



Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group & Stakeholder Meeting

September 17, 2024, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Santa Fe Community College
6401 Richards Ave, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Bill Lee.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present

Chair Bill Lee (Chair)
Raymond Mondragon (Vice Chair)
Elmer Torres
Evan Williams
Johnny Pena
Acting Secretary Lancing Adams (NMTD)
Angelica Trujillo (Proxy for Secretary Ricky Serna- DOT)
Daniel Zillmann (Proxy for Secretary Debra Garcia y Griego – DCA)
Daniel Gutierrez (EDD -Designate)
Deputy Secretary Danielle Gilliam (NMENV - Designate)

Commissioners Not Present

Alicia Ortega
Scott Verhines

Welcome & Introductions

Chair Lee welcomed everybody and thanked everyone for being at the Coordination Group Stakeholder Meeting. He noted that they will probably have more people still arriving and joining the meeting, especially as the Group gets closer to the stakeholder roundtables and working groups.

Motion to Approve the Agenda

Chair Lee directed Coordination Group members to the next item on the agenda—approval of the agenda.

Motion by Member Raymond Mondragon to approve the agenda, seconded by Member Elmer Torres.

Presentation; Debbie Johnson, Commissioner, National Route 66 Centennial Commission

Chair Lee welcomed the first guest speaker for the meeting—Debbie Johnson who serves on the National Route 66 Centennial Commission and is also the Senior Vice President of the Miles Partnership, a leading tourism marketing consulting firm.

Debbie Johnson noted that the National Commission was designated by President Joe Biden and that there are 14 members that sit on the commission, which represent all eight states along the route. Johnson stated that there are a few committees as well, and that she chairs the Marketing Committee, which covers national and international marketing. She stated that it is a great commission with a lot of passion about Route 66 that has a lot of conversations about what they can do to support the eight states. She said the conversation is about continuous marketing efforts between now and through the end of the Centennial and beyond.

Johnson asked attendees to visit the website, www.route66-centennial.com, to learn more about what the Commission is doing. Additionally, she noted one of the most important reasons to go to the site is if you had things that you would like to get recognized by the Commission, whether it's an event, marketing initiative, or other project connected to the Centennial. Johnson noted that the Commission doesn't have money for projects, but they can support projects from a recognition standpoint. Recognized projects will get projects national awareness about what is going on in New Mexico and how important the section of the route in New Mexico is to you, your organization, and the state as whole.

Johnson added that another website, www.visittheusa.com/route-66, is currently the Brand USA specific page for Route 66 that calls out all the things to see and do. Brand USA is in an active effort to promote right now and she is very happy to share they are going to be working with the Commission on creating a marketing platform nationally and internationally. This is so all of the states and marketing entities can have one visitor page and potential visitors who can information about the Centennial and Route 66 can go and get everything in one place. Johnson noted that Brand USA will have this site up for three years—2025, 2026, and 2027.

Johnson noted that the site will have links towards each state with information about road trips, events, festivals, and things to see and do along the road in every state. She is really excited about this opportunity for united marketing across all the states.

Presentation; Lisa McNiven & Jeminie Shell, Governor's Commission on Disability

Chair Lee welcomed the second set of guest speakers for the meeting—Lisa McNiven and Jeminie Shell with the Governor's Commission on Disability.

McNiven noted that they are not an enforcement agency but are really partners that can assist in the Route 66 Centennial Celebration to ensure they are inclusive to all individual across New Mexico. She also went over the statutory responsibilities of the Governor's Commission on Disability which was created in 1978. The responsibilities include promote public awareness, educate and encourage public and private action, provide advice and testimony, and focus on disability issues over the life span.

McNiven then welcomed Shell to the stage to conduct the presentation. Shell provided an overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as stressed the importance that people with disabilities must have an equal opportunity to participate in programs, services, and activities offered by any public entity. She noted this means that any barriers to their opportunity to participate must be removed to the maximum extent possible Shell stated that a barrier might be a policy or practice that needs to be modified to allow the person to participate in what the entity has to offer. Shell also gave several examples of policy modification and barrier removal examples to the audience.

