# AZSITE Consortium Board Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2021
10:00 a.m. to 11:39 a.m.

A quorum was obtained.

**A. CALL TO ORDER** (Watson)

**Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m.**

Board members present:

Jim Watson, Chairperson, Arizona State Museum (ASM)

Mary-Ellen Walsh, Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Kelley Hays-Gilpin, Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA)

Melissa Powell, Arizona State University (ASU)

Members of the public present:

Gabe McGowan (AZSITE Manager)

Carrie Schmidt (AZSITE Technician)

Karen Leone (Arizona State Museum)

Dan Garcia (Salt River Project)

Jenni Rich (ACS)

Abraham Arnett (Arizona Game and Fish Department)

Sarina Mann (Arizona State Museum)

Ian Milliken (Pima County)

Cara Lonardo (EPG)

Reylynne Williams (Gila River Indian Community– THPO)

Sarah Herr (Desert Archaeology)

Ashley D'Elia (Tierra Right-of-Way)

**B. Introductions**

1. Members of the AZSITE Board were introduced.
2. The AZSITE Manager was introduced.

**C. Agenda Items** – The Board may consider or take action on any of the following:

1. Discussion and Approval of 1st Quarter 2021 Meeting Minutes (Watson)

    a. Motion to approve (Hays-Gilpin)

        i. Seconded (Walsh)

        ii. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Finance Report (Watson)

    a. Watson reviewed the current AZSITE balance: $270,522.

    b. Most of the income for 2021 has already come in, at approximately $111,915.

    Expenditure should be able to be met if this income level is maintained.

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    c.   Watson reviewed income for the past five years. A large increase in 2020 was from a raised fee structure, which was decreased beginning 2021.

3. **Large Data Requests (McGowan)**

    **a.**  Data request by Jared Renaud from the University of Arizona Anthropology Department for all sites in the Santa Cruz River watershed within Pima County. These data will be used to examine site density distributions between different site types for an archaeological statistical methods class. The data will be stored on Renaud's personal laptop until completion of the project, at which point the data will be deleted.

        i.  Discussion:

            1.  Watson inquired if they had reached out to Pima County.

                a.  McGowan confirmed that they are coordinating with Pima County.

            2.  Milliken stated that the county recommended that Renaud go through AZSITE for security purposes.

        ii.  Motion to approve (Walsh)

            1.  Second (Hays-Gilpin)

            2.  Motion passed unanimously.

    b.  Data request by Carlos Herrera from Prescott National Forest for sites data within an area of 185,000 acres in support of projects in the Black Hills Areas of the Prescott National Forest. Data will be stored by central USDA server than can only be accessed by Prescott National Forest archaeologists.

        i.  Discussion:

            1.  Walsh inquired about the land jurisdiction for these projects since the National Forest Service (NFS) typically stores site data on NFS land.

                a.  McGowan replied that he can ask about the land jurisdictions involved.

        ii.  Motion to approve (Powell)

            1.  Seconded (Hays-Gilpin)

            2.  Motion passed unanimously.

    c.  Data request by Florencia Pezzutti from Colorado State University Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML) for all data on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land. They are contracted for a project standardizing and improving BLM data across the western states and filling in gaps for their NCRIMS system, a landscape analysis tool. This entails data entry for major fields and

mapping fields between the databases. The data will be stored on Colorado State University's internal network, which is VPN secured, and only be accessed by the team contracted for the project. The same request was made in 2016 and granted by AZSITE. Per communication with Matt Basham of BLM Arizona, the updated dataset will be made available for integration back into AZSITE when the project is complete in approximately one year.

    d. Motion to approve (Hays-Gilpin)

        i. Seconded (Walsh)

        ii. Motion passed unanimously.

**4.** Hosting Changes and Costs (McGowan)

    a. McGowan reviewed the previously discussed hosting arrangements with ASU. The main server, azsite4, needs to be moved from the current location. As an alternative to a cloud server, there is an on-premises storage location called the Research Computing Solution at Arizona State University (ASU) that would host azsite4. Costs would be $1,525 per year and an initial software cost of $1600. If azsite4 were to be moved to AWS, it would be $2,900 a year with a one-time software fee of $1,000. With the Research Computing Solution, database backups would be maintained in cloud storage (AWS S3) so that longer-term backups can be maintained than are allowed by the Research Computing Solution. Only compressed and encrypted databased backup files would be stored in AWS. If azsite4 were moved to the Research Computing Solution, the remaining three servers would be grandfathered in at ASU's University Technology Office for a few more years, with continued free hosting. At some point within the couple years, this issue may come up again, and the hosting regime for all four servers will need to be reconsidered. The software licenses purchased with the one-time cost can be transferred, should azsite4 have to be moved again within the next several years. McGowan recommends moving forward with migrating azsite4 to the Research Computing Solution.

