

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan
Service Excellence (SE) Committee Meeting
Schuler's Pub, Marshall, 10am – 4pm, April 14, 2014**

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions – All
2. Review of January 21, 2014 Meeting Notes – All
3. Update from January 24 and March 8 Travel Commission Meetings – Travel Commissioners Larry Schuler and Julie Sprenger
4. Review of March 11 Annual MTSP Meeting – All
5. Report on Session on the Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) program at 2014 Governor's Conference – Julie Pingston and Sarah Nicholls
6. *Objective One: Define "service excellence" and "The Pure Michigan Promise" and share these definitions with the industry – All*
 - a. Use of M in logo
 - b. Sharing of definitions
7. *Objective Three: Establish and increase satisfaction and intention to return/recommend levels among national and international visitors – Sarah Nicholls*
 - a. Piloting a survey this summer
8. Next Steps and Next Meeting – Sarah Nicholls
 - a. Adding more committee members
 - b. Meet over summer or in autumn?

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan
Service Excellence (SE) Committee Meeting
Schuler's Pub, 10am – 2:30pm, April 14, 2014**

Meeting Notes

In attendance: Larry Schuler (Co-Chair), Jennifer Zieger (Co-Chair), Julie Pingston, Chris Shepler, Sarah Nicholls, Louise Smith.

Absent: Kelly Brennan, Rick Hert, Julie Sprenger, Judy Zehnder-Keller.

Welcome and Introductions – made by Larry Schuler, all.

Review of January 21 Meeting Notes – Notes reviewed and approved, no changes or additions made.

Update from January 24 and March 8 Travel Commission Meetings –

Most significant development = ongoing discussions re. governance and funding of MTSP. A TC subcommittee has been formed to discuss leadership and oversight, Chair Curtis presented this subcommittee's proposals re. a governance process and the structure of a funding mechanism to the TC for a vote on January 24. The repository of funds is a 501(c)(6) – the MI Tourism Plan Fund. The Fund has a five-member board, including three Travel Commissioners (the Chair – currently Roger Curtis, the Funding Co-Chair – Jerry Toney, and one other) and two industry members (the Funding Co-Chair – Steve Yencich, and one other). The TC expects any item requiring funding in excess of \$5K – as well as any potentially controversial or divisive issue – to be brought to them for a vote prior to its implementation; SN and the TCers on each committee should decide where the line is between what does and does not need TC review/approval. The governance structure and details of the Fund were discussed further at the March 9 TC meeting and were also presented at the meeting of all eight committees on March 11 (both at Governor's Conference on Tourism at Grand Traverse Resort).

Review of March 11 Annual MTSP Meeting –

Committee members in attendance agreed that meeting seemed to go well: it was well attended, there were good questions, clear progress, real sense of momentum. No negative feedback re. the definitions or logos developed by the SE group. Discussion of timing – especially since the meeting was not mentioned at the closing luncheon, so many might not have even known/remembered the event (weather downstate was also getting bad so many chose to leave to beat that). Could this be integrated into the Sunday TC meeting immediately prior to the opening of the conference instead?

Report on Session on the Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) program at 2014 Governor's Conference –

Julie was one of four panel members – others were Mickey Schaefer from CTA program and representatives of two other participating CVBs. Room was full, 54 evaluations were returned, responses were overwhelmingly positive (see handout). Were some concerns about cost. Idea of statewide program discussed; current participants (Lansing, Kalamazoo, GR, AA) would have legitimate worries about how the investments they have already made in their own programs would be accounted for in a statewide system. The brands and big independents already have their own programs – need to add enough value to get them to participate above and beyond what they already do. The smaller independents typically don't have the time, know-how or money to have their own program – so need to entice them too. Suggests need for different levels or versions for different clients. Ultimate goal = a consistent message (based on the definitions SE has already developed) that is delivered to frontline employees across the state and to multiple sectors.

Suggested that we ask Mickey to make a presentation to this group about a possible statewide program. If the program seems feasible, could then take to a broader group (Travel Commission, MEDC). Discussion of funding mechanisms (need to keep cost per participant low, c. \$20 – SE committee could apply to MI Tourism Plan Fund, SE/the TC/the industry could ask MEDC to provide a match (could this be considered a partnership like the advertising partners?).

Sharing of Definitions from Objective One (Define “service excellence” and “The Pure Michigan Promise” and share these definitions with the industry) –

Service Excellence: A.C.M.E. Ambassadors. Creating. Memorable. Experiences. We are passionate ambassadors of Pure Michigan, committed to creating memorable experiences and igniting our guests with an undeniable desire to return to our state.

The Pure Michigan Promise: We promise to take pride in exceeding your expectations with a heartfelt and unforgettable experience, leaving you eagerly anticipating your return to Pure Michigan.

- a. Use of M in logo: Neither MEDC nor Travel MI has ever used just the M. It is extremely unlikely that the use of just the M would be approved. Recommended to use the entire logo, in which case the usual approval process would apply (requires full/final mock-up of use in graphic form).
- b. Sharing of definitions: How does the SE group create awareness and acceptance of these statements? Traditional options = things like the MTSP website and LinkedIn pages, associations such as TICOM, MLTA and MACVB. Big ideas: the Governor, Kid Rock, Izzo, a Tim Allen ad, at Lions/Tigers/Pistons games. Need a ready-to-use toolkit – items that can be printed or distributed at minimal cost and en masse. Julie P. offered to have her marketing team produce templates for review at next meeting.

Pilot Survey to Address Objective Three (Establish and increase satisfaction and intention to return/recommend levels among national and international visitors) –

Larry, Chris, Julie and Jen are willing to share a short survey with their guests – key questions = origin, purpose, satisfaction, and intention to return/recommend; space for comments also good. Sarah will develop something that fits on a sheet the size of a rack card and pre-test with Chris (since he seems to have the most captive audience).

Next Meeting – Julie will check with Mickey Schaefer regarding her schedule, preferable to have her attend in person than on phone.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting –

- Statewide CTA proposal – Mickey Shaefer.
- How/where to share the definitions of SE and The PMP – review templates.
- Pre-test of pilot survey.