



NEW MEXICO

TOURISM DEPARTMENT

New Mexico Tourism Commission

Q1. FY25 Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 10, 2024

1:00pm – 3:00pm

Red Rock Park

825 Outlaw Rd., Church Rock, NM 87311

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. by Chair Jennifer Kimball.

Roll Call:

Commissioners Present:

Jennifer L. Kimball (Chair)

Bill Lee

Tania Armenta

Emerson R. Vallo

Commissioners not present:

Ben Abruzzo

Belia Alvarez

Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Armenta moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Vallo, and the motion passed unanimously.

**At approximately 43 minutes into the meeting item number 9 on the agenda was rolled due to the absence of a presenter for Reno Eddy. Additionally, due to technical difficulties, item numbers 8 and 10 on the agenda were switched – motion passed unanimously.*

Approval of Amended Minutes from Q3.24 Meeting: Commissioner Lee moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Armenta, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes from Q4.24 Meeting: Commissioner Vallo moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Armenta, and the motion passed unanimously.

Presentation from McKinley County Commission: *Brandon Howe* presenting for Anthony Dimas – The county presented the work done on the Red Rock Park facility, and the efforts that they have undertaken since the agreement with the city of Gallup. Background on Red Rock Park included the county and city agreements regarding the facility, County management that is taking over operations and maintenance of the park, the Red Rock Park master plan, design concepts, funding secured and projects completed, and the anticipated use of money awarded.

Red Rock Park was a State Park opened in the 70s at a preliminary cost of about 3 to \$6 million and eventually transitioned over to the city of Gallup. More recently in 2022, McKinley County and the city of Gallup agreed to transition over operations and maintenance over to McKinley County. A park

of this size has presented operation maintenance challenges across all levels of ownership, prompting a collaborative network in McKinley County and the City of Gallup with investment from the State of New Mexico to help reinvigorate the park and help alter the local tourism economy. There are 640 acres of park site that includes trails out to the north, Rodeo Rena, public convention centers, museums, parking, and campgrounds.

Following the agreement between the county and city in October 2022, the county acted swiftly to make sure that the operations and maintenance continued. During the transition period that took place, they established an annual budget for the operations and maintenance of the park and hired full time staff to manage the park. Currently, general facilities have been assessed to understand the needs of the park that are present today and minor infrastructure improvements have been made utilizing the county's facility crews. A conceptual master plan was developed after establishing and hiring personnel to operate and maintain the park. The county has focused efforts to better understand the park's assets and think about solutions to improve the park as a whole to make it a much more profit generating asset for the community. With the park utilized for a number of regional statewide events, focus is to increase user rate, but also provide a good quality experience for attendees, whether local or from throughout the state and the country. The master plan was funded by DFA grant, part of the Regional Recreation and Quality of Life Program. There are about 16 high-level concepts identified in the master plan. McKinley County was also the recipient of an NMTD Destination Forward grant in its inaugural year. The county was awarded \$100,000 for a conceptual level design to expand the RV park and campground, to maximize space and accommodate more sites. The county has made it a priority to bring in as much investment into the park as possible through various funding sources. The facility will be expensive to renovate, particularly with prices increasing for all the projects that need completing. As the county proceeds, the legislative session and upcoming grant cycles will be a priority. Implementation strategy is ready for the perceived future. As the county stands, roughly about \$3,000,000 of \$8.89 million has been expended.

Chair Kimball: You've got \$6 million that's been hasn't been spent yet, not enough to say from 9 to 3. How much of this \$6 million get, how close to your vision you think you'll be?

- One of the priority projects that the county is proposing is a big canopy structure that involves a lot of engineering work, and it will take roughly about \$3,000,000 to put that structure up. Restrooms are also currently being renovated and whatever money is leftover will go to the concession area. These are the primary components of the park that the county wants to improve with existing funding. Other avenues are being looked at for funding the entryway and road. The partnership between the county and city as accountable governance is to help recount and identify best sources of funding and prioritize projects.