    b. Discussion:

        i. Walsh stated that we should investigate Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) GIS servers as a viable alternative.

        ii. McGowan stated that ISSR has shared that there is a lot of momentum for state agencies to move to cloud servers. Due to difficulties of having mixed locations, all servers should either be on-premises or on a cloud server. ISSR has assured McGowan that security in a cloud hosting framework would be

maintained to the highest standards. The main concerns are associated with hosting costs, with continued on-premise hosting being the lowest-cost option in the short to medium term.

    c. Motion to approve (Hays-Gilpin)

        i. Seconded (Walsh)

        ii. Motion passed unanimously.

**5.** Updates to Public Mapper (McGowan)

    a. McGowan reviewed the proposal from the Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee for improving the AZSITE Public Mapper. ISSR at ASU provided a cost estimate for meeting the proposal goals. Updating to a more modern Esri ArcGIS mapping application would be approximately $12,000, with a total of $25,000 for all proposed enhancements. It is possible to get the total cost under $20,000 if certain functionalities are left out, such as the ability to add local GIS files (shapefiles or keyhole markup) and the construction of links from the application to AZSITE citation data. The proposed public mapper changes could be used as a framework for overhauling the current member mapping application.

    b. Discussion:

        i. Walsh will investigate funding for the Certified Local Government (CLG) component of these enhancements.

        ii. Milliken inquired how much of these costs can be applied to the member mapping application first to lower costs for improving the public mapper.

        iii. Watson stated concerns for the time this would require from AZSITE staff and inquired if these improvements would cut into time ISSR has to work on general AZSITE tasks.

            1. McGowan replied that ISSR does seem to be limited on the time they can dedicate to ASZITE. However, he feels that since they gave him a detailed cost estimate for this work, they are more likely to prioritize it.

        iv. Garcia stated that having a more modern interface would be extremely useful for users. Raising user fees, in combination with grants, could help fund improvements to both applications.

        v. Watson stated that if the board thinks this is a priority, AZSITE funds can be used to move forward with these improvements.

        vi. Walsh discussed various possible grants, including from Pima County.

vii. McGowan stated that he will ask ISSR for more specifications if the improvements were first applied to the member mapping application. It could potentially be less costly up front.

viii. Powell inquired about the total AZSITE hours involved in these improvements.

1. McGowan clarified that all hours reported on the estimate are for ISSR. There currently is not a specific time estimate for AZSITE staff.

ix. Powell inquired about how many CLG requests have there been in the past.

1. McGowan replied that he has only come across one request. There is likely a user base for the CLG layer if it were readily available, but the exact number is unknown.

x. McGowan stated that he will estimate the total hours required for AZSITE staff for the next meeting. The website traffic for the public mapper can also be collected and reported.

6. **Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee Report (Garcia)**

a. Garcia presented the Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee report. Reylynne Williams has joined the committee as the tribal advisor. The committee has met once since the last board meeting. Scott Courtwright gave a presentation on how the National Resources Conservation Service (NCRS) non-archaeologist staff, such as range managers, use cultural resources data. AZSITE Enhancements were prioritized by the committee into three main categories: 1) Increasing functionality of AZSITE, 2) increasing the user base, and 3) improving the ability to accept outside data.

b. The need for a more specific land ownership/jurisdiction layer for both archaeologist and non-archaeologist users was discussed. The committee can work with AZSITE staff on building and improving this layer.

i. Milliken stated that Pima County can provide AZSITE a link to county owned parcels. Maricopa County also has this data available. Time will be required to collect and standardize these datasets as they likely differ from county to county.

c. Garcia stated that the committee would like to prioritize adding well-known sites that are not currently published in AZSITE. The committee can work on collecting and providing data associated with these sites. The State Sites Stewards Program can help

with gathering this information, in addition to collaboration with the Archaeological Records Office (ARO).

    d. Garcia stated that improvements are needed for a prehistoric/historic canals layer in the Phoenix metropolitan area, in addition to other parts of the state.

        i. Walsh stated that a specialized historic BOR canal layer would not be particularly useful in AZSITE.

