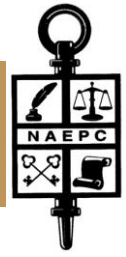


# Town Hall Roundtable



*A word about the session notes:*

The information shared below is a synopsis of the discussion during five Zoom-based Town Hall Roundtable sessions held during May 2020 in response to COVID-19.

## • Membership

### ***Sub-Topic · Engagement***

*Your members want to stay involved... and may have a bit more time to do so*

- Don't abandon programming, whether educational, social or networking!
- Plan small focus group sessions related to planning for next season
- If the council is not offering a compelling social media presence on LinkedIn or Facebook, create a task force to discuss starting them (NAEPC is available to assist with best practices)
- Host creative and compelling virtual networking
  - "Brown bag" luncheons
  - Wine / beer tasting
  - Happy Hour
  - Stress-management events
  - "Speed networking" using online breakout rooms
  - Have lunch delivered or prepared for member pick up for a webinar viewing

### ***Sub-Topic · Retention***

*Things your council can do now to aid in retention through the next season -*

- Stay in constant communication
- Focus on engagement now and through the typically dormant summer months by hosting educational, social, and networking events
- Set the council apart through service and community outreach events (example: foodbank)
- Recognize that members have different needs and be flexible when necessary
- Be gentle with dues collections; recognize that members may need more time due to cutbacks or simply not being in the office
- Allow for online renewals to avoid the need for a firm to cut a check and mail it
- Communicate via email and paper mail
- Reiterate benefits of membership regularly
- Survey members – what types of topics are you interested in seeing the council offer?
- Consider setting up virtual study groups

## ***Sub-Topic · Growth***

***Don't pause your growth goals***

- Communicate with non-members, the council's response to COVID-19, share your plans for next season along with today's activities and community support
- Use webinars as a way to show value to non-members; allow these individuals to experience the council on a complimentary basis with these low-cost programs
- Personal outreach
- Develop relationships with other allied professional organizations such as local community foundation and consider joint events, virtual or otherwise, with other councils in your area

## **• Meetings**

### ***Sub-Topic · Annual Meetings***

***Your council can still have its annual meeting***

- Review council's bylaw sections related to annual meetings, voting rights, quorums, etc.
- Interpret with flexibility
- Look for words like "in person" and guidance with regard to dates
- Scan for probations against online meetings
- Check with state to find out whether there are any legal requirements with regard to an annual meeting for a non-profit
- Ask NAEPC for a brief, non-legal review
- Consider hosting the annual meeting in conjunction with an educational webinar to increase attendance
- Use the event as an opportunity to update your members
- Vote using a ballot or by having members vote via email (recommended only as a last resort)

### ***Sub-Topic · Continuing Education***

***Don't assume things are "business as usual" with regard to continuing education credit***

- Check with your state and governing bodies now for rules related to live and on-demand distance learning programs (often treated differently than one another and from in-person events)
- Investigate rules with regard to tracking attendance
- Communicate availability clearly with members

### ***Sub-Topic · Virtual Educational Meetings***

***Like it or not, virtual meetings are here to stay***

- Registration is often higher
- Day-of attendance is strong
- Members want to see one another and interact
- Don't make assumptions about the membership's level of tech-savviness; may want to offer a trial run or "how to do" a Zoom/virtual meeting
- Use a "chat" window to get attendees talking to one another
- Platforms available that range from self-service (example: Zoom/GoToMeeting/WebEx) to full-service (example: ConferTel) with levels in between, some which incorporate continuing education tracking (ConferenceAdit)
- Your chosen delivery platform will not accommodate all members or their needs – make sure to communicate alternative methods to join the event (example: telephone or using a personal computer instead of a firm-supplied computer)
- Provide member instructions to join your virtual meeting
- Rehearse with speakers, if necessary
- Consider the NAEPC "no charge" speaker program, but rather than have that person live, have them in a virtual call (benefit of cost-effectiveness)
- Consider webinars as an alternative to live speakers
  - NAEPC can offer every council one complimentary group showing each year to rebroadcast via Zoom or other platform

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### ***Sub-Topic · Planning for Next Season***

***Start now and plan with flexibility***

- Start now by choosing speakers that have the flexibility and comfort level to present in person, virtually, or both
- Consider a venue that provides the ability to stream the program for those who may wish to stay at home or avoid large gatherings (City Clubs, colleges, etc)
- Contract with venues carefully and with flexibility
- Consider an expanded schedule for the 2020/2021 year
- If the council is one that prefers a formal plan, choose to host all events virtually through a pre-determined date
- Venues should be large enough to accommodate a reduced number of guests at each table
- Plated meals will be preferred, if not required by your state
- Avoid "self-service" items like water, coffee, bread and butter

## · Financial Considerations

### ***Sub-Topic · Budgeting***

*Preparation is key*

- Prepare a multi-scenario budget
- Consider preparing a contingency budget taking into account a certain percentage drop in membership
- Don't be afraid to make changes – just because something has been done one way for some time, doesn't mean it can't be changed

### ***Sub-Topic · Dues***

*Membership dues support the council's activities*

- Review the council's current cash position
- This is the perfect opportunity to review the council's dues structure
- Consider financial reductions for members who didn't receive all of the benefits of membership during the prior year (make sure this policy is clearly communicated)
- Delay dues collection slightly if the plan for membership season / year is not in place
- Contemplate personal outreach
- Consider changing from an all-inclusive to pay-for-events-as-you-go system
- Be flexible and gentle with dues collections; recognize that members may need more time due to cutbacks or simply not being in the office
- Accept credit cards as payment to make it easier on the member and council

### ***Sub-Topic · Sponsorship***

*Creativity is a must*

- Don't assume all is lost - sponsors generally want to have an ongoing presence, even during difficult times
- Communicate with prior year supporters
- Transfer prior year support if necessary
- Reconsider your program as a whole and/or levels of support
- Make it easy for sponsors to participate
- Be creative with regard to benefits
- Benefits are likely to be different for virtual vs in person events, plan for both and communicate options
- Host networking events where sponsors have breakout rooms and can talk directly with interested members; share an attendee list post-event
- Use logos and links rather than a firm name wherever possible
- Update the council's website and add placements where desirable
- Watch the NAEPCC website tutorial: "Leveraging your NAEPCC-hosted Website to Maximize Your Council's Sponsorship Income"

## · Resources

### Technology Platforms

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Zoom	<a href="https://zoom.us/">https://zoom.us/</a>
GoToMeeting/Webinar	<a href="https://www.gotomeeting.com/">https://www.gotomeeting.com/</a>
WebEx	<a href="https://www.webex.com/">https://www.webex.com/</a>
ConferTel (NAEPCs webinar provider)	<a href="https://confertel.net/">https://confertel.net/</a>
ConferenceAdit (incorporate of CE tracking)	<a href="https://conferenceadit.com/">https://conferenceadit.com/</a>

### NAEPC Website Tutorial

“Leveraging your NAEPC-hosted Website to Maximize Your Council’s Sponsorship Income”

<https://vimeo.com/424180727/028224cd01>

*\*Contact NAEPC for other tutorials or find them in the administrative hub of a website hosted by NAEPC.*

### Sample Budget

<http://www.naepc.org/assets/national/files/Sample%20EPC%20Budget.xlsx>

### NAEPCs Programming Resources

<http://www.naepc.org/affiliated-councils/speakers-bureau>

### Council Section of NAEPC Website

<http://www.naepc.org/affiliated-councils>

*\*Use left panel navigation to read all pages related to councils.*