Commissioner Armenta: Curious, with some of your existing events and specifically from a living standpoint, are there things identified here that helped those existing events? I know resident facilities would certainly be a broad reach there, but are there new elements that you've all seen from an event standpoint being able to do as you move toward the bigger picture?

- The county and the projects team had joint meetings with the city and the event holders of Red Rock Park facility to get employments to some of the potential designs, some of the concepts, things like that pavilion on the West side or our vendorspace campground. We want people to stay here. We also want them to stay at our hotels, but we want them to be able to stay at Rock Park. More stays at the campground means increased revenues or maintenance and operations of the park. The RV campground is going to be an integral piece in supporting all events at Red Rock Park. The county did try to incorporate some of the event holders in the process.

Chair Kimball asked if there were any other questions. With none, she thanked Mr. Howe.

**Agenda amended by unanimous motion.*

NMTD Update:

1. *NMTD Deputy Secretary Jennifer Saavedra* presenting: Deputy Secretary Saavedra updated the Commission members on the next Route 66 Centennial meeting set for Tuesday, September 17th in Santa Fe, at Santa Fe Community College; both a Coordination Group and Stakeholder meeting will be held. Meetings have been held in multiple communities, with the last Stakeholder meeting being held in Grants and/or Gallup to meet the requirements of the Coordination Group in the Executive Order. The agenda will include Debbie Johnson who is joining from the National Commission, NMTD, the National Park Service, and the New Mexico Commission on Disability to talk about inclusions for business infrastructure. The Route 66 just concluded its Cooperative Grant Program. Santa Rosa, Tucumcari, Pecos, Santa Fe, Albuquerque with partners Barelmas and Old Town were all communities that were awarded. Unlike NMTD's normal cooperative marketing program, which we receive funds from partners to match the Department's 2:1 match, the Route 66 grant program will be fully funded by the Department. There will be marketing and promotion and a flex option for some web enhancements and for promotional items as part of that grant program. The program will grant about a half million dollars with NMTD is putting forth promoting each of these communities in preparation for the Centennial. NMTD will be closing the infrastructure application and special events overflows, but we are working through the applications to determine who we're going to be awarded through those programs. We were really excited about the infrastructure, one of the most exciting things for us is that hearing people's idea as we've gone throughout this and some of those ideas and projects are now part of our grant program and you know, that's super exciting. We're also continuing to work with Brand USA for our marketing and looking at developing an app for maps so that people can build itineraries as they're and we're preparing for things

As statutorily required on September 1st, NMTD submitted our budget. Our budget for FY26 includes a request of about a 3% increase over our FY25 current operating budget. NMTD programs have grown; we've added Destination Forward, we've added TEGS, we've added a lot of these programs to support our communities, but staff has stayed the same. We really need to look at investing in our staff, so there is no significant burnout. There is also a goal to make portions of the budget part of our base that historically have been a special appropriation. NMTD's special appropriation request was for about 22 million, 15 for national and international marketing, 2.5 for Route 66 again, and 1.9 again for Destination Forward. As heard from the county, Gallup is one of our recipients of our Destination Forward grants. Hopefully at the next Commission Meeting, there will be some exciting stuff to tell you all about the beautification campaign.

There was 2 million requested for our Marketing Center of Excellence. We are the marketing agency for any state agency that wants us to help them with their marketing. NMTD hired a director for that and that's going well. An additional \$300,000 for Special Olympics, which NMTD has always supported and will continue to support.

2. *NMTD Marketing Division Director Erin Ladd presenting:* Because it is the first meeting for FY25 and for the purposes of our national marketing campaigns, it's actually kind of an in between time of year. NMTD's main spring/summer campaign wrapped in mid-July and after that we went into what we call our incremental or interstitial campaign, which is still live, specifically in California markets. This decision was made because California markets have become so important to us as economic drivers. A lot of really good data is coming out of like new and growing the California markets.

