



Conference Planning Committee Meeting #1 June 27, 2023

In-Person Attendance: Matt Saam, Brad Henry, Chris Petree, Jessa Trbojevich, Luke Lortie, John Mazzitello, Toby Muse, John Powell, Mary Detloff

Virtual Attendance: April Crockett, Bev Farragher, Chris LaBounty, Cristina Mlejnek, Heidi Hamilton, Nina Stanley, Tom Thompson

1. Wrap-Up of 2023 spring conference

a. Thoughts From Committee

Committee members shared feedback and opinions on the spring conference, summarized below:

- The Gull Lake Center worked well
- People appreciated two service projects with different opportunities & options
- Pre-conference activities were popular – golf and mountain biking
- Improve breakfast check-in/ticket process
- Trivia was popular and well done
- Weather was outstanding

b. Final Spring Conference Budget

The spring conference ended with \$46,173.76 as net profit, over the budgeted net profit of \$16,925. Total income was \$128,235 (budgeted at \$105,375); total expenses were \$82,061.24 (budgeted at \$88,450).

2. Review of Planning Timeline and Committee Roster

Matt Saam reviewed the planning timeline for the upcoming fall conference and the committee roster. Jessa Trbojevich was welcomed back to the committee.

3. Review Most Recent Conference Evaluations

Evaluations from the [Spring 2023 Conference](#) and the Fall 2022 Conference, from both [attendees](#) and [exhibitors](#), were reviewed by the committee. Most comments were positive

4. Ideas, Suggested Changes to Fall Conference Schedule/Format/Logistics

Several suggestions were brought to the committee for their consideration related to the upcoming fall conference:

a. Session for Executive Fellowship Cohort Presentation

After following up with the Education & Training Committee, this suggestion is withdrawn since a cohort presentation was made at the spring conference.

b. Breakout Session(s) Featuring Project of the Year Winner(s) and Honorable Mention(s)

At past conferences, POY winner(s) have made a very short presentation about their project during the awards program. Conference attendees have repeatedly said they would like to know more about those award-winning projects. The Awards Committee suggested a breakout

session featuring those award-winning projects to provide such an opportunity. This idea was well received by the Conference Planning Committee. It was noted that if this is not possible at the fall conference due to time constraints it could be considered as a spring conference session. Jessa will coordinate with the Awards Committee.

c. Swap Awards and Recognition (to Thursday) and Business Meeting (to Friday)

Should a Thursday afternoon breakout session feature the Project of the Year winner(s), the awards presentation would need to be held on Thursday instead of Friday as in the past. This would switch the days of the awards presentation and business meeting conference elements.

d. Include Code of Conduct Acceptance/Checkbox on Registration Form

After an incident occurred at the spring conference that was brought to the attention of chapter leadership, chapter officers have suggested adding a Code of Conduct to the conference registration form as is common practice for many association events. The committee is in favor of adding this item to the registration form and will encourage this to be reinforced, potentially in the opening conference remarks by the president and/or via other avenues.

e. Bundling Non-Member Registration with Membership

APWA national has suggested chapters bundle “Never Been a Member” membership with non-member conference registration at the chapter level to increase membership, including increasing the cost of non-member registration to cover membership dues. This increased cost includes \$115 for APWA national (50% off the regular rate) plus chapter dues of \$57.25 for a total of \$172.25. Chris Petree will follow up with the Executive Committee.

f. More Non-Compete Time for Exhibitors / Exhibit Hall One or Two Days

Exhibitor feedback from 2022 showed they expected more exclusive time to connect with conference attendees, especially those exhibitors that are not long-time sponsors and exhibitors. To continue to grow the exhibit hall, we should maximize non-compete time for exhibitors and conference attendees to connect but without reducing PDHs.

Similarly, exhibitor feedback from 2022 showed most exhibitors favor a Thursday-only exhibit hall rather than both Thursday and Friday. The committee was also in favor of returning to a Thursday-only exhibit hall. No outdoor exhibits will be pursued – it’s the wrong season.

