

## **Planning Overview:**

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## **Meet Detail Overview:**

**Registration**  
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**Company Store**  
**Board Meetings**  
**Welcome Party**  
**Ladies Event**  
**Swap Meet + Vintage Attic**  
**Car Show & Judging**  
**Tech Session**  
**Award Banquet**

**Typical Annual Meet Format** Select Tuesday through Saturday or Monday through Friday

- Day One:** PAS Board Mtg., PA Fdn. Board Mtg., Registration/Store, Earlybird Driving Tour, Welcome Party,  
**Day Two:** Driving Tour 80 to 100 miles with lunch, Store, Dinner optional, Evening Option possible  
**Day Three:** Driving Tour 80 to 110 miles with lunch, Store, Dinner optional, Evening Option possible  
**Day Four:** Driving Tour of shorter distance, Car wash facility & time, Swap Meet-Silent Auction-Vintage Attic  
**Day Five:** Judges Breakfast meeting, Car Show & arrival Photos, Tech Session, Award Banquet

## **Resources**

The Meet Chairman and their committee must coordinate and take advantage of various Society standing committees. The Annual Meet Resources, Finance, Information Systems, Projects & Company Store, Publications, Standards, Judging & Awards, Technical, and Women's Activities Committees are frequently needed resources.

## **Site Selection**

Annual Meet locations are selected in two manners, volunteers stepping forward or the Society Board choosing a desired area and recruiting a Meet Chairperson in that area. If the 1<sup>st</sup> doesn't occur the 2<sup>nd</sup> must. Ideally the locations will rotate across the country in a flowing manner to accommodate participation by all members over 3 to 4 years.

The ideal locations will offer driving tours with scenery, low traffic roads, no or little city or expressway driving, museums, historical sites, car collections, other points of interest, restaurants for lunches, and a suitable hotel close enough to air travel for distant members. The Hotel should accommodate at minimum 100 rooms being available, a date range that will be between early to mid June and mid-August to accommodate those who wish to bring children, designated parking for Pierce-Arrows and trailers, adequate meeting rooms for our various needs, banquet space for 250 and a large onsite restaurant for breakfast & dinners. If a city location, quick access to touring friendly roads is essential. Meeting spaces are needed for Board Meetings, Registration, Company Store, Hospitality & Banquet.

## **Planning Schedule**

**Three years ahead:** Select location and Meet Chairperson, general meet plans with venues & Hotel options. Begin hotel negotiations with assistance from a designated Finance Committee member. Final contract must be signed by the President following Finance Committee Review and Board Approval of the location plan.

**Two years ahead:** Present general plan with Meet Schedule to PAS Directors for approval including a detailed Income & Expense Budget. If approved, proceed to finalize Hotel Contract, theme and budget corrections. Set up accounting spreadsheet, put fundraising plans in motion, confirm tour stops, arrange committees, set up banking requirements with PAS Treasurer, work with other available PAS assets on artwork & graphics, begin promotion.

**One year ahead:** Present final meet details to PAS Directors including detailed schedule, events & budget. Show a video/photographic presentation about the Meet to invite members to attend at the previous Awards Banquet. Following that proceed to finalize budget working with a designated Finance Committee member. Confirm every small detail of tour stops. Set up the registration form, schedule all mailing insertions for the year with the PAS Publisher. Finalize Tour & Program Book content, Dash plaque, event tickets, planned meals and make final arrangements for all other goods & services needed during the course of the meet. Lock in every possible detail!

**Winter Board Meeting before Meet:** Present final plans and **Final Budget approved in advance by Treasurer** or designated Finance Committee contact to the full Board of Directors. Incorporate any adjustments required.

## Financial Responsibilities

The financial results of an Annual Meet have a direct impact on the ability of the Pierce-Arrow Society to continue as a viable ongoing organization. The Annual Meet Chairperson and Committees must exercise good sound fiscal practices to protect the Society as well as the Annual Meet.

The PAS Treasurer will open a bank account dedicated solely to the Annual Meet and provide the advances needed for hotel deposits and other venues and events. In years where a PAS Region is hosting the event, no comingling of Annual Meet funds and Region funds is permitted. PAS will provide advances as required by Hotels and other venues and events. PAS also covers many of the overhead expenses related to holding an Annual Meet. Insurance, trophies, some basic supplies, mailing costs, access to digital communication with the membership and experienced advisers are provided to the Meet Committee by the Society. The PAS will pay the cost of Board Meeting expenses as an administrative expense.