Director Ladd went on to provide updates on the Co-op program and gave a couple of relevant creative examples including one from Gallup, that was in New Mexico Magazine and one digital placement from Discover Navajo. FY25 is the largest ever Co-op year with 50 awardees with slightly under \$4 million awarded. NMTD is at a \$5.8 million social media making our largest whole media value ever. Production is just now getting started and we are taking advantage the nice weather in Native New Mexico. This includes production with partners all around the state and just now really kicking off the CoOp program. Late August is the earliest NMTD can get into market at the beginning of the fiscal with our partners.

In FY25 to support marketing for the Route 66 Centennial the Marketing Division will be doing a special deal with an app and a developer called Visit Widget. Visit widget is a special destination mapping tool that also comes with app development. NMTD is engaging with them specifically for Route 66 specifically, the state of New Mexico in total will not be included. The Route 66 specific mapping project with is going to live on newmexico.org so it is going to be browser based as well as being app based. There is also potential work with New Mexico Magazine on some synergies with these options. Something else that NMTD will be doing for the first time, or it has been a lot of years since it has been done, is a specific Route 66 influencer campaign. It has been a long time since the state has overseen a specific marketing-based influencer campaign and NMTD is working right now on that with a company called Stellar. Several different influencer marketing companies were evaluated before choosing to work with the company Stellar. The specific influencer candidate will start in FY25 and they will do their content distribution in FY25, and there is hope to continue something like this in FY26, but this will be a something fresh out of the gateway. That activity is getting started right now, probably to be distributed next spring/summer, closer to the summer.

National production for a new Route 66, 30 second commercial will be set for distribution in 2025. The last handful of years, NMTD has been working with a creative strategy called Living Legends. Living Legends have previously been like sort of a singular modern storyteller, influencer, person of note in the state of New Mexico telling their story, resulting in NMTD's creative company. That is a lot harder to do with 500 miles of Route 66; therefore, a new concept is being shot right now. There is no footage for you at this time, but hopefully soon – either the next Commission meeting or the meeting after that. Finally, for the first time ever NMTD is doing international destination marketing for the purposes of New Mexico True. This is something that NMTD is deciding to pilot specifically for promotion of the Route 66 Centennial. We are working with the federal marketing agency of the country which is called Brand USA (brandusa.com), and planning on targeting the UK and Germany in the spring of 2025 with some digital options, some publisher specific options, etc. The UK targeting's going to be specifically in London. A lot of special projects are getting started.

It is a bit quiet in our national advertising right now. There are some airport out of home placements that'll be live for a while and some TEGS. It will be another 6-8 weeks before we are fully in market with our winter campaign. There are 3 new pieces to show, and the three pieces will be in market as NMTD starts with the Winter campaign by early November. The three pieces show included a shoot at Angel Fire, Chimayo, and a James Beard nominated chef out of the Farmington/Aztec area. These are the three pieces that we will have in market for the winter campaign. These pieces were just finalized this week and will go live in November.

Chair Kimball asked Director Ladd that she remind everyone what states the New Mexico True campaign is in right now where would [NMTD] with more money?

- Right now, we are in coastal California. Top to bottom of the of the state of California, we're in San Diego and several LA area airports such as the Santa Ana airport in Burbank and LAX. We are also in the Bay area including San Francisco (SFO), San Jose and Oakland. Covering California top to bottom is a relatively new development. The campaign went into San Francisco last winter and this will be our second winter campaign in the San Francisco area and after the pandemic our campaign started in LA in 2021. The California market has turned into some statistically very meaningful travel to the state. Influenceable travel to the state of New Mexico is what NMTD hopes to capitalize more on because the California markets have proven very successful. We are also in Dallas, Austin and Houston in the Texas markets, and Phoenix and Denver as well. NM True is pretty prominent in all these airports. There is a lot of digital billboard presence in the DFW airport. If we had extra budget to add another at another metro, there are a couple of things that we have considered for a long time. One of Visit Albuquerque's flight markets is Las Vegas. Las Vegas is one the markets that pops. Portland and Seattle have really good connectivity in and out of Albuquerque. Portland and Seattle have strong points of differentiation just client wise with those destinations. Salt Lake City would hit inside that top five too, probably Las Vegas, Portland, Seattle, Salt Lake, those would be really strong markets.

