



Conference Planning Committee Meeting #1

January 25, 2022, 11:00 am – 1:30 pm

Burnsville Office of WSB and Virtual via Zoom

In-person attendance: Matt Saam, Sara Flagstad, Chris Petree, Cristina Mlejnek, Heidi Hamilton, Monica Heil, Mary Detloff

Virtual attendance: April Crockett, Bev Farragher, Mike Marti, John Mazzitello Brad Henry, Jessa Trbojevich, Chris LaBounty, Eric Nelson, John Powell, Toby Muse, Tom Thompson, Anna Bessel

Minutes taken by: Mary Detloff, Crescendo Consulting Solutions, Conference Planning Coordinator

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1. Introductions; Review of planning process, timeline and [committee roster](#)
Committee members introduced themselves. Matt Saam reviewed the planning process and timeline for all present.
 2. Review 2022 Conference Planning Committee Goals
 - a. Hold two great conferences for our chapter members that provide educational, skill-building (technical, leadership & DEI) and networking opportunities for all.
 - b. Further expand on the exhibitor/sponsor space available at the Fall Conference; review alternate locations for the Fall Conference.
 - i. Subcommittee (Sara, Chris L., Nina and Mary) to gather soon to review potential options, narrow to workable options make a recommendation in the next few months for fall 2022 location
 3. Review Most Recent Conference Evaluations
Recent evaluations were reviewed and briefly discussed by the committee: [Spring 2021 Virtual Conference](#) and [Fall 2021 Conference](#).
 4. Confirm Spring Conference Overall Format and Schedule
The committee discussed whether to implement any changes to the overall conference format or schedule. After some discussion, the committee opted to move forward with the 2022 conference using the same schedule and format as in the past.
 5. Brainstorm Potential Conference Session Topics
Resources: [Master topic list](#), [Fall 2021 Conference session topic submissions](#), [Fall 2021 Conference Call for Presentations responses](#), [Spring 2021 conference survey](#)

The budget for speaker fees and expenses for the spring 2022 conference is \$12,000.

Potential session topics discussed and committee members who will follow up on each topic:

- **BEV - [DEI Committee recommendation](#)** – They will be flexible based on our needs. Propose two sessions (Wed. PM and Thursday), reimburse for travel expenses (local to MN), Wed. and Thurs. overnight for two speakers (both speakers do both sessions), \$5000 fee. Can switch to remote presentation if needed, can do two sessions Thursday if desired. Bev will ask if they will present only Thursday/two sessions on Thursday.

- **MARY, JOHN M** - Heide Stefanyshyn-Piper (astronaut) is another keynote option. Was discussed as a fall keynote possibility and moved to consideration for spring. Fee is \$1000 plus travel expenses. Local school outreach/STEM engagement where conference attendees could assist with small group activities at a school on Thursday afternoon – give to Public Awareness Committee? Jessa is liaison to Public Awareness Committee
- **CHRIS L., BRAD** - Post-pandemic what to expect. Tom Fisher, U of M design center director gave presentations in 2021 about reimagining cities in post-pandemic world. Tom Fisher, Abimbola Asojo, Virajita Singh. One hour. Brad has Tom's contact info.
- **BRAD, TOBY** - Infrastructure funding – several topics within this overarching topic: How to get funds to local municipalities and asset management as examples. Potential one hour session on Friday. Others to connect with are Kristine Elwood Amy Grothaus, Kristin Asher.
- **JOHN P, HEIDI** - Jack Uldrich – futurist, anticipating change, thinking strategically, future workplace/AI – jackuldrich.com. Future Trends in Construction: Seeing Beyond the Pandemic was presented recently. Topics on agriculture and agribusiness – possible Friday closing speaker?
- **NINA** – Potential presenter from Seattle, transit conference, futurist in transportation that Nina has mentioned in the past
- **MONICA, CHRIS L** - Marney Gellner, Timberwolves announcer, was with Fox Sports North, first woman to call play by play for Twins
- **SARA, JESSA** - Burnout and mind wellness (Jessica Rector submission) – timely topic

Topics that were discussed but considered for fall 2022 instead of spring:

- Fall conference breakout - construction inspector training: The program was initiated in 2019, and we had participants start the program in summer 2021. It's a 3+ year career path for individuals from diverse and underrepresented populations. Twin Cities Rise was a key partner (they are a workforce development nonprofit). Participants serve one year as construction inspector trainees, then years 2-3 are spent as associate construction inspectors until qualifications are met to become full Council inspectors. (Anna)
- Lessons From the Edge/hostage negotiator – possible fall 2022 general session speaker. Fee is high – will he negotiate?
- Margaret Anderson-Kelliher – leadership, working with legislators, etc. – new PW Director for Minneapolis, leaving current position as MnDOT commissioner. Appropriate presenter for middle of conference (not closing speaker).
- Blind golfer on personal resiliency

6. Review of APWA national, APWA-MN committees/groups with involvement in the spring conference

- Public Awareness Committee
- MN2050
- Young Professionals Committee - **SARA, CHRIS L.** Past discussions on pairing first-time conference attendees unfamiliar with the conference with experienced members and conference attendees. Sara will bring this forward at the upcoming YP Committee meeting.
- APWA National - **CHRIS P.** APWA president and CEO will attend (Stan Brown and Scott Greyson are both confirmed). APWA representatives typically do a conference welcome Wednesday PM. Chris P. also invited Joe Johnson, APWA Region 6 Director; Joe is TBD.
- Education & Training Committee – **MONICA, TIM** Leadership Academy Graduation, UUCIS promotion, Executive Fellowship Program for spring 2023. Seeking a way to encourage leadership academy graduates to attend and engage them in the conference. Potentially free conference registration with meals, encourage grads to work with employers to cover lodging. Connect graduates with other attendees to welcome, introduce to others, etc.

7. Draft conference program

There was a brief review of a draft conference program with timing of events each day. The service project was discussed. Chris P. reviewed past service projects in the Nisswa area and noted the Northland Arboretum spring cleanup was the planned service project for spring 2020. Chris P. will reach out to Mary Kay to ask about projects in the area for 2022.

8. Committee Members to Follow Up on Identified Session Topics, Presenters

See above under item 5 for specific assignments to each committee member.

9. Action Items Summary

- VARIOUS: Reach out to potential speakers - See above under item 5 for specific assignments to each committee member
- MARY: Research potential fall 2022 conference locations.
- MARY: Re-convene fall conference location task force (Nina, Sara, Chris L., Mary)
- SARA, CHRIS L. – Follow up from YP Committee on buddy system for first-time attendees
- MONICA – Feedback from E&T Committee on involving leadership academy graduates in the conference, encouraging attendance, introducing them to others, etc. and incentives to do so
- CHRIS P. – Service project opportunities in and around Nisswa

10. Next Meeting: February 14, 2022, 11am – 1:30pm, WSB Burnsville or Virtual via Zoom