Shell noted that additional surcharges may not be imposed on persons with disabilities to cover the cost of providing ADA mandated access to good and services. Public agencies also must make sure contractors follow through with ADA Title II obligations.

Shell then gave examples on ways to be accessible to individuals with disabilities as it related to consumer experiences such as self-guided tours, pop-up exhibits, concerts, theatre productions and other public events; product development such as commemorative merchandise and food establishments; marketing and promotion, such as publications and documentaries. Shell went over web accessibility requirements related to links, phone numbers, and the mobile web experience. Last, Shell discussed infrastructure such as wayfinding signage and public art.

Shell noted that the Commission on Disability would be happy to work with communities to make sure that accessibility is ensured for events and projects related to Route 66 Centennial celebrations.

Presentation; Kaisa Barthuli, Program Manager, National Park Service

Chair Lee welcomed the third set of guest speaker for the meeting—Kaisa Barthuli, Program Manager for the National Park Service Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program.

Barthuli noted that she will talk about why and how the National Park Service is involved in Route 66 and also the resources that the National Park Service has available to support communities as they move forward with the Centennial Celebration and beyond. Barthuli gave a brief history of Route 66 to provide context for the audience. She noted the Route 66 Special Resources Study Act of 1990, which stated Route 66 is of national historical significance and should be preserved.

Barthuli discussed the Route 66 Preservation Program which works with partners to provide recognition, technical assistance, and grant funding to preserve the special places and stories of historic Route 66. She discussed several educational outreach programs including community meetings, workshops, and conferences; as well as providing historic context and a historic property inventory. She noted that the Program also has a Route 66 National Register Travel Itinerary.

Barthuli discussed that through the program there have been 169 projects funded to date totaling over \$2.5 million in National Park Service Funds and almost \$4 million in matched funds. She provided an overview of several new Mexico projects that received funding including, Restore 110 Route 66 Neon Signs Across new Mexico, El Rancho Hotel, Blue Swallow Motel, Del's Restaurant, Whiting Bros., Santa Domingo Trading Post, El Vado Hotel, Imperial Motel Sign Restoration and more. Barthuli also discussed the Junior Ranger Program and Passport stamps.

Stakeholder Roundtables & Working Groups

Chair Lee invited Jason Espinoza to speak about the working group discussion instructions and how the Coordination Group will gather ideas and information.

Jason Espinoza presented on the format of the Stakeholder Meeting. He stated that each small group would spend 10 minutes per work group topic, and those 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. Espinoza also noted that this is just the start of the process and that each table has copies of blank "Project Idea Worksheets" that are intended to help organize thoughts and ideas. The project idea worksheets included questions such as summary of project, new or existing project, does the project align with national strategic principles, what stakeholders/partners need to be involved, project timeline, type of financing, and how will it be sustained beyond the Centennial. He also noted that online project submission form, which can be accessed via the QR code on the screen.

Chair Lee thanked Espinoza for the instructions and encouraged folks to get started in their small groups, as well as encouraged Coordination Group members to circulate with each group as they have in the past.

Espinoza and four other facilitators facilitated small group discussions with stakeholder groups on the identified work group topics and recorded project ideas and questions. At 11:50 p.m. the stakeholder discussion wrapped up.

Approval of the Tucumcari Meeting Minutes

Chair Lee asked the Coordination Group to review the meeting minutes from Tucumcari that were sent out in the meeting packet.

Motion by Member Elmer Torres to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Danielle Gilliam. Motion carried; none were opposed.

Approval of the Albuquerque Meeting Minutes

Chair Lee asked the Coordination Group to review the meeting minutes from Albuquerque that were sent out in the meeting packet.