Commissioner Vallo asked about the Atlanta market.

- We do have flight connectivity to Atlanta through the Albuquerque Sun Port. Delta hub does have a flight. Historically, we have never touched the Southeast as a cultural point of differentiator or climate point of differentiator. The flight connectivity is there, it exists, which is good.

Commissioner Vallo mentioned Atlanta airport as an international hub.

- It is an international hub and that is one of the things that we really love about being in the LAX and the Phoenix sky harbors and the DFWS of the world because we just touched so many more people who are using it as an as an entry and exit point for so many other places. Atlanta as far as an origin market doesn't often pop for us. A lot of times we will see the East Coast. That's going to be like a New York or Boston, Washington, DC and then some Florida cities. Florida might not be a bad choice because we also have some flight connected to Florida too. The goal is always to try and get people here on one flight if possible but that's not an exclusive. That's not a metric for what I would consider a good flight running for us.

Commissioner Vallo asked Director Ladd about NMTD interviewing people along Route 66 and asked to consider looking at how Route 66 affected pueblos like the potters who would go up the road and exchange a lot. There's a lot of stories out there, with the elderly and if [NMTD

interviewed them] that would be awesome if they can be reached out to, to get some of these stories.

- A really good point. In 2018 [NMTD] did a Route 66 mini film. Lee Harman, from Laguna Pueblo was interviewed. He was in his early 90s when we when we interviewed him eight years ago and he's since past; but yes, he had really interesting stories to tell about early photography on early Route 66 and where it came from for the Pueblos on that side of Albuquerque.

Commissioner Vallo discussed NMTD starting through Brand USA and having a good point of contact that submits many German artists

- This is our first time meaningfully engaging with Brand USA. They've always been a possibility and a resource out there available to us – just was never previously the right kind of product that was great for it. Let's talk afterward [Commissioner Vallo] because I would love to know what you know about where you're saying this is our first time.\

3. *NMTD Tourism Development Division Director Holly Kelley presenting:* In our division we have the Tourism Event Growth and Sustainability (TEGS) program, Destination Forward program and New Mexico Clean and Beautiful program. For FY25, this will be our third year for TEGS. The program provides technical assistance marketing and sponsorship to qualifying tourism events. It's really about the community's signature events that they rely heavily on, and they need extra support with, whether it's in the area of assistance, marketing, sponsorship. This year for FY25 we awarded 38 tourism related events and with a total program budget of over \$533,000. There are differences between technical assistance and sponsorship for this program. You can apply for three different tiers. If you apply for assistance you can participate in what we call our accelerator track where you receive an award up to \$5000. Tourism Development comes to the event, we provide on site assessment and give you suggestions and recommendations. Our marketing firm is engaged to do an online discoverability assessment for the event and then partners receive those results. That award money can be spent for the recommendations and suggestions that come with both of those assessments as well as tangible assets for the event itself and marketing. The sponsorship tier provides NMTD attendance for the event. Award dollar amounts vary depending on the attendance of the event. NMTD participation includes bringing members of NMTD staff and NMM adventure guides, seasonal adventure guides, New Mexico Magazine, NM True swag and we partner with you on site. An example of an event award recipient is Tour de Acoma. A gorgeous event to participate in or just attend and cheer on the participants. Santa Fe Wine and Chile Fiesta has been an award recipient as well. Destination Forward Grant (DFG) program is in its second year. This program supports tourism infrastructure related projects. For years acting Cabinet Secretary, Lancing Adams, he's been focused on how can NMTD help bring kind of shop some of the ICIP type projects, the capital outlay related projects, but we help shine light on the tourism infrastructure, infrastructure related projects in order to assist in ensuring that they receive the funding they need for these important community assets. A couple years ago NMTD started a tourism infrastructure project dashboard on our website and they're ICIP projects and, and we highlight that list of projects through a legislative session every year, try to raise awareness Some are very large-scale projects, some are smaller scale projects, and some require multiple funding sources to complete some of these projects. In FY24 NMTD was able to kick off this program with a small budget. Now our DFG program can fund some of these projects. This fiscal year NMTD awarded \$2.3 million to 12 destination forward projects. Not all of these are necessarily ICIP projects. Some applicants need funds to afford a budget for a master plan or conceptual design plan that cost a lot of money. DFG can help provide funding for something along those