It is expected that the Meet Chairman and Committee **maintain at least the decade historical average of a \$3,000 minimum net profit after all advances and stipends are returned to the PAS Treasurer.** This amount must be adjusted upward periodically due to inflation. Profits above the minimum are strongly encouraged to ensure the long-term viability of the Pierce-Arrow Society and continued Annual Meets. See section on Fundraising & Promotion on page 4.

All contracts related to an Annual Meet will require advance approval by the Finance Committee and then the signature of the current Society President. Many hotels provide for a complimentary room when room night counts achieve a benchmark. Always try to negotiate at least one initially with your hotel contract. Keep in mind, the first Complimentary room must be available to the current Editor of the Arrow or otherwise will be an expense.

The control of costs for attendees and the return to PAS depends on proper planning and efficient fundraising efforts. Detailed Income & Expense budgets should be submitted for review to the Finance Committee **30 days before** each Board Meeting. An initial basic budget should be presented to the Board 24 months in advance of the Meet's date. A member of the Finance Committee will be assigned to assist the Meet Chairperson in meeting these requirements and review the detail of all expenditures for the Meet. A full report of detailed Income & Expense results and all bank records must be provided to the PAS Treasurer by **November 1st** following the Meet.

## Hotel Negotiation

Hotels want the Society to guarantee room nights, food & beverage minimums, early cutoff of room blocks and also impose huge penalties if we fail to meet their numbers. Of course we want the ability to reduce those limitations & penalties to nothing so this becomes a tedious process. Meet Chairpersons must use the expertise of the Directors and experienced individuals to negotiate a tolerable compromise. The Treasurer and Finance Committee can help with previous Meet references and examples of previous contract terms. Negotiating a good contract with flexibility is essential to a successful Annual Meet for both attendees and financial results. Establishing a good relationship with Hotel staff is a key step.

## Budgeting

Properly budgeting the costs and revenue for an Annual Meet is key to a successful event. The PAS Treasurer will designate a member of the Finance Committee to work with the Meet Chairperson and Meet Treasurer from the start of planning. The process begins with a spreadsheet itemizing all possible anticipated costs and income. The best way to achieve success is to assume costs to exceed expectations and income to fall short of expectations.

Adding at least 15% to 20% to most every cost expectation is essential to cover the unexpected, unknown and extremely costly events. Price Driving Tour events and meals as a "Daily Tour Fee" rather than giving options.

Estimate most buffet meal counts to providers at 5 to 10% below actual as any responsible provider will plan a cushion. They often don't take the time & hassle to do head counts and bill for the recent guaranteed number. But if they do so accurately don't argue, apologize for the error and pay the bill with a smile.

Even when the costs of a tour day or a dinner are precisely known, a cushion is needed for contingencies. Banquet costs are always difficult so that may be the sole exception. Fundraising is necessary to make the event affordable for members and avoid a loss due to surprises. That very important subject is covered separately under Fundraising.

Determine projected costs for the plans first and then do a conservative revenue plan to cover well above the costs. It is your responsibility to balance costs to attendees while meeting financial obligations to the Pierce-Arrow Society and protecting the interests of the majority of members who never attend our Annual Meets.

## Tour Planning

The tour area and specific venues should be what drives the site selection and will likely provide a theme for the Annual Meet. The selected theme can best be used for the Tour Book cover, the selection of poster art whether an old ad or original creation, and promotional materials for the Meet on the PAS website and in PAS mailings. The sooner you begin this process the better. The Driving Tour plans and the attractiveness of the area are what drive attendance and successful Annual Meets. The effort put in here will make many memories, either good or not so...

Some aspects of planning a good driving tour are obvious. Good low traffic roads for the wide variety of our Pierce-Arrows, interesting venues, nice scenery, good food, adequate 'rest stops' for older tourists come first. But time management becomes a challenge akin to herding cats, so have enough stops but not too many. How?

Do turn by turn & direction instructions and test routes before finalizing planned stops.

Long sections need intermediate landmarks note, even more as next turn or direction is approaching.

Drive the route at 35 mph and record driving time between stops to estimate the AVERAGE driving time.

Estimate the typical expected time at each stop and suggest departure times from each stop.

Determine if there is enough total average time to get most people back at the hotel by 5 PM.

If there is not enough time to do what you wanted, stick with more important venues.

Lunches should be buffets whenever possible. If not possible, pick only one or two choices for simplicity.

Arrange to have volunteers depart (noisily) from a stop 10 minutes before the recommended time.

A "Trouble Truck" with back seat manned by a registrant is the best approach to cost free assistance

Having a trailer towed along the tour is intrusive at tight venues. Let members solve breakdowns.

Provide contact information for local towing services in the Tour Book...and sell them ads in the book!

Have a water source of some kind available for tourists each morning.

