

APA-PA SW Section Monthly Meeting  
December 12, 2018  
10:00am-12:00pm  
Location: Westmoreland County Planning Dept.

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*Attendance: Laura Ludwig, Jeff Raykes, Daniel Carpenter, Corey Young, Josh Spano, and Jordan Holloway (via phone)*

### **Overview and Updates**

Laura noted that she will be working on the 2019 Program Plan document to send to Shermer and Associates. Katie Stringent will be completing the 2018 year in review. Dan Carpenter will be working on the draft budget for 2019. Laura stated that the 2019 Program Plan, 2019 Budget, and 2018 Year in Review are due by the end of the year. Once received, they will send out our 2019 allocation for the Section.

### **Budget Update**

Dan noted that he will be working on the draft budget this week and will send it out to the rest of the group via email for comment and review. He stated our 2019 allocation from the State APA is \$1,420.41. In addition, we are rolling over some funds from 2018. Dan said the total budget for 2019 will be about \$2,180.

### **Robly vs. MailChimp**

The group reviewed the information received from Rhiannon on pricing of these two email distribution services and discussed the two options. The group opted to go with Robly, since the features they offer are a bit more advanced. The group felt with the increased outreach we want to achieve during our term, Robly was the better option. The group especially likes that Robly can hold emails until the time of day that a recipient usually reads them.

### **Update on Focus Areas Survey**

Jeff stated there was a three-way tie for the top focus area. The three focus areas in the top spot were Capacity Building, Connecting the Dots, and Mentorship. The group discussed these various focus areas at length, noting how intertwined they really are. The group ultimately chose two areas – **Capacity Building and Mentorship** – as the two focus areas for our term as the Southwest Section Leadership. The group discussed capacity building incorporates a lot of what the Section already does, in terms of hosting educational trainings and workshops as well as social and networking events. Mentorship and connecting with emerging planning professionals, including students and recent graduates, is a definite priority and we need to get much better and making these connections and building these relationships. Jeff noted he will work on consolidating some of the descriptions with the various sub-goals underneath them.

### **Mentorship**

Regarding the Mentorship Program, Dan noted that Suncoast Chapter in Florida had a great mentorship program and he would investigate their program a bit, as we may be use their program as a base for getting our program up and running.

The group also discussed creating better relationships with the vast array of colleges and universities in the area that have planning and public administration degrees. Slippery Rock,

Chatham, Robert Morris, IUP, Pitt, CMU, W&J, and Pitt-Johnstown are all located within our Section.

Jordan asked if the membership data we get from the State deciphers between student and non-student members. Laura checked, and she said the membership database provided to us from Shermer and Associates does have "STU" if the member is a student. So, we already have a small group of students we can reach out to through our direct membership.

### **Workshop Ideas**

The group discussed various possible topics for a spring educational workshop. Laura shared an idea that Kay Pierce had presented to her on Tiny Houses. Laura said that Kay mentioned that in Penn Hills there is a current development underway that involves the construction of tiny homes and they are all for area veterans. This would be a great workshop opportunity to discuss tiny homes and how they can be treated in terms of zoning ordinances and building codes but would also involve a site visit to the tiny home development as part of the workshop.

Other possible workshop topics were discussed as well. Dan stated that he thought a workshop on Tactical Urbanism as well as Incremental Development regarding the reuse of buildings, rebuilding towns, etc. would be interesting. Autonomous vehicles were also mentioned as a possible workshop topic as well as energy efficiency in municipal buildings or something on energy policy like what Corey and his team do at W&J.

Ultimately, we decided to focus the spring workshop, to be held sometime between mid-March and mid-April 2019, on the topic of energy planning at the local level. This workshop will be held on the campus of Washington and Jefferson College and will provide an overview of what steps a municipality can take to incorporate energy policies into their everyday practices. Discussion topics will include how energy policies affect land use planning, changes in building characteristics, changes in transportation, and community energy sources. We are thinking this could be held from 10-2 or 3, with a networking social hour to follow the event. Our goal would be 50 participants for this workshop.

Our other workshop will be on Tiny Houses and will be held sometime in September 2019. This workshop will include a presentation on tiny houses, how to properly apply building codes to tiny houses, and how to treat tiny houses within municipal zoning ordinances. This workshop will also involve a site visit to a tiny house complex for veterans that is underway in Penn Hills.

### **Networking and Social Events**

We discussed some ideas for social and networking events. We decided to try and host a cocktail/networking hour after the Energy Policy workshop in the Spring. In addition, we will aim to have another event or two in the fall. Possible ideas thrown area were a family-friendly bike ride on a nearby trail and axe throwing. Josh volunteered to look into various axe throwing establishments in the region.

### **Miscellaneous Items**

The group discussed adding our fun bios that we sent out via email to the Section website. Perhaps this is something that Rhiannon can do.

We also want to get our focus areas out there on the website and via our social media accounts once they are finalized.

Laura stated that we need to decide who we want our PDC and PDO representatives to be. The group briefly discussed the PDC and PDO roles (based on the State Chapter's bylaws). Laura mentioned that Amy Wiles said she would continue as the PDC rep if needed. Laura will reach out to her to confirm she is still interested. The group discussed the duties of the PDO and who might be a good fit. Dan was going to reach out to Alex Graziani to see if he was interested.

*Meeting adjourned at 12:01pm.*