lines, for a larger scale project and at least help move the needle a little bit. DFG can also fully fund something like the Route 66 neon gateway sign for the City of Albuquerque. NMTD is very proud of this program and see big things happening with this program. In addition to Gallup's RV Park that was awarded \$100,000 for the design plan, City of Grant's Multipurpose Arena was awarded. This is an example of a very large-scale project, an ICIP project, but what was applied for and awarded was \$384,000 to replace their grandstands so they're ADA compliant and a multipurpose arena. The master design has a total cost of \$10 million but every little bit counts.

The clean and beautiful program (NMCB) is one of our legacy programs with the department. This year we've been able to increase the participation by 13% with a 10% decrease in investment. By providing funding to these communities around the state, we assist, and we invest in not only our communities, but they're their efforts in better ratification of litter and beautification. NMCB also funds programs to help them educate their youth and engage them in projects related to getting out there, picking up litter, understanding how to recycle, that sort of thing. NMTD was able to award \$1,000,000 to 67 communities. Not only does the program help provide supplies for these efforts such as trash pickers, bags, gloves and safety vests and what have you, but also, engagement with youth groups is encouraged.

4. *NMTD Director of Communications Cody Johnson* presenting: There was rapid growth in FY24 NMTD's National Media program. In FY24, the Tourism Department's National Earned Media Program secured 140 placements in travel media, resulting in over 2 billion impressions and over \$26 million in advertising value equivalence. Over the past 4 years, the Tourism Department has implemented this program with increasing efficiency. To put that into perspective, the Tourism Department finished FY21 (the first year of the overhauled National Earned Media Program) with an ROI of \$5 in estimated media value for every \$1 spent on strategies and tactics. By FY24, the Tourism Department produced an ROI of \$77 in estimated media value for every \$1 spent on strategies and tactics.

YOY increase of 10% for "hidden gems" inclusion in coverage. Multiple stories in the NYT about Gila Wilderness Centennial. 17 international placements, including: Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, UK, Italy, Mexico. Four straight years of inclusion in Smithsonian Magazine's Best Small Towns to Visit.

Director Johnson discussed the impact of these results explaining that many of the articles about New Mexico you have read over recent years – in publications such as the New York Times, CNN Travel, Condé Nast, Forbes, Vogue, the Washington Post, National Geographic, USA TODAY and more – were produced in part through the efforts of the Tourism Department's Communications team.

One of our internal KPI's is inclusion of what we refer to as "hidden gems," which we consider as New Mexico destinations not Albuquerque, Santa Fe or Taos. In FY24, we saw a 10% increase in coverage of "hidden gems" compared to FY23. A few examples of some of these destinations are Truth or Consequences, as there has been a good amount of interest in the local hot springs; Los Alamos due at least in part to Oppenheimer; and Alamogordo due to interest in White Sands. Ruidoso and Las Cruces also received some measurable coverage over the course of FY24. One of our PR efforts during FY24 was highlighting the Gila Wilderness Centennial. Through our efforts, we helped secure 2 different feature articles about the Gila

Wilderness and the surrounding area in the New York Times. Another trend we have noticed over the past couple of years is a growing organic interest in New Mexico from international travel writers. We continue to pursue these media opportunities, which resulted in 17 secured placements in international travel media markets such as the United Kingdom, Australia, Italy, Ireland, Mexico and more. We secured 140 separate placements in national and international media and then all comes up to an ROI of \$77.00 for security number for \$1.00 spend in tactics.

