



NEW MEXICO

TOURISM DEPARTMENT

Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group
Special Meeting & Stakeholder Meeting #2
Tuesday, May 21, 2024, 10:00 a.m.
Blue Hole Dive Center,
1085 Blue Hole Road, Santa Rosa, NM 88435

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m. by Chair Bill Lee.

Roll Call:

Group Members Present:

Bill Lee (Chair)
Raymond Mondragon (Vice-Chair)
Evan Williams
Johnny Pena
Acting Secretary Lancing Adams
Scott Verhines
Daniel Gutierrez
Michelle Roberts

Group Members Not Present:

Alisha Ortega
Elmer Torres
Secretary Ricky Serna
Danielle Gillingham

Welcome & Introductions

Chair Lee welcomed meeting attendees and stated he was excited to see the large number of individuals in attendance. He encouraged everyone to come to every stakeholder meeting. He then introduced local elected officials and dignitaries.

Chair Lee asked that City of Santa Rosa Mayor Nelson Koitar provide a brief welcome. Mayor Koitar welcomed the Route 66 Coordination Group to Santa Rosa and stated Santa Rosa was ready to help.

Chair Lee thanked the mayor and stated he wanted to keep the business portion of the agenda as brief as possible so that they could spend the majority of the meeting working to gather input from the community for the celebration of Route 66.

Coordination Group Business & Action Items

ByLaws Amendments

Chair Lee introduced the proposed ByLaws Amendment and asked Novela Salazar, General Counsel, New Mexico Tourism Department to go over the proposed changes and to explain the need.

Novela Salazar stated she is presenting the following additions to the Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group Bylaws:

Section 3. Designees. An appointed member must select another individual as their designee should they choose not to participate in the Coordination Group.

Section 4. Proxies.

The purpose of a proxy is to ensure that an absent member has the opportunity to provide input and/or vote on all issues brought before the Group.

1. An appointed member may select another individual to serve as their proxy.
2. Voting by proxy means that a particular member is authorized to cast the vote of an absent member in a meeting.
3. A member may appoint a proxy to vote or otherwise act for the member by alerting the chair, either personally or by the Group's general counsel.
 - a. An appointment in the form of an electronic record submitted by a member who has agreed that either bears the member's electronic signature or is sent from the member's designated email address and that may be directly reproduced in paper form by an automated process shall be deemed a valid appointment form within the meaning of this section.
 - b. Any member wishing to appoint a proxy should notify the Chair in writing prior to the meeting at which the proxy is to be exercised.
4. An appointment of a proxy is revocable by the member unless the appointment conspicuously states that it is irrevocable, and the appointment of a designee.

The following was added to Section 3. Stakeholder Meetings: Meeting activities shall be recorded, summarized, and shared with the Commission for communication purposes.

Section 5. Notice of Meeting has been revised to state:

1. Notices of each public meeting held by the Coordination Group shall be given as provided in the Group's annual resolution adopted pursuant to the New Mexico Open Meetings Act.
2. Notice of each public meeting of the Group shall be posted on the New Mexico Tourism Industry website (www.newmexico.org/industry/ipcoming-events) and shall include the meeting agenda.

3. Copies of the written notice for any public meeting shall be provided to those broadcast stations licensed by the Federal Communications Commission and newspapers of general circulation that have provided a written request for such notice.

Motion by Member Pena approve the adoption of the ByLaws Amendments, seconded by Member Guterriez. Motion carried; none were opposed.

Open Meetings Act Resolution Adoption 2024

Chair Lee asked Novela Salazar to provide a brief overview of the Open Meetings Act Resolution.

Novela Salazar noted that this is similar to the Opens Meetings Act adopted in 2023 by the Coordination Group but must be adopted each year. She noted that notice of each public meeting of the Coordination Group shall be posted on the New Mexico Tourism Industry website at least seventy-two hours prior to the meeting and shall include the meeting agenda She

Motion by Member Mondragon to approve the adoption of the Open Meetings Act Resolution, seconded by Member Pena. Motion carried; none were opposed.

Group Plan Amendment & Reschedule June 18th Meeting Date

Chair Lee noted that the group worked to set up the next meeting in June as far ahead as possible, but even the best plans run into scheduling issues.

Acting Secretary Adams stated that a date for June had been set previously during a public meeting, but the Annual Tribal Summit was set at a time that conflicted with the original date.

Chair Lee noted that the request is to change the date to Tuesday, June 25, 2024, in Albuquerque and they are working with Member Pena to secure a location.

Motion by Member Mondragon to approve the adoption of the Group Plan Amendment to reschedule the next Quarterly Meeting for June 25, 2024, seconded by Member Pena. Motion carried; none were opposed.

Working Group Instruction

Chair Lee introduced Jason Espinoza of KW Consulting LLC, who has been contracted to facilitate stakeholder meetings and support the work of the Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group. He asked Jason to come up to the podium and give an overview of the working group format and instructions.

