

DATE: January 10, 2019

TO: APA California Chapter Board

FROM: Hanson Hom, AICP, Vice President Conferences

SUBJECT: 2019 CONFERENCE CLOSURE REPORT & DISTRIBUTION OF CONFERENCE PROFIT

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Accept the 2018 Conference Closure Report and Profit and Loss Statement;**
2. **Upon final P & L reconciliation, distribute the 2018 conference profit to the Chapter and Sections in accordance with the Conference Requirements Handbook.**

**DISCUSSION**

**Conference Closure Report**

Pursuant to the Conference Requirements Handbook, the VP for Conferences and San Diego Conference Host Committee (CHC) prepare a Conference Closure Report following the conference. This report summarizes conference registration, sponsorships, income and expenses for the 2018 conference. For the benefit of future conference planning, the CHC has prepared an additional report with helpful attachments that details successes, challenges, recommendations, and unexpected items that occurred during the planning of the conference and at the conference itself (Attachment 1). The VP of Conferences also sent out a post-conference survey to all attendees and the results are summarized below. Both the CHC report and survey results have been provided to the Central Coast CHC to assist in planning the 2019 conference in Santa Barbara.

In addition to accepting the Closure Report, the Board should also approve the distribution of the conference profit pursuant to the Conference Requirements Handbook.

The 2018 APA California conference in San Diego offered over 100 sessions, 4 pre-conference workshops, Opening and Closing Keynotes, the annual Diversity Summit, and 13 mobile workshops totaling over 200 AICP CM credits, including multiple opportunities for Law and Ethics credits. The Opening Reception was held on the historic USS Midway which was reserved entirely for APA California on Sunday evening. Planners and guests enjoyed the top deck of the aircraft carrier with its panoramic view of the city skyline, while the lower deck offered more food and beverages, entertainment and guided tours. The Opening Keynote was a welcome address by Assembly Member Todd Gloria of the 78th State Assembly District and former Councilmember for the City of San Diego. The topic for the Diversity Summit was “Moving Toward Transportation Justice.” The annual APA Chapter Awards Ceremony and CPF Auction were also well-attended events at the conference. The conference ended with a Closing Keynote by Dr. Mary Walshok, Associate Vice Chancellor for Public Programs and Dean of Extension at the University of California San Diego.

*Registration:*

Total registration for the APA California 2018 conference was 1,665, which is the second highest attendance ever. This considerably exceeded pre-conference projections and doubled the attendance of the last conference held in San Diego in 2010. Approximately 88 percent of attendees registered for the full conference and the remaining 12% registered for one day. A particularly large number of students attended the 2018 conference compared to prior years. The breakdown of registration is as follows:

Registration Category Number Percent

Members/Non-Members 1009 60.6%

Chapter Only 123 7.4%

Registered Speakers 152 9.1%

Students 230 13.8%

Young Planners 151 9.1%

**TOTAL 1,665 100.0%**

Attendance at the San Diego conference compares to prior years as follows:

 Conference Total Registration

 **2018 San Diego 1,665**

2017 Sacramento Valley 1,462

 2016 Los Angeles 1,758

 2015 Northern 1,590

 2014 Orange 1,257

 2013 Central 717

 2012 Inland Empire 708

 2011 Central Coast 879

 2010 San Diego 838

*Conference Profit:*

The Conference Requirements Handbook requires that conferences achieve a minimum profit of $120,000 based on 900 registrants. The Handbook further sets a profit margin guideline of 20-25 percent (net income/gross income) for larger conferences. This guideline balances providing a high quality and complete conference experience for attendees while ensuring that conferences generate income to fund the ongoing programs of the Chapter and sections. The Host Section also heavily depends on its share of conference profits to fund its activities for multiple years.

*Income:*

Sources of income are summarized below with line item details available in the attached Profit and Loss statement for the 2018 conference (Attachment 2):

Income Source Amount Percent

Registrations\* $ 746,533.00 84.3%

Sponsorships $ 138,825.00 15.7%

Misc. Income/Credits\*\* $ 20.58 - %

**TOTAL $ 885,378.58 100.0%**

\* Includes mobile workshops and extra event tickets; excludes pre-conference sessions and CPF donations.

\*\* Additional credit pending from hotel/convention center.

*Sponsorships:*

The CHC Sponsorship Subcommittee generated $138,825.00 in sponsorships for the conference. They were able to sell out 35 exhibitor booths early. The committee was effective and systematic in seeking sponsorships and conducted considerable outreach. The historic trend between conference profit and sponsorships is shown below.