Forbes Michele Herrmann did a story "At 100, This Santa Fe Tradition Is Still Burning Bright" with coverage views at 168,000 and reaching 124,000,000 and creating 106 social engagements so far.

The communications department is preparing for the travel tradeshow circuit, with three tradeshow on our schedule from now until January 2025 – London, Alabama and California. Specifically focusing on the Route 66 Centennial at the Brand USA Travel Week in London, and we will have Visit Albuquerque join us at that event. NMTD is working to secure in-market representative for UK, working to establish USA Discovery Program for New Mexico, and IPW partnership opportunities. Tradeshow booth RFP will launch November 11, 2024. A big first step was hiring an FTE to oversee the creation and management of this program, which was done in April. Then a small team of Tourism Department staff travel to Los Angeles in May to attend IPW, which is the largest inbound travel trade convention in the United States.

Some of you may be asking "what is travel trade?" We like to define travel trade as "the businesses that arrange and sell travel products and experiences directly to consumers and/or other businesses." Effectively what we are doing is developing B2B relationships with international travel buyers – the people who research, build and manage packaged travel for travelers all across the world. While our Marketing Division will continue to do the great work of promoting New Mexico True through excellent creative production to appeal directly to prospective travelers, the Travel Trade program will begin developing relationships with travel buyers to increase the inventory of packaged travel that features New Mexico so that when a prospective traveler becomes interested in visiting New Mexico, there will be more options for them to experience the Land of Enchantment when it comes time to booking their trip.

Some questions posed and answered included why did our agency identify this as a strategy to pursue at this time? One big reason is that travel trade will allow the Tourism Department to "test the waters" in international markets. And why would it be valuable to make New Mexico more appealing to international travelers? According to data from the US Travel Association, the US anticipates to see international travel return to pre-pandemic levels in 2024 and surpass pre-pandemic levels in 2025. Capitalizing on international travel is high-value economic opportunity for New Mexico tourism. According to data from Tourism Economics, the typical international trip to the US spans an average of 11 days, and includes an average spend of \$4,200 while in the US. In order to focus efforts on a specific theme, we hope to center at least some of our travel trade strategies on the upcoming Route 66 Centennial. Based on travel planning behavior of prospective international travelers, they may spend anywhere from 12-18 months from early exposure to booking a trip – this will align very nicely with the Route 66 Centennial in 2026. This program is still very much in the foundation-building stage, and we hope to use FY25 as an opportunity to develop essential relationships and test different strategies and tactics. The collection of logos you see on screen are just a sample of some of the strategic partnerships we hope to develop – and in some cases, have already developed –

as the department actively builds out this program. Additionally, the Travel Trade program is already activating through a handful of strategically-identified travel tradeshow and conventions. On screen you will see a promo post about our attendance to IPW where the Tourism Department met with roughly 130 travel buyers and product managers. The Tourism Department is already planning on attending three more tradeshow between now and January 2025, and we will be returning to IPW 2025 when it will be hosted in Chicago.

5. *NMTD Research Director Victoria Gregg presenting:* 2023 visitor spending results for the state were just issued to NMTD but county has not been issued. A press release from NMTD will come following the receipt of county information. At the state level there was \$8.6 billion in direct visitor spending, which is \$11.6 billion in total economic impact, over 93,000 jobs sustained by direct spending, which is an increase over 2022, and state and local taxes have generated about \$810 million. In comparison visitor spending increased by 3.8% from 2022 to 2023. Visitation was also up by 1.2 percent, which is notable because the rest of the country has stayed flat or even declined a little bit in visitation in 2023. International visitation was up over 34%, which brings it right in line with what we were seeing in 2019. For the US as a whole, they were only at 84% of where they were in 2019. International spending increased even a little bit more like 36.2%, which is 6% more than in 2019. We're seeing increases in international visitation and spending and visitor-supported employment grew by 2.2 percent in 2023.