           1. Garcia replied that recent issues have resulted from incorrect and outdated canal information.

        ii. Watson stated that improvements to a canal layer would not require board approval and the committee can move forward if they decide to do so. The committee can also work on putting together a list of sources for building an improved land ownership/jurisdiction layer.

        iii. Garcia stated that if the board thinks the committee should move forward with any enhancements, a proposal can then be drafted and presented.

**7.** Legislative Updates (Garcia)

    a. No updates.

**8.** AZSITE Updates (McGowan & Schmidt)

    a. Backlog:

        i. Projects:

           1. 2,586 total projects

           2. 634 uploaded (25%)

               a. 140 negative surveys/monitoring (100%)

           3. 1,952 not uploaded

               a. 1,546 with shapefiles

           4. Focus has been processing new sites.

               a. Now compiling large batches of 'updates only'

           5. Goal: process 50-100 projects a week

        ii. New Sites:

           1. 7,877 total new sites

               a. 227 known to be on Tribal Land

           2. 3,052 uploaded (40%)

           3. 4,584 in Advanced Sites Layer (60%)

               a. 3,323 with shapefiles

           4. Goal: process 125 new sites a week

5. Geographically, of the largest numbers of remaining new sites are in the Phoenix-Tucson corridor.

    iii. Site Updates

        1. 7,146 site updates

           a. 7,127 not known to be on Tribal Land

        2. Full updates including boundaries - ARO

        3. Basic updates (project-site, reference-site, NRHP recs) scripted

        4. 1,746 basic uploaded (24%)

b. Uploads Overall

    i. A total of 1,084 new sites were uploaded in 2020, with 1,565 uploaded so far in 2021. In comparison, an average of 1,706 new sites were uploaded annually from 2004-2009, with annual uploads subsequently declining until 2020.

c. Updates:

    i. Process:

        1. ARO has added an AZSITE data fixes/consolidations workflow to their database; more of these items are moving through to AZSITE.

        2. Batch upload scripts are in place for both old and new entry modules

        3. Tribal Lands check is being incorporated into upload scripts

    ii. Attribute Data:

        1. Site XY, quads, TRS, county, land ownership, human remains data have been augmented

        2. Site/Project numbers cleaned

        3. Date fields are being cleaned to a consistent format to allow sorting

        4. State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) data updated:

           a. National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) determinations

           b. SHPO Site/Project reports

    iii. GIS Data:

        1. Site/Project numbers cleaned

        2. Data from Tribal Lands removed from production servers using latest ASLD land ownership layer, which is now shown in the web applications and the Mercator server

        3. Historic structures layer updated to remove modern structures; awaiting full update from SHPO.

4. Historic districts layer updated with minor corrections and additions
5. City of Phoenix Site Buffer layer updated to reflect recent uploads andadded to weekly sync
6. Corrections to topo basemap tiles are pending.

iv. Applications:
1. Website updates:
    a. More information about courtesy submissions
    b. Ongoing efforts to centralize data submission information and improve website functionality
2. Web entry module:
    a. National Park Service (NPS) grant application submitted March 2021, centering on added functionality for the web entry module.
3. Web apps – pending changes:
    a. Site search query changed to avoid redundant results.
    b. Links to site cards and PRFs from site/project entries
    c. Links to ASM LARC from reference entries
    d. Binary fields in NRS table displayed as 'True/False'
    e. SHPO site/project report links from AZSITE site/project entries
    f. Project 'history' tab showing related sites

d. Discussion:
i. McGowan to coordinate with Walsh for what is needed for SHPO Historical Buildings.
ii. Milliken inquired when adding new features, could it be possible to add more information about collections.
1. McGowan replied that there is a field in the site attribute search under site history indicating if there were collections at each recording. Linking more detailed ASM collections information may be feasible once upgrades to the ASM Collections Information System are complete. The new entry module records collections information at the site level.

**D. Public Comment**

a. Garcia stated that it is good to see so much progress made towards the backlog and all other AZSITE and ARO endeavors. The main areas of development in the state are also in high-site corridors, therefore it is imperative to increase processing speed of the backlog and unpublished well-known sites. Most cultural resource firms and AZSITE users do not research through the ARO. Recently, a developer disturbed a site because a survey (completed 10 years ago) within the project area was not published in AZSITE. Information needs to be available as soon as possible.

    i. Walsh stated that this is part of a larger problem. SHPO is working on developing guidance to make sure all entities are on the same page when determining information requirements.

    ii. Watson stated that time requirements of AZSITE staff are a main concern when considering proposals because of these issues. The main priority is publishing the backlog.

**E. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

a. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be on Zoom.

**F. Adjournment**

**a.** Meeting adjourned at 11:39 am