes, Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau; Ali Morris, Visit Fairfax; Liza Jo Gutshall, Huntingdon County Visitors Bureau; Edward Stoddard, The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau; Ginny Jacob, Visit Lawrence County; Mindy Bianca, Allegany County; Jana Carter, Kent County, MD; Miranda Jarrell, Visit Williamsburg; Joel Cliff, Discover Lancaster; Hilary Dailey, Calvert County Economic Development; Josiah Jones, Visit Clearfield County; Carl Whitehill, Destination Gettysburg; Courtney Swenson, Stafford County Department of Economic Development & Tourism; Connie Spindler, Maryland Office of Tourism; Tracey Johnson, Visit Baltimore; Matthew Scales, Visit Harford; Laura Torpy, Fauquier County Economic Development and Tourism; Brianna Strunk - PR Manager, Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau ; Abigail Vitaliano, Enjoy Baltimore County; Cara O'Donnell, Arlington Convention & Visitors Service; Nicole Nussbaum, VisitNorfolk; Mindy Schneider, Visit Harford; Josiah Jones, Visit Clearfield County; Jamie Williams, Kent County, Maryland; Joel Cliff, Discover Lancaster; Jen Sigal, Visit Loudoun; Hilary, Calvert County Economic Development/Tourism; Katie, QAC Marketing & Destination Dev. Specialist; Krista Boothby, Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism; Jennifer Boes, Greater Wilmington and the Brandywine Valley; Cory Van Horn, Visit Montgomery, MD; Alicia Quinn, Discover Lehigh Valley; Anna Weltz, GO Laurel Highlands; Maggie Boyden, Explore Charles County MD; Taylor Spellman, Virginia's Blue Ridge; Paola Fernandez, Arlington Virginia; and Chrissy Tobias, York County Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Welcome and Housekeeping**

Anna Weltz, Chair

Virtual attendance was taken along with answering the ice breaker question “What did you want to be when you were in the 5th grade.”

**Approval of Minutes - October 15, 2021**

Tiffany Hernandez, Secretary

Motion to approve: Linda Devline

Second: Cora Gnegy

No opposed: Motion passes

**Approval of Treasurer’s Report & Budget**

Krista Boothby, Treasurer

Motion to approve: Nicole Warner

Second: Ed Stoddard

No opposed: Motion passes

**Old Business**

Anna Weltz, Chair

New Staff Member - The Board has been working on a job description for the new staff member. We would have to hire an employee or an association management company. This person will need to be someone who will help keep MATPRA going. I’d like to personally thank Matt Scales for taking on this task and all his hard work.

Matt Scales - Thank you, Anna. We are working with our lawyer regarding the new staff member. Hopefully we’ll have something more concrete in place and share more details at our meeting in April.

**20th Anniversary**

Jen Sigal

July 1st is MATPRA’s birthday. We are gathering ideas on how to honor the 20th anniversary of MATPRA in 2022. The social media and marketing committee have been working very hard with putting together an RFP. I want to thank Courtney Swenson and Vanessa Junkin for helping with the RFP - they did a great job. We will be sending the RFP to a marketing/PR firm to help us promote our 20 year anniversary. Our goals in working with a marketing firm is to attract more high-profile journalist to Marketplace, create a 20 year logo to share, and create a marketing plan for our 20th year campaign.

Anna - Having an agency will help us gain some fire power in promoting our 20th year celebration.

**New Business**

Anna Weltz, Chair

Updated Policies and Procedures document - Please take some time to view and get to know the revised MATPRA policies and procedures document.

Ali Morris - This document is on the resources tab of our website.

## **2022 Marketplace Update**

Ed Stoddard, Host Committee

We are looking at Marketplace dates (which will be October 18-20), and we are making plans with hotels. We learned a lot from our “practice run” in 2021, and we know what is and isn’t of interest to writers. We’re also really excited to work with our neighboring tourism partners to co-host the event.

Josiah Jones - Yes, we are very excited to co-host Marketplace, and having almost a whole year to plan for it.

Liza Gutshall - We’re looking forward to representing our region as a whole. We have a great foundation and are excited to host everyone.

Ed Stoddard - We are planning pre and post fairs. Stay tuned for more information to follow.

Event reminders and pre-planning info

Anna Weltz, Chair

The formal dates for Marketplace are October 18-20. Plan to budget for \$575 for registration and estimate about \$160 per night for lodging. Sponsorship opportunities are available. DMO registration will be open in May. September 1, 2022 will be the deadline to cancel for Marketplace. September 20, 2022 will be the deadline for partial refund.

Ed Stoddard - To get the latest news on Covid protocols, you can look at Penn State’s Covid dashboard for updates on the coronavirus.

Anna - We want to have a masking policy in place, and it’s in the works. If you have more questions about Marketplace, please reach out to Ed Stoddard.

## **Annual Meeting Committee Reports**

### **Website Committee**

Ali Morris

New Committee Members:

Welcome to Leslie Baker of Visit Hampton (VA) and Mindy Schneider of Visit Harford (MD)!

Recent Minor Updates:

- Destination Videos gallery page has new filtering capability and has also been added to Primary navigation under Our Destinations and Trip Planning Tools.
- Visitor Guides page was added to Primary Navigation under Our Destinations for more exposure.
- Instagram icon added to homepage header
- Updates pushed through to address issues with Latest News feed
- How-To Guides recently updated per new submission criteria
- For additional past major projects, refer to October 2021 report.

Work In Progress:

- Website approval notifications and preview functionality when submitting content
- Filter capability on News Post page similar to Itineraries section that will allow users to sort by

- region and categories
- Overhaul of Story Ideas page into similar format as News section to highlight press releases
- Analytics / UTM tracking in coordination with social media committee
- 20th Anniversary Content Implementation, per direction from Board & Marketing committee
- Marketplace page updates, per direction from Board

#### New Criteria for Submitting Content

Members, please take note of new criteria for submitting content. Please try to stick to this as much as possible to help the committee approve content to the site quickly.