This is 2023 data although we're more than halfway through 2024. Currently NMTD does have an RFP out where we're hoping to get a little bit more timely data when it comes to our big economic impact report. Hopefully next year when findings are discussed, it won't be in September, it will be a little bit earlier in the year.

Commissioner Vallo asked how much of spending is done in pueblos in the state?

- With the main ways we have to track international spending it is difficult. For domestic spending, we can track that. I don't know that we've looked at it specifically, but that's something we can look at.

Commissioner Lee mentioned some of that information may be caught in county data.

- It will be, it will cover the county by county and then we can use Geo location to target specific areas so we can look at specific communities.

6. *New Mexico Magazine CEO Edward Graves presenting:* An exciting time for New Mexico Magazine and the staff. They were recently recognized for 20 awards of excellence from the International Regional Media Association, including Magazine of the Year. A comment about New Mexico Magazine reads like a love and Mexico people, culture, culture of food and activities. The 24th annual New Mexico Magazine Photograph Contest awards are now ongoing. The nomination process is open through September 15th. One of the new categories that we've added this year is a Route 66 category and we plan to produce a Route 66 calendar. The 2024-2025 Travel Adventure Guide is in production. Some of the upcoming editorial issues include Western Fashion, Roadhouses & Saloons, Film & TV, and Holiday/NM True Heroes. NM True Heroes will be announced on YouTube live channel on November 22nd. Specific to Gallup, we work on a special spread for the Intertribal Ceremonial and the Queen.

Presentation by City of Gallup Tourism and Marketing: Marketing and Projects Coordinator Dee Santillanes presented on her time with the organization and her life long experience with the City of

Gallup, having been born in Church Rock, NM. Coordinator Santillanes discussed the Gallup Summer Indian Dances and a kickoff with community members and partners to promote the Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremony. She mentioned the deep rooted in the culture in Gallup and McKinley County and the happiness to share it with New Mexicans, with other states, and most importantly, with the international people of this world.

Director Sentallnes went on to discuss her department and their staff including tourism and marketing manager Matt Robinson and summer interns. Cajun Cleveland interned with the City of Gallup this summer who helped organize meetings with several Navajo Nation chapter houses, lead introductions to local indigenous leaders in the Navajo Nation and the services the city can provide. The department also invited local indigenous leaders to shop, to visit, to, to eat, in Gallup and to share their events and network. Micah Biaf was a high school intern who has been interested in creating social media content and the department has been helping him develop his skills in that area.

Gallup Lodgers tax, Route 66, and the City of Gallup's deep cultural heritage from all the different Native American tribes to America and its history was also briefly discussed. Events mentioned included Gallup Summer Indian Dances and Market, Enchanted Forest Mountain bike race, bull riding, rodeos, parades, dances, film screenings and a Pow Wow. The department also offers a reimbursement program for event marketing and promotion awarding \$180,000 to about 20 local events in 2023. Gallup's 4th of July Stars and Stripes celebration has been revived with a new RFP for a drone company and the community loved it. Gallup is the center of nine national parks or monuments, they have the most hotels and restaurants with stores in a 2-hour radius and are a historic and contemporary hub for trade, commerce and community coming together. The Gallup Route 66 Centennial has an art and beautification plan for the future including metal art installation plans and two new mural plans.

****With Reno Eddy, Rodeos and the Tourism Economy, no longer available to present, Chair Kimbell asked for a motion to strike the presentation. Passed unanimously.*

Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Bill Lee – C.E.O. for The Gallup McKinley County Chamber of Commerce

- Preparing for Gallup's big balloon rally, on the heels of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (AIBF). These events have impact across the state and there are large groups who travel to Gallup to take their balloon rides before they get to Albuquerque. A large airstream group that travels with their trailers will come and park about 70 RVs on the way to AIBF, which impacts the local economy. Gallup just had many visitors that went to the Zozobra celebration who came to visit the community. Commissioner Lee offered a tour of Red Rock Park following the meeting and mentioned the park's beauty. Commissioner Lee formerly ran the park as manager and told the audience a story about John Kerry visiting on his former Presidential campaign. Commissioner Lee also provided local corn necklaces made by a Navajo family in the area for all Commissioners in attendance and some additional items from Gallup Chamber of Commerce.

