MAKING DECISIONS IN A PANDEMIC

WEFMAX
May 21, 2020
What should we do about our upcoming annual conference in Chattanooga this July?
Water Professionals Conference (WPC)

1. Joint conference with KY/TN Section of AWWA
2. ~1,700 attendees and 200+ exhibitors
3. Primary source of income for both organizations
4. Location rotates between the two states
5. Governed by Joint Steering Committee of officers and staff of both organizations
Option 1: Keep Current Date – July 19-22, 2020 in Chattanooga

Option 2: WPC20 November 8-11 (Sun – Wed); Proceed with WPC21 (KY)

Option 3: Virtual Events for 2020

WPC21 Chattanooga Summer 2021

Option 4: No WPC20; WPC21 Chattanooga Summer 2021
Unusual issues associated with decision:

1. Potentially high consequences
2. Changing standards and guidance
3. Quality of event
4. Unknowns
5. Emotion
1. Which option is best for our members?

2. Which option presents the least amount of financial risk to both organizations?
Interim Guidance for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Guidance as of 3/15/2020

Large events and mass gatherings can contribute to the spread of COVID-19 in the United States via travelers who attend these events and introduce the virus to new communities. Examples of large events and mass gatherings include conferences, festivals, parades, concerts, sporting events, weddings, and other types of assemblies. These events can be planned not only by organizations and communities but also by individuals.
Follow-up results in positive response from attendees:

1. Personal calls to conference planning committee
2. Personal calls to exhibitors and sponsors
3. Video message to membership
4. Website updates
5. Email to registered attendees and membership
6. Forwarded registrations to 2021
Hindsight 20/20 Advice:

1. Acknowledge the emotional components
2. Embrace that there will be different viewpoints
3. View membership and organization as one and the same
4. Utilize what you know and can control, and accept that there may be more you don’t know and can’t control
5. Narrow down your options to a reasonable number
6. Set deadlines for when decisions must be made
Want to talk about it?

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