Motion by Member Johnny Pena to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Daniel Zillmann. Motion carried; none were opposed.

Coordination Group Member Updates

Chair Lee asked members if they had updates, they wanted to share with the group. Daniel Gutierrez noted that the Economic Development Department MainStreet Program received \$10 million this year and are portions to assist communities along Route 66. They are also excited to use Route 66 Centennial logos and creating rack cards to promote the Centennial. Angelica Trujillo with NM Department of Transportation noted they are working on a updated road inventory signage list to upgrade all the Route 66 signs that are in poor condition. She also noted they are working with local governments to see if they can get more pavement shields out on the roadways. Vice Chair Mondragon noted a conversation about the potential of putting Route 66 Centennial logos on the Route 66 signs along the highways. Evan Williams stated his excited to have the next meeting in northwest New Mexico. Chair Lee noted that a group has been formed in his area with the City and the County that are working diligently on Route 66 Centennial planning in our area. He is excited to see that group performing in his community. Chair Lee also spoke about the idea about tie in of brands like Harley, gas brands, electric cooperatives and Tri-State Generations and Transmission Association and how communities can involve them in the process and have their brands as part of the Centennial celebration.

Update from the New Mexico Tourism Department

Acting Secretary Adams noted that he has really been inspired by this entire process from the first meeting in Santa Fe to the multiple meetings in communities across the state. He stated he will provide an update on the NM Tourism Department Route 66 Centennial Grant Program that is complementing some international marketing that the Department is going to be doing with Brand USA. Adams noted that goal is to celebrate and improve Route 66 as a coordinate that is vibrant and attractive fo residents and visitors.

Adams noted that in addition to new events, there are opportunities with existing legacy events to sponsor them under the Route 66 umbrella and provide smart advertising opportunities for the Centennial. He noted there is a lot of great work that already happens and there are events that are already happening that we can leverage.

Adams noted that \$2.5 million were appropriated this year to the Tourism Department to support the Centennial. He noted that the Department did include another \$2.5 million for next fiscal year in the budget process. He noted that roughly half the dollars are

going towards cooperative national and international marketing buys with Brand USA in likely the markets of the United Kingdom and Germany. Adams stated the other portion were going towards these grants. Adams noted that there have been applications from across the state and that the grant agreements should be finalized within a month. He noted they have seen lots of demand for the grants.

Update from the Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group Meeting Facilitator

Espinoza noted that as we continue moving forward with the Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group that we have now created a Project / Activity Submission Portal, where communities and organizations can submit projects, events, or program for consideration by the New Mexico Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group. Espinoza noted that submissions will be accepted on a rolling basis and reviewed. If endorsed by the New Mexico Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group, the project/activity will be submitted to the U.S. Route 66 Centennial Commission as an official Route 66 activity/project.

Espinoza noted that the submission portal includes the New Mexico scoring criteria, as well as overview of the National Route 66 Centennial Commission working groups. He noted that the information collected during submission closely mirrors the information collected by the national commission. The information includes working group alignment, project name and summary, alignment with centennial strategy, new or existing project, event frequency, financial support, participant score and rationale. Additionally, a question regarding project feasibility, readiness and community support was included to ensure compliance with the New Mexico specific scoring rubric. Espinoza noted that the portal should be up and running within a month so that the Commission can potentially consider endorsing projects at the next meeting.

Update from the Route 66 Centennial Coordination Group Meeting Facilitator

Motion by Member Elmer Torres to set the next meeting date for November 19, 2024, in Grants, seconded by Member Johnny Pena. Motion carried; none were opposed.

Adjournment

Motion by Member Johnny Pena to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Vice Chair Raymond Mondragon. Motion carried; none were opposed. Chair Lee adjourned the meeting at 11:48 a.m.

Approved by Coordination Group vote at public meeting held on November 19, 2024.



Coordination Group Vice Chair, Raymond Mondragon