Chairwoman Jennifer L. Kimball – Ambassador and Board Chairman Emerita at La Fonda on the Plaza

- Commissioner Kimball provided an update on the Santa Fe International Film Festival held on October 17th and 18th. The person getting the award at the Film Festival will be Brian Cranston. Santa Fe Wine and Chile Fiesta will be September 26-28, 2024, and be hosted at

Fort Marcy Park for the second year. Commissioner Kimball also thanked NMTD for making a sponsorship donation to the Folk Art Market held in Santa Fe in July. NMTD's sponsorship allowed the last day of the market to be free to all who attended. This allowed many families, kids and community members who could not otherwise attend, go to the market for free.

Commissioner Tania Armenta – President and CEO of Visit Albuquerque.

- Commissioner Armenta provided updates on several developments in Albuquerque. A brand-new Sun Capital Hotel in Uptown Albuquerque a new element hotel, new park at Win Rock and a new Ex Novo Brewery location. The original location was located in Corrales, and the new location is in downtown Albuquerque, with some new and exciting opportunities including Chef Marc Quinones in the kitchen. The old Hotel Blue is also being renovated with the Arrive Hotel slated to open in about 6 months. Season 4 of Bands of Enchantment is filming at the Kimo Theater which is aired on PBS. Citywide conventions happening in Albuquerque continue have been important for the overall state. The State Fair currently provides nice citywide business and following Balloon Fiesta will launch with 16 new shapes and a drone show. Commissioner Armenta showed appreciation for all of the partnerships with the New Mexico Tourism Department for Route 66 and for all things media coverage, and cooperative opportunities. Albuquerque is also finalizing their destination master plan and plans to unveil that 10-year vision for Albuquerque at the annual meeting on November 12th.

Commissioner Emerson Vallo – Pueblo of Acoma.

- No update.

New Commissioner Ernie Kos – City of Clovis Chamber of Commerce

- Commissioner Kos discussed her excitement about the target marketing for the UK because of Clovis' music history with Buddy Hollywood. She discussed upcoming projects including a Rock'n'Roll museum and Clovis Music Festival. Commissioner Kos expressed how impressed she was for her first Tourism Commission meeting and how appreciative she was of the statistics provided.

Commissioner Bill Lee asked thoughts and prayers be with Scott Applewood's family after his recent passing. Mr. Applewood was a NM Tourism Hall of Fame member and a large part of the state ballooning community. He was remembered fondly as starting the special shapes rodeo and balloon glow for AIBF.

Public Comment:

Director of the Arts Council for Gallup and McKinley County discussed and new event six years in the making that's launching next March. The Council has been working since 2018 to build a museum showcasing our community's collection of new art dealers. A really expensive and impressive collection of new dealers in the 30s and 40s and over 120 objects have been collected. They received a \$1,000,000 in funding from the National Endowment for the Arts to build a groundbreaking virtual museum experience with the event happening March 28th and 29th.

Bobby Martin Navajo Tourism Director discussed the Navajo Tourism budget, coming in at just \$400,000 and covering New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. Director Martin discussed what the Navajo Nation is missing and offered his contact information to begin collaboration with attendees. Director

Martin also mentioned the Navajo Nation Conference in November in Page, AZ this year.

Northwest Council of Governments notified the audience and commissioners that they are in the process of updating their corridor management plan for the Scenic Byway, a federally designated byway. They are also determining who will be on the Byway Association and the formation of that group.

Adjourn: Motion made by Commissioner Kos to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Armenta and passed unanimously. Chairwoman Kimball adjourned the meeting at 2:17pm.

Approved by Commission vote at public meeting held on November 20, 2024.


Commission Chair Jenny Kimball