#### For Events

- Must be an annual or large, one-time event.
- Should not be longer than a week (if it is, consider submitting a News Post instead).
- No weekly series events like Farmers Markets, Concerts, Art Galleries, etc.
- You may submit up to 6 active events at a time.
- Ask yourself if this event is something a travel writer would cover or if someone from 30 miles away would travel to attend. Look at it as a pitch opportunity.

Questions on event submissions can be directed to committee member Crystal Abrom:  
crystal@howardcountytourism.com.

#### For News Posts

In an effort to balance out content, each DMO can submit 2 news posts per quarter for a total of 8 submissions a year. (This is 4 more than currently accepted.) If you want to submit all 8 posts at once to save time, you MUST list your ideal publishing timeframes (i.e. Day/Month) in the “Notes to Admin” section of the submission form so that they can be scheduled in advance. Questions on news post submissions can be directed to Ali Morris: amorris@fxva.com.

#### For Website Access & Management

All members are asked to please take a few minutes to review your DMO profile on MATPRA.org. After you have logged in, you will see a drop-down menu under Member Links. Here you will find helpful info on how to update your profile, add a post, update events, and upload an itinerary. If you need a login or have questions about your account, please contact Ali Morris: amorris@fxva.com.

#### Membership Committee

Taylor Spellman

Membership Update: We have 79 paying members. Hopefully everyone is getting our emails. If you’re not getting emails, please let me know. If you have new contacts, let me know and I can update.

#### New Members:

If you are a brand new member, we’d like to have a virtual mingle and share our thoughts and ideas. Be on the lookout for an email about the virtual mingle. I’d also like to give a big shout out to Nicole and Lisa for all of their help.

## **Marketing and Social Media Committee**

Vanessa Junkin & Courtney Swenson

Vanessa Junkin - Our committee has been collecting submissions and photos for the group press releases and distributing these releases to the media. Then, we share the submitted information and photos on our social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We have not spent money on social media in the last quarter, but we will be doing so in 2022 as we begin to celebrate MATPRA's 20-year anniversary. In the coming quarter, the committee will be working on creating a dedicated graphic banner that DMOs can add to their websites letting consumers know they are a proud member of MATPRA, a design manual and an updated flyer. The committee will be part of several marketing-related initiatives for MATPRA's 20th year.

Courtney Swenson - The marketing and social media committee has combined. The marketing committee is really in need of more help. We are looking for topic ideas (past the month of June of 2022) for our group press releases. If you have any ideas, please let me know. We have worked on the RFP for our 20th year anniversary. Our committee is looking for a content writer and a graphic designer.

If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact Vanessa Junkin at [Vanessa.junkin@gmail.com](mailto:Vanessa.junkin@gmail.com) or Courtney Swenson at [cswenson@staffordcountyva.gov](mailto:cswenson@staffordcountyva.gov). We are especially looking for one marketing-focused member.

## **Media Committee**

Matt Scales (Subbing for Morgan Christopher)

### **Media Committee Tasks**

- Keeping a comprehensive record of our media contacts and updating these lists throughout the year
- Management of the Marketplace Application process from distribution through acceptance for participation in the event
- Working with Marketplace hosts and the board of directors to communicate marketplace information with the media partners as necessary

An email will be going out next week to potential journalists. The media committee is in need of help. Please reach out to Morgan if interested.

Anna Weltz - Every committee is essential to the function of MATPRA. We'd love to see more people step up. I'd like to give a special thank you to Courney Swenson for stepping up the way she has. We really appreciate everything she has done to help MATPRA in a short period of time.

Ali Morris - Can we get a catalog of stories about our destinations? We'd like to include it on the website.

Matt Scales - Yes, I'll chat with Morgan about that. We can do that.

Courtney Swenson - We have just received word that Miranda Jarrell from Visit Williamsburg has joined the Marketing Committee, and Tracey Johnson from Visit Baltimore is interested as well - thank you!

## **Professional Development Session**

Maggie Boyden, QM host

Please welcome Chris Hoover, Sales Director, Major League Fishing Tournaments

Chris Hoover - I've been with Major League Fishing Tournaments for about 20 years. We believe bass fishing is more than just tournaments – It's getting outdoors with family and friends, finding the perfect spot, selecting the right gear, dialing in on the bite, feeling the joy of setting the hook and seeing the smiles on the faces of those around us.

Major League Fishing is the world's largest tournament fishing organization and premier outdoor entertainment brand. We utilize our tournament fishing platform to share the passions of bass fishing with our fans. Our goal is to entertain, engage, educate and steward for the sport of bass fishing – no matter the format. We bring fishermen to the area and use our media services to help attract people to your destination.

Our TV show airs on the Discovery Channel, Outdoor Channel, World Fishing Network and more. The economic impact for a show is about 1.2 million dollars.

Questions:

Cory Van Horn - Does your event draw spectators?

Chris Hoover - Yes, we attract spectators, especially during the times when we do the weigh-ins. We'll also have a kids fishing derby and give away free fishing poles to the first 50 kids.

Vanessa Junkin - Are you looking for new locations to host an event?

Chris Hoover - Yes. We have to qualify the lake to make sure it's big enough. We have to make sure it fits the geographical area and make sure the community shows well.

Anna - Thank you Chris for joining us today, and thank you all for your contributions to MATPRA.

**Next quarterly meeting is April 22, 2022, in Dewey Beach, Delaware, hosted by Tina Coleman**

**Closing Comments / Adjournment**

Anna Weltz, Chair