

ANPR Board of Directors Conference Call
Tuesday, February 25, 2014
8:30 pm Eastern/7:30 pm Central/6:30 pm Mountain/5:30 pm Pacific

Board Members Attending: Erika Jostad, Jeremy Kaufman, Ken Bigley, Alison Steiner, Ben Walsh, Gannon Frain, Seth Tinkham, Wendy Lauritzen, Colleen Derber

Board Members Not Attending: Paula Alexander, Lauren Kopplin

Erika – Roberta D’Amico has a background in communications and would like to help ANPR. She will join our call later this evening.

Revitalization Plan came out 4 years ago. Lots of people worked on it, jump started ANPR. Recruitment and retention of membership is an issue. I see really positive things with this group, with on-going programs like oral history project, mentoring program, etc.

Discussion Questions – Why did you join ANPR? What are we doing well? Where can we improve?

Wendy – Highest level of membership was during or right after successful professionalization of LE ranger careers. It took 15 years working with OPM, a long-term effort that paid off.

Hiring authority issue, status of long-term seasonal employees, attitude shift from insurance issues, would draw people in to ANPR.

Gannon – Completely agree. Now the best way to get permanent is to go to another agency. It would provide lots of value keeping employees in the NPS.

Wendy – Goes back to the Director’s statement that we have to do something good for the agency, not just ourselves.

Ken – Completely agree. New issue would generate a lot of enthusiasm and make ANPR more visible.

Erika – We would like to focus on advocacy on some of these issues.

Wendy – Advocacy that crosses all specialties will have a major draw, serves managers and employees trying to get in. We’ve gotten caught up in the mission.

Seth – Large advocacy role relative to Pathways, lots of uncertainty. ANPR would be a solid information source.

Wendy – Mike Reynolds will be taking David Vela's place (Associate Director of Workforce Management, Relevancy, and Inclusion)

Ben – ANPR has the opportunity to be an information source. Even HR people don't know all the answers. We can be another resource, a better repository, another way for people to look at us for all things NPS.

Erika – Think about, "What are we good at?"

Wendy – In trying to professionalize LE, Jim Brady was doing a lot of LE. He developed a good relationship with OPM, become aware of HR management. Our members became aware of classification, how to argue our point. NPS couldn't approach OPM, but ANPR could, dealt with OPM issue – to get approval for hiring authority. ANPR helped position NPS, non-profit organization doing the advocacy.

Erika – Who's advocating? Members are moving up in their careers, taking on more responsibilities.

Roberta joined call at 8:51pm.

Wendy – We had the goal of ranger careers. After we succeeded, there were lots of rumors about ANPR as a good old boy organization. Important to develop a relationship with OPM and get advice from Jim Brady.

Gannon – With potentially converting seasonals to permanents, do we have to go through Congress?

OPM – Rangers careers did that, has to be legislated.

Wendy – Working on how positions are classified, seasonal employees should get converted or Pathways internships. We have to find out if it's an OPM issue or if it requires legislation. Veterans filed suit because they felt they were being discriminated against.

Ken – Some is statutory, Title 5 of US Code. No question that it would have adverse effect on hiring of veterans. There is a diversity of views on hiring veterans; we need to have a conversation down the road.

Wendy – The recent grad program is just one more category for applying. That way we're not eliminating veterans, just allowing competition in the process.

Erika – Appreciate your thoughts. Any other issues?

Alison – ANPR is heading in a lot of positive directions. We can frame a lot of issues on workforce, more about message and framework.

Erika – Good segue into Roberta's presentation, background in legislative advocacy, HR 533, Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act, talking to congressmen re: getting higher profile, new sponsors, getting more attention than years ago.

Why we joined ANPR? Erika – debt of gratitude to ANPR for me getting into law enforcement.

Roberta – Been in NPS for along time, communications for fire in Boise, came up thru communications, interpretation, maintenance, recruited to help with RR37, lifelong member of ANPR. ANPR helped me get to know people, helped me learn the ropes. Then it became a lot like work.

Observations in Communications

Working on mentoring with Ken, how to help ANPR grow, will show lessons learned, focus message that BOD wants to achieve.

While working on communications for Rendezvous....What are the messages of ANPR? Where does ANPR need to go?

Jeremy – What are your hopes for communication at the Rendezvous?

RR can be used to push forward ANPR.

Roberta – We are a volunteer organization. We have to focus on the work. How much has membership changed? The attendees at Rendezvous in CA were more diverse in age. Difficult to send out your message if you have dysfunctional organization.

Forming, Norming, Storming, Performing – from a consulting company outside of Denver. Strategic plan – basic knowledge of organization, plan out what you want to do and why, implementation, and evaluation.

Road to Abilene – When we get to communications, it's really important to know where we're going, especially for Board. Everyone has to be in agreement since we represent ourselves.

Roberta shared an example from Public Relations Society of America, Boise chapter. Lots of crossover w/ANPR as they are also struggling with low membership numbers.

Focus – “What is our biggest problem?”

Problem – Limited number of people recognize the benefits of the organization.

From the problem, you develop the goal.

Goal – To build membership support.

Set objectives, have target year, then build out strategies, build messages, partner with other groups, develop time table and costs.

Where does ANPR need to be by 2016? How do we get there? Who needs to be involved?

When do we get started?

Erika – Like how you framed “what is your biggest problem?” Our lack of focus is a problem.

Advocating for workforce issues can be our focus.

Wendy – Focus on how to raise membership? Are we here to be together, or are we trying to improve the lives of rangers? If trying to improve lives of rangers, the agency looks at us as doing good for the agency. ANPR has always been a social organization, but also had focus for a long time.

How to increase membership vs. what is our focus?

Wendy – “Ranger” magazine – should we change the name? ANPR really is an employee organization. However, in the past, we focused on certain series. What is the agency struggling with that needs our help?

Roberta – After 9/11, lots of LE rangers went to FOP. Who is ANPR servicing?

Wendy – We had accomplished professionalization, had worked with FOP, FOP was able to lobby, we could not. We got a reputation of being LE because of pursuing 6C retirement for LE Rangers. Then there was a switch as we wanted to broaden our base.

Roberta – Who is our target audience?

Gannon – HR 533 cuts across all classification/grades/pay scales, identifies us as NPS employees, accomplishes rallying point, long-term strategic goals, may take years. What can we do right now?

Erika – Thank you so much, Roberta. Lots of interesting points, so we can bring clarity, look forward to following up.

Roberta – Everybody has to be part of the process, everybody has to sell it.

Wendy – Association for Partners of Public Lands (APPL) annual meeting in ABQ, name change came up, organizations go through that struggle, broaden the base that it's for everyone, and how do we distinguish ourselves from other organizations?

Roberta – opportunity with Mike Reynolds coming to HR position, fact that NPS is number 200 on workforce satisfaction, issues in NPS right now

Roberta signed off at 9:45pm.

Erika – Will summarize thoughts and discuss further.

Meeting ended at 9:46pm.