Complex, unusual instructions can be covered in a short pre-departure Driver's meeting with handout.

## Fundraising & Promotion

Fundraising from "other people's money" will generate good revenue and won't cost the Meet or attendees anything. Here's how!

If the sale of a **product** is intended to raise money, double (or more) the final cost of the item and don't burden it with Meet specific information. Pick an item that has strong appeal both before and after the event. If you choose to go this route, please plan and coordinate with the PAS Company Store because they will be inventorying any remaining items.

Planning and arranging a **Meet Poster** with the Pierce-Arrow Foundation program averages \$1200 or more clear profit on average. Working jointly with the Foundation to find a sponsor who may want their Pierce(s) in a piece of original artwork can often double the revenue. Currently the Foundation pays for poster printing and only markets the unsold stock after the event. Begin working with them as soon as the Hotel contract is signed.

Business **sponsors** for the Meet or for specific entertainment events can enhance the experience for attendees while adding to the revenue or offsetting an expense. Banners promoting the company/sponsor to over 250 attendees or the public at a PAS car show are always a good way to bring recognition for their support.

By far the best way to help cover expenses and build additional revenue is selling **advertising** in the Meet Tour & Program Book. Approach vendors who sell parts or services to antique car owners.

Some key points for approaching potential advertisers are:

(1) The Meet Book with their ad in it is in the hands of over 250 PAS members the entire week.

- (2) It has a long shelf life because it goes home with the member as a reference for future needs of services.
- (3) At the average price of \$250/page, that's delivering the advertiser's message for only \$1.00 per person.
- (4) Call on suppliers/vendors YOU use and know! If you needed them, someone else does too!
- (5) **Advertisers with appropriate products/services will also be listed on the PAS website *Parts & Services Directory* available to all PAS members.** The old car hobby is full of people filling needs and more choices for services is always better. Getting their names out to our members or reminding them that they are there is a key to success!

The best results have come from selling fixed sized ads for several reasons. If you offer a small, cheap ad, they will choose it more often than not, which makes a lot of work for little return and piecing the Meet Book together is harder with smaller pieces. It is suggested that you stick with 2 ad sizes – Full and Half page. Pricing should be more “per page” than a full page. For instance, if your full-page rate is \$250, that should make a half page \$150 not \$125 which makes the page's return \$300 instead of \$250. The \$150 half page is still a very affordable price for any business. Don't sell cheap ads that give advertisers access to a group driving *America's Finest Built Motorcars!*

You can also pitch ads and Sponsor opportunities to local businesses like restaurants, auto services, wineries, and theaters. The Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau can assist you in identifying logical target companies in their area and also promote public interest in the Pierce-Arrow Judged Car Show.

Email and the telephone is your friend but if it is possible, visit better prospects in person and show them a previous Annual Meet Tour/Program book and give them a copy of **The Arrow** Annual Meet edition (contact “Back Issues” via the website to get free copies for this purpose).

The positive results in these fundraising efforts are essential to avoid placing any financial burden on the members who are unable to attend and enjoy your Meet. At the same time you can minimize costs for attendees as well.

## **Tour & Program Book**

In recent years the Program and the Tour Book have very effectively combined into a single item that our members actually will carry with them all week. This makes it easier to print, saves money and gives advertisers a better placement for their ad dollars. Charge a premium for color ads and premium placement, but remember that the last page should be given to promote the following year's Annual Meet.

Try to make it easy for members to use by placing a full color ad page facing each tour day directions. This is also sales pitch tool when selling ‘premium’ ad space. Work with the PAS Publisher to get more color pictures and ads included and obtain a very low printing cost. Use previous meet books to ensure informational standards that need to be included for the benefit of member attendees.

## **Registration**

The availability of online registration should result in more information being transferred electronically over time, but the form itself will be the same. The Registration form should be print ready by Jan. 1 preceding the Meet. Follow previous examples for format to include the necessary information. Menu choices complicate the process. Tours priced on a per day basis to avoid form complexity and contribute to smoothing out income & expense variations. As soon as possible assign a strong person to learn all of the tools available through the PAS Registration systems.

Registration at the Meet itself requires advance preparation and organization to ensure that attendees receive all the information and materials that they need at the time of arrival. This function requires a well trained committee to be ready by the day before the Meet. Welcome packets with Tour Books, event tickets, other area info, and a General Information page plus any Goody bag must be ready to handout the afternoon before Day One. A pocket size or badge size Schedule of Events for the week including the hours for Registration, Hospitality, Company Store to be open through to Day Five is recommended.