Jason Espinoza presented on the format of the Stakeholder Meeting. He stated that each small group would spend 15 minutes per work group topic, and that individuals would start at the table matching the color of their card. He noted that every group will be able to cycle through all five work group topics. He stated that the given work group

topics included: Consumer Experiences, Product Development, Marketing & Promotion, Infrastructure, and Special Events. He also provided an overview of the “Project Idea Worksheet” that would be available to the public at each working group table. He noted that the “Project Idea Worksheet” is intended to help organize ideas and present a more complete picture of the proposed idea and/or project. The “Project Idea Worksheet” includes the following questions:

Project & Community Benefit

- What is the project benefit (positive change, utility, or value)?
- What is the story we are telling?
- Is there a connection to a national/statewide project?

Project Planning & Implementation

- What stakeholders/partners would need to be involved?
- What is the project timeline?
- How will this project be sustained beyond the Centennial?
- What type of financing, staffing, administration or other support is needed?

Mr. Espinoza noted that this is just the start of the process and wants participants to continue to evolve their ideas, so at each table is a sheet of paper with a QR code that will allow participants to fill out a “Project Idea Worksheet” online after the meeting.

Chair Lee thanked Jason for his overview of the stakeholder meeting and asked participants to head to the table that matched their color paper they were given when signing in for the meeting.

Stakeholder Roundtables & Working Groups

Participants were divided into four Stakeholder Roundtables that were facilitated by Jason Espinoza, Brittany Espinoza, Jennifer Saavedra, and co-facilitated by Christy Tafoya and Andria Montoya. Each group discussed what new or enhanced Consumer Experiences, Product Development, Marketing & Promotion, Infrastructure, and Special Events could be created to support the Route 66 Centennial.

Report Outs from Working Groups to Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group

Each workgroup facilitator reported several overarching themes from their Stakeholder Roundtable discussions. Jason Espinoza, Brittany Espinoza, Jennifer Saavedra, and Christy Tafoya briefly noted project ideas and/or themes from their discussions.

Consumer Experiences: An idea to enhance consumer experiences included customer service training for community residents / employees. It was noted that this customer service training could include a module on the history and significant of Route 66 so that when visitors visit communities, the residents and employees at related businesses would be able to enhance the experience by sharing information and history with them.

The development of a Route 66 passport across all states and communities along the corridor was recommended. The Route 66 Passport could include information about the communities along the corridor, places of interest to visit, photos, and specific community itineraries at each stop along the way. It was noted that the passport concept has been used successfully during past Route 66 anniversary celebrations.

The idea of expanding existing consumer experiences such as the Musical Highway to other communities was discussed. There could be a series of songs and stops along the route.

Product Development: The creation of Route 66 branded swag including towels, flip flops, caps, t-shirts, bathing suits was discussed. It was noted that these promotional items could be sold during special events created for the Centennial. The need for a coordinated logo that communities could utilize, but also would create consistency along the route and to visitors would be helpful. Creation of a Geocaching activity that would encourage visitors to explore communities along Route 66 could help move drivers off of I-40. Geocaching is an outdoor recreational activity in which participants use GPS and other techniques to find and hide items at specific locations. This is similar to a scavenger hunt.

Marketing & Promotion: The need for coordinated marketing for communities across New Mexico along the Route 66 corridor, including specialized itinerary for each community that could lure drivers off I-40. The need for sign restoration, including neon sign restoration, but the need to overcome obstacles related to historic preservation was also noted. The idea was floated to leverage funding from multiple sources to purchase a station on Sirius XM Radio that would be dedicated to the Route 66 Centennial for a designated time frame. The dedicated radio station could play music, podcasts, and stories that tell the story of Route 66 and of the communities, but also entice listeners to travel Route 66 and discover the communities along the route. This could also serve as a location for businesses and attractions to direct advertising dollars to drivers/listeners as they traverse Route 66.

Infrastructure: The community noted that a wayfinding project is in the process but may need further funding to ensure completion. There continued to be discussion around the need for additional directional signage, whether it was better signage to the Blue Hole, to the theatre, or to other community points of interest. Shields of timeline along Route 66 were also discussed. A Department of Transportation sign that included the Route 66 communities was discussed. The need for designated walking districts to enhance the consumer experience and walkability was noted. The desire to affix a placard to existing Route 66 signs was discussed as a potential way to notify the public about the upcoming Route 66 Centennial was discussed.

Special Events: It was noted that a Special Event could be created as a fly-in on Route 66. Specifically, since the original runway Santa Rosa Route 66 Airport, which is owned by the Town of Santa Rosa, was a section of the old U.S. Highway 66 prior to the construction of Interstate 40. Hosting a special event that allowed participants to fly and

land on an actual part of the historic Route 66 may be a unique way to drive interest and visitors to Santa Rosa. Related to the fly-in, was an idea for a dive-in due that could utilize the famous Blue Hole's historic location next to the historic Route 66. Historically, when Route 66 went through Santa Rosa in the early 1900s, the original alignment meant it went right past the Blue Hole. Certificates could be created for individuals who participated in the 'dive-in' similar to certificates for the fly-in. Community events at city-owned properties were also discussed, where there could be arts and crafts fairs, dances, cornhole, car shows, and overall highlight vendors with local flair.

Chair Lee reminded and encouraged members of the public to utilize the online form to submit project ideas.

Adjourn: Motion was made by Member Pena to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Member Roberts, motion carried. Chairman Lee adjourned the meeting at 11:48 a.m.

Approved by Commission vote at public meeting held on June 25, 2024.

Commission Chair Bill Lee