APA CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE

PROFIT & SPONSORSHIP PATTERNS

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| YEAR | LOCATION/SECTION | PROFIT | SPONSORSHIPS |
| **2018** | **San Diego Marina/San Diego** | **$ 249,693**  | **$ 138,825** |
| 2017 | Sacramento/Sacramento Valley | $ 205,425 | $ 127,137 |
| 2016 | Pasadena/Los Angeles | $ 343,488 | $ 144,675 |
| 2015 | Oakland/Northern | $ 135,931 | $ 147,645 |
| 2014 | Disneyland/Orange | $ 38,763 | $ 114,100 |
| 2013 | Visalia/Central | $ 136,737 | $ 76,021 |
| 2012 | Rancho Mirage/Inland Empire | $ 140,000 | $ 120,650 |
| 2011 | Santa Barbara/Central Coast | $ 131,000 | $ 81,900 |
| 2010 | La Costa/San Diego | $ 78,782 | $ 56,390 |
| 2009 | Squaw Creek/Sacramento Valley | $ 52,690 | $ 82,750 |
| 2008 | Hollywood/Los Angeles | $ 143,036 | $ 173,300  |
| 2007 | San Jose/Northern | $ 216,216 | $ 158,450 |
| 2006 | Garden Grove/Orange | $ 142,258 | $ 174,840  |
| **TOTAL** | **$ 1,871,761** | **$ 1,421,843** |
| **12-Year Average** | **$ 155,980** | **$ 118,487** |

*Expenses:*

The attached Profit and Loss statement details conference expenses. Major expense categories consist of the following:

 Expense Category Amount Percent

Operations (including conference contractors) $ 76,116.21 12.2%

 Conference Facility/Audio Visual $ 92,387.16 14.8%

Opening Reception (USS Midway) $ 108,420.13 17.4%

Other Food and Beverage: includes Keynote lunch,

 Consultants Reception and CPF Auction $ 281,925.67 45.3%

Publicity/Social Media/Mobile App $ 52,648.52 8.5%

Other Expense s $ 11,140.70 1.8%

**TOTAL $ 622,638.39 100.0%**

**Post-Conference Survey**

As part of our continuing effort to improve our conferences and meet the expectations of planners, a survey was sent out to attendees after the conference. Over 325 responses were received (20% response rate). Respondents consisted of the following:

* AiCP Members – 54%
* Public Agency Planners – 61%

Private Practice Planners – 26%

* Years of Practice:

Up to 10 years – 23%

10 to 20 years – 38%

Over 20 years – 39%

Many observations and suggestions were offered for future conference planning. Regarding the quality and breadth of conference sessions, 94% expressed satisfaction with the topics offered, and a similar percentage felt the sessions were applicable to their current job or practice. Particularly helpful were suggestions for future topics and feedback for improving sessions. Reoccurring suggestions encouraged expanding the diversity of topics, session formats and speakers.

Members were mostly very satisfied (54 percent) with the onsite registration support provided at the conference, but difficulties with registration were noted on Sunday morning when the online program went down temporarily. This was the first year that badges and tickets were mailed out in advance to pre-registered attendees instead of available for pick-up at the conference. The goal was to reduce registration lines and while generally successful, it did not go as smoothly as planned, so this will be a continuing item for process improvement.

The heavily attended Opening Reception at the USS Midway received rave reviews with many commenting on the spectacular setting for this premier conference event. The only dampening observation was regarding the initially long food and drink lines due to everyone arriving at once. But plenty of food was available throughout the night and the entertainment and networking setting received very positive feedback.

The San Diego CHC tried a new approach for the luncheon event. Instead of a plated lunch with a keynote speaker, the lunch was buffet style and was organized as an informal networking event with no keynote speaker. The response to this concept was overall positive, but some still preferred having a keynote speaker for AICP CM credits for at least a portion of the lunch or perhaps returning to holding the Awards Ceremony over lunch. The other “Lunch-On-Your-Own” day was well-received although some preferred a downtown setting with restaurants within convenient walking distance.

With the goal of implementing more sustainable practices for our conference such as eliminating the full printed program in 2019, we asked attendees if they relied more on the printed program or the mobile app for conference information. While an increasing number of attendees are using the mobile app, a large number of attendees still refer primarily to the printed program. This suggests that at least a summary guide of conference sessions and events would be helpful and appreciated by many attendees.

For the 2019 conference, we will look into enhancing the mobile app since we will not be providing a full printed program. We sought suggestions for improving the mobile app and also asked users which features they used. Below were the responses:



Attachments:

1. San Diego CHC Report with attachments
2. APA California 2018 Conference Profit & Loss Statement