This is a very important welcoming process for all attendees, but especially for those attending their first Meet. Start trying to match any attendees without a Pierce with empty seats for the next days tours, especially newbies. A large cardboard listing of Banquet Tables and Spaces must be displayed on an easel at Registration at the beginning of the Meet allowing members to sign up spaces with friends at the Banquet. After the first tour day it can be placed in Hospitality until Show Day.

The Registration location at the hotel is important. It must be easy to find and signage to direct people as they arrive are essential. Registration may be able to share space with the Hospitality area, but that location must be easily found from signage at Hotel arrival and check-in.

Parking for Pierce-Arrows and trailers must be preplanned at hotel selection and in detail after registration info is received. Signage and volunteers must be ready starting the Day before the Meet begins, on Day One and on Day Two. Failure to organize and assist attendees with these parking issues at their arrival will result in a congested mess and angry attendees before they can begin to enjoy all of the fun you have gone to so much effort to plan for them.

## **Hospitality**

Attendees need an area where they can get together casually for conversation, snacks, water and soft drinks. One person should have responsibility to check and restock throughout the week as needed. Stick to affordable basic offerings and have a plan to replenish if needed. The space should be open to attendees through the week as much as possible. Some hotel facilities may have adjacent spaces that can be shared with Registration and the Company Store. Hospitality and Company Store go very well together, but the Store must be able to be closed off when staffing is not on duty. Both should be kept as close together as possible. Bulletin board(s) should be provided for members to post item For Sale, Items Wanted, and Messages for other members along with necessary supplies. .

## **Company Store**

The Company Store Manager must be consulted well in advance to ensure that the planned space is both adequate and located appropriately. Every effort must be taken to promote maximum exposure for PAS Company Store sales. The Meet Chairperson should work together with the Store Manager to ensure the best results for PAS and also for any Meet related products for fundraising. The setting for the Car Show sometimes has sufficient facility and public attendance to merit having Company Store merchandise available for sale. This should be discussed well in advance with the Company Store Manager. Meet projects may also be offered in appropriate settings. Extra Staffing helps!

## **Board Meetings**

The PAS Board Meeting is held on Day One of each Annual Meet. Space will be required for a minimum of 36 attendees beginning in the early morning. Coffee and water should be available. Breakfast snacks and a Lunch with soft drinks should be planned in coordination with the current President. The Pierce-Arrow Foundation Board Meeting is held in the afternoon following conclusion of the PAS agenda. Only water needs to be available. The expense for food is the responsibility of the Society with payment to be coordinated with the PAS Treasurer.

## **Welcome Party**

A Welcome Party is traditionally held in the evening of Day One. Typically heavy hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar, limited drink tickets and some musical entertainment are offered in a casual setting that encourages mixing socially. Some hotel contracts can be negotiated to cover some of these costs. Another option is to solicit Sponsors to cover or offset some of the costs. Auction houses, auto transport carriers and auto insurance companies are prime target examples. It may be necessary to charge attendees for this, but a no cost event potentially draws earlier participation in activities. This can be particularly advantageous in getting First Timers acclimated into the group.

## **Ladies Event**

It is essential to have at least one event specifically for women. This can be scheduled as a late afternoon, evening opposite the Tech session on Car Show day. The Meet must coordinate planning for this with the PAS Women's Activities Committee early in the year prior to the Meet as it needs to be on the Registration form.

## **Swap Meet & Vintage Attic**

The Swap Meet is typically held on the evening of Day Four requiring a large room and lots of banquet tables. The tables are sold to interested members on the Registration Form. Plan to have the space for at least 3 dozen tables. The number actually needed should be recorded by including the fee for a table on the registration form. Add 4 to 6 possible extras. The Vintage Attic for the Ladies items is held at the same time, preferably in the same space. Coordinate this with the Women's Activities Committee.

Limit access to the Swap Meet space limited to registered table purchasers showing their wares. This will give all other members an equal opportunity to get a chance at the most desirable items.

## **Judging**

The Chief Judge and Committee have requirements that must be considered in the choice and facilities needed in selecting a location for the Car Show. Consult with them during this process to make sure all of their needs are met. A shelter at the show field or access to working space in a very close structure are essential. This space should be kept as clear of intrusion as practical from the public or attendees who are not a part of the judging team. The judging teams will bring their judging sheets to this central location where another team will do the tallying of results. As with most activities these days, electronic devices will be used and could benefit from electricity.

A traditional Judges Breakfast provides a chance for the Chief Judge to give final instruction to the judging teams before the show. Work with the Chief Judge to provide an inexpensive meal in a private setting. The number of cars to be judged directly affects the attendance at this breakfast and the overall complexity of the judging process. For many registrants this will be a primary reason they have attended, so things need to flow smoothly. Have a member of the Meet Committee assigned to assist in any details required by the Chief Judge before and during the show.

