



NEW MEXICO TRUE

New Mexico Tourism Commission

4th Quarter Meeting
Tuesday, May 17, 2022
3:30 PM

Albuquerque Convention Center, San Miguel Room (#215)
401 2nd Street NW Albuquerque, NM

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 3:32 p.m. by Jennifer Kimball.

Roll Call:

Commissioners Present:

Jennifer L. Kimball (Chair)
Ben Abruzzo
Belia Alvarez (telephonic)
Tania Armenta
Bill Lee
David Norden
Emerson R. Vallo

Commissioners not present:

N/A

Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Norden moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Abruzzo, and passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes from previous meeting: Commissioner Norden moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Armenta, and passed unanimously.

Approval of 2022 OMA Resolution: Renewal of the annual Open Meetings Act (OMA) Resolution, which identifies the public notice requirements for all Commission meetings and is unchanged from last year's resolution. Commissioner Lee moved to approve the Resolution, seconded by Commissioner Abruzzo, and passed unanimously.

Appointment of Clean & Beautiful Advisory Committee members: The law requires that the Tourism Commission appoint members to the Clean & Beautiful Advisory Committee (CBAC). There

are 11 nominees to the committee, and a brief bio for each of the nominees was provided to the Commission for their consideration. The nominees are: Debra Homer, Mary Garwood, Shawn Jeffrey, Sarah Pierpont, Elizabeth Juarros, David Tetrault, Gloria Skeet, Allyson Siwik, Brian Hoover, Elena Fernandez, and Joe Padilla. Commissioner Abruzzo moved to appoint the slate of 11 nominees to the CBAC, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Vallo, and it passed unanimously.

NMTD Update: Secretary Schroer provided a recovery update, encouraging everyone to recognize the wins that we achieve even while we are still coming out of effects of pandemic. For example, currently statewide hotel occupancy rates are at 96% of 2019 levels. Erin Ladd discussed the spring/summer advertising campaign in LA and Denver. Cody Johnson provided a review of the earned media efforts for tourism in New Mexico, including 1.3 billion impressions, with a \$4.5 million earned media value (EMV) thus far in FY22. Lancing Adams presented on the Tourism Event Growth & Sustainability Program that his team is developing, as well as the work his team is doing to help kickstart group travel business in New Mexico. Deputy Vigil presented on the hospitality training reimbursement program, which allows for training grants to all companies in the tourism and hospitality industry in New Mexico. She also discussed the ERAP housing stabilization program that includes hotel participation. Finally, Deputy Vigil described NMTD's latest efforts regarding hotel marketing and digital optimization, which is being managed by Holly Kelley at NMTD. In conclusion, Sec. Schroer discussed the recovery activities for the communities hit by wildfires and an upcoming endeavor by NMTD to develop a Tourism Exchange platform to find more competitive opportunities for New Mexico small tourism businesses.

Restaurant Industry Update: Carol Wight, NM Restaurant Association CEO, presented an update on the restaurant industry. There are still many lingering effects of the pandemic on this industry. She also discussed relief efforts (both federal and state). The top challenges in 2022 for restaurants are rising food costs and ingredient shortages. To meet hiring needs, NMRA is managing the "Hungry for Success" program to connect restaurants with potential employees. NMRA is also working to provide relief to people in the industry facing hardships – including "Desserts for Disaster Relief" for restaurants to provide proceeds of their dessert sales for relief for wildfire victims.

Level UP – Local Workforce Pipeline Model: Lutz Arnhold (Inn of the Anasazi) and Rik Blyth (La Fonda) presented on the Level UP! Program, a pilot program they developed to bring high school interns to a few Santa Fe hotels in 2022. They have worked to create formal and informal partnerships with local schools to develop future hospitality employees. They want to expand the program to include more schools and all hotels in the lodgers' association. For further information, check their website at www.levelupnewmexico.com or on Instagram at #levelupnewmexico.

Commissioner Updates:

Chairwoman Jennifer L. Kimball – The first ever Santa Fe Literary Festival starts May 20 with lots of well-known authors.

Commissioner Tania Armenta – Starting to see some positive momentum with visitation in Albuquerque. Creative collaboration between ABQ and Santa Fe to provide a special pass to cross-

promote the two locations. Albuquerque Tourism Marketing District (city-wide) adds a 2% assessment to all hotel stays in order to generate marketing revenue for Visit Albuquerque.

Commissioner Emerson Vallo – Most of tribal tourism venues are still closed due to the pandemic. Some of the museums and restaurants are open, but most other tours and access to tribal areas are still closed to the general public. Those feast days that are coming back this spring are limited to tribal members only for now.

Commissioner Ben Abruzzo – Great snow season this year recovering from pandemic effects of last year. However, they are still struggling to find adequate staffing levels. National forests are closing for now due to fire dangers.

Commissioner David Norden – Taos Air service operating for 4 years now. Excellent winter ski season, with great snow levels and great revenues. World-Pro Ski Tournament was a great success. Preparing for summer activities – working to improve forest health to avoid fire dangers.

Commissioner Belia Alvarez – N/A

Commissioner Bill Lee – There are several events upcoming: in Farmington, the River Fest, the 4x4 and Rock Crawling competition, and lots of new guide services for mountain biking, hiking, etc. and in Gallup, the Levitt AMP music series, Summer Indigenous Arts and Native American Dances, rodeo season, including the Best of the Best rodeo and Wild Thing Bull-riding, and the 100th Intertribal Ceremonial will be in August. Gallup now has air service to Phoenix.

Public Comment – N/A

Adjourn: The motion was made by Commissioner Abruzzo to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Armenta, and passed unanimously. Chairwoman Kimball adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

Approved by Commission vote at public meeting held on September 27, 2022.


Commission Chair Jenny Kimball