Finally, several exhibitors suggested an incentive for attendees to visit the exhibit hall. Ideas shared included an exhibit theme with activities (and prizes) at booths or a vendor visit card with a winner drawing.

A [potential conference schedule](#) showing a Thursday-only exhibit hall with increased non-compete time was drafted and briefly reviewed by the committee as a foundation/idea for revising the conference schedule moving forward. Breaks will be a maximum of 30 minutes

g. Utilizing Event App for Fall Conference

Several companies that create apps for conferences and similar events have reached out to offer their services for the fall conference. After some discussion and committee members sharing how they use apps at other conferences, the committee opted to decline creating an app for the fall conference.

5. Review Potential Conference Session Topics

The committee reviewed responses to the most recent [Call for Presentations](#) and the [Master topic list](#) to begin identifying potential session topics and speakers.

The following topics and/or presenters were identified, mostly from the Call for Presentations responses linked above, with committee members volunteering to follow up also noted. Where possible, topics suggested by consultants should also involve an agency representative in the presentation if appropriate.

- Mark Ray – Fence Consortium Update. Potential breakout. Line 2 of responses spreadsheet. Toby will follow up.
- Paul Sandy – Brainerd’s Journey Reconnecting the Community to the Mississippi River. Line 3 of spreadsheet. Chris Petree will follow up.
- Amy Fredregill – Reducing Embodied Carbon in Construction, Transportation and Procurement in Your Cities. Line 4 of spreadsheet. Chris Petree will follow up.
- Asset Management topics – potentially combine into breakout(s) – Brad Henry will follow up on all.
 - Todd Lang – 2023 Hennepin County Retaining Wall Asset Mgmt. Plan. Line 5
 - Chris LaBounty – Driving Efficient Operations through MS4 Inspections. Line 9
 - Shannon Perlich – Resiliency and Sustainability: Ensuring Your Utility is Prepared for the Future – Line 10
 - Shannon McGrath – If Asset Mgmt. is a Journey, What’s the Destination? Line 16
 - Shannon Perlich – Lead Service Line Inventory, Management and Funding – Line 18
- David Filipiak – Stormwater Management Consensus Building for a Mega-Project – The Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit. Line 7. Nina will follow up.
- Shannon Perlich – Designing a Lower Salt Future. Line 13. Cristina will follow up.
- Toby Muse – West Side Flats Story: A Rivalry Between Aging Infrastructure, Inflow/Infiltration and New Development. Line 17. Could be general session or breakout.
- Toby Muse – How Cottage Grove is Address PFAS Contamination in Residential Wells. Line 19.
- Mark Rohweder – Improving Lives with Clean Drinking Water in Guatemala. Line 23. John Mazzitello will follow up.
- Kent Exner – Mini-Roundabout Implementations – A Retrospective Design & Performance Overview. Line 25. Nina will follow up.
- Dr. Jermaine Davis – Leading & Working Through an Inclusive Lend and/or Bridging the Gap: Communicating Effectively Across Generational Differences. Potential keynote. Cristina will follow up – suggestion from DEI Committee.
 - UPDATE: Dr. Davis is available until 4:30 Thursday, Nov. 16 (not available Friday). He charges \$7500 for a keynote and an afternoon breakout would be an additional \$1000.
- Organics recycling facility at Mystic – John Powell will follow up.
- Stormwater chamber in south Minneapolis (Barr) – this may not be ready for a presentation this year. John Powell will follow up.
- Minnesota Zoo elevated walking trail (old tram) – longest in North America. Matt will follow up.
- Rep. Koegel Infrastructure Committee activities, including the Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force (Russ Matthys is a member, named to the task force by APWA-MN) – Brad will follow up.
- Engineers Without Borders – John Mazzitello
- Smart Cities (Chelsea Kohler with Smart Cities Connect) – Chris LaBounty
- Ethics – no specific topic or follow up assigned
- Mallory Weggemann – inspirational story about overcoming her paralysis to become a gold medal-winning Paralympian. Chris LaBounty will follow up.

6. Next Meeting: Thursday, July 20 at WSB in Golden Valley