## **Car Show**

Assign a leader and team to handle all of the Car Show details from planning to end of the show. When choosing a location they need to assess a number of details including the following, but the Meet Chairperson should approve the final show field selection.

Will the number of cars the planned space can handle compared to an optimistic estimate.

Will it be large enough to have adequate space around vehicles plus the anticipated crowd?

What can be the options for restrooms, access to buy food, food provided by registrant, shelter in a storm?

Where can attractive pictures be taken as cars arrive at the show field?

Are there shaded areas where people can get out of the sun?

Will it be on grass or pavement and what are the pros & cons of each?

Is the terrain flat or can irregularities be used attractively without issues for cars or people?

Is the location within a short drive from the hotel, a nearby park or on the hotel grounds?

How will the spaces be laid out, measured and marked on the surface chosen?

Does the site facilitate organizing cars by class and with some logical chronological layout.

Leading up to the Meet there are many details to be arranged.

How many people will be needed to direct and park the cars? Generally at least 6 to 8.

What type of holders will be used for the Society 8 ½ x 11 car signs and who will provide them?

A complete list of cars must be reviewed often to adjust layout and arrangement plans with Chief Judge.

How will layouts be measured and set and who will do it very early show day morning. 2 or more needed!

Car signs and holders must be ready and organized for placement in the layout plan the day before the show.

If driving over curbing is required, a ramp at least 8 feet wide must be in place on show day morning

Sign holders need to be collected as cars prepare to leave to forward to the next Annual Meet.

Show Day morning layout should start 2 or more hours before cars are directed to arrive. Photography and directing people should arrive at their assigned positions least 1 hour before the 1<sup>st</sup> car is due to arrive. Some cars will be early and some cars will be late. Have enough parking assistants to avoid backups. If a late or incompetent arrival has a difficult parking slot or lacks skill, pick up his sign and move him to the next available row end.

## **Technical Session**

A technical session is normally held in the later afternoon of the Show Day. The Technical Committee should be consulted regarding selection of a topic. Local resources may be available to do a presentation or the Technical Committee may be able to assist with a presentation. In either case every effort should to present subject matter that is interesting, helpful and fresh. Select a topic that hasn't been done in recent years.

Try to allow a little time after the presentation for a general question & answer session led by Society technical experts.

## **Awards Banquet**

The Awards Banquet is much more than a dinner and trophies. It includes traditions that emphasizes many of the best aspects of Society membership. The first is a Social hour with a cash bar. Depending on space issues it is best to

have this in an adjacent area to the banquet room with the doors to the dinner opened at the appointed hour. Some members will use this opportunity to wear vintage clothing. Everyone will enjoy this last chance to chat with old and new friends until next year's Annual Meet.

The meal itself should be negotiated as a part of the hotel contract. Generally plated meals will be more expensive and buffets will be less costly. Plated meals do complicate the registration process as choices must be on that form. Buffets often can offer more variety than plated selections with less choice. If a buffet is selected, a plan for organized release of tables must be executed to move the process along in a time efficient manner.

The Meet Committee must work with the Annual Meet Resources Committee and the Society President on all the details of the Banquet program. A variety of activities need to be included into the evening.

The Banquet should be accompanied door opening with a large video display of the cars, people and places visited during the Meet. Photography from a variety of sources should be used for this portion of the evening presentation. Later on photographs of all award winners should be shown as each award is presented.

The Society President will handle the Society's business aspects of the evening with presentation of information about the past year, current events, general Society affairs, recognitions and the traditional 'stand up-sit down' event. The Chief Judge and his committee will handle the Awards Ceremony. The last part of the program will be a presentation about the Annual Meet for the next year.

### **Aftermath**

The Annual Meet Chairperson duties don't end after the last day of the Meet. Pay all the bills, reimburse legitimate related expenses, make a list of what worked well and what didn't and prepare two reports. A full accounting report is due to the PAS Treasurer is due by **November 1** following the Meet. A summary of all statistics and a **what worked & what didn't list** plus suggestions for upcoming Meets should be sent to the President and the Annual Meet Resources Committee by **December 1** following the Meet. The Board can use that feedback to keep these Guidelines and Policies relevant in an ongoing basis.

We all will owe you and your committee huge **Thanks for your efforts!**

### **Motion:**

**The Board of Directors adopts the Guidelines and Policies (2020) effective immediately exempting the imminent 2020 Annual Meet. It will be updated periodically as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.**

**Submitted by Dave Stevens, Director at Large**