

# Speaking Terms for Michael Shuman

April 2015

**TO:** Potential Sponsors

**FROM:** Michael Shuman

**RE:** Speaking Terms

Many thanks for considering me as a speaker and/or engaging me to lead a workshop. What follows is an overview about my fees and preferred topics, formats, terms, and procedures.

## GENERALLY

**Speaking** – My basic fee is \$2,500 per speaking day, plus expenses and travel-day fees. For my travel days, I charge \$500. Expenses for 1-3 day trips usually total \$500-1,000.

**Workshops** – I currently have three all-day workshop curricula: on local economic development, on local investment, and on “pollinator” businesses. My basic fee for an all-day workshop is \$4,000 plus expenses and travel days. For a half-day workshop, I charge \$3,000 plus expenses and travel days. I am willing to add a public talk, either before or after either a half-day or full-day workshop for \$1,000.

**Travel Days** – Being away from home – I’ve got two children – is costly, so I also charge for travel days. Because a West Coast talk probably requires a minimum of three days, I usually need to charge \$3,500 for a one day speaking event. A talk in the Midwest, South, or New England would probably be \$3,000. If I can fly/drive to and from the event in the same day, I’ll charge \$2,500.

**Multiple Day Speaking Tours** – Some sponsors, particularly those outside the United States, understandably like to take advantage of my long trip and put together multiple events in proximate communities. I like this too, and therefore am prepared to offer a financial incentive for such “packages.” So...if you buy one speaking day of my time for \$2,500, I’ll add speaking days for \$1,000 per day. Note that only applies to the “Speaking Work Load” requirements outlined below, and does not apply to multiple workshops.

**Virtual Events** – I’m also prepared to keep my carbon footprint lower and avoid travel altogether through a virtual event. I’m happy to give a talk via Skype, Google, or another platform. Since every talk requires several hours of preparation, I typically charge \$1,000 for this. If more preparation is required, I’ll need to charge slightly more.

**Gratis Speeches** –Two or three times each year, I’m willing to speak for a lower fee or no fee at all, *though even in these circumstances expenses must be covered*. Please only ask for this if you expect an audience of more than 1,000.

## **TRAVEL EXPENSES AND LOGISTICS**

**Travel Expenses** – I invoice for all reasonable expenses, including: transportation to the local airport (taxi rides or airport parking fees); baggage and travel agent fees; car rental once I arrive (including \$25 insurance per rental); and hotel for each night. I will keep all meals and incidentals to less than \$75 per day, including travel days (if you feed me, I will not charge you). For international travel, I will charge for any special expenses required for visas, vaccinations, etc. For travel to a local event, mileage will be charged at the standard current IRS rate.

**Air Travel** – You should book my air tickets per your needs, and send me the e-ticket data. Any airline is fine. It’s easiest if I can fly in and out of Baltimore (BWI). I can also fly in and out of Reagan National and Dulles. The only exception is if I’ve got multiple stops, in which case I’ll book the ticket and invoice you for half of a two-stop ticket, a third of a three-stop ticket, etc. Note that I prefer you not buy a ticket too far in advance, because often I need to revise the front or back end of the ticket as I book other events.

**On-Site Transportation** –Two back surgeries have placed significant limits on my ability to rely on mass transit. Therefore, I prefer to rent a car once I arrive at a site, unless the speaking venue is a short cab ride away. As noted, I pay \$25 per rental for insurance and prepay for a tank of gas.

**Hotels** – I prefer a middle-range hotel room (assume \$100-125 per night) that is reasonably comfortable, quiet, private, and internet friendly. *Please, no home stays, B&Bs, bare-bones tourist hotels, or roommates—no exceptions*. The whole purpose of a reasonable place to stay is so I can give you and your audience the best performance possible, and that means I need undistracted down time.

## **EVENT PREPARATION**

**Work Load** – I’m happy to add to my work day radio and television interviews, site visits, discussions, whatever you’d like. Basically, you’re the boss of my time with you, with following qualifications: I will do one prepared talk, and one 60-90 minute workshop (usually as a follow-on to the talk). I strongly discourage multiple public events in a day, since they tend to cannibalize one another’s audiences. Try not to work me for more than eight hours during the day. And allow time for me to eat every now and then.

**Event Formats** – I’m happy to speak on almost any topic you’d like, in almost any format. Audiences seem to respond best to my speaking solo for 55-75 minutes, and then to take questions for another 30 minutes. But I’m happy to speak for a shorter period and with a panel of people. I also enjoy debate formats.

**Technology** – I almost always give PowerPoint presentations, so you should have an LCV projector and a screen. I can provide the computer (or memory stick) and a remote mouse. Because I almost always make changes and additions until the moment of presentation, I cannot provide an advance version of the presentation. I will, however, provide you with a PDF of the presentation for distribution after the event.

**Name Gathering** – If possible, please figure out a way of gathering names and e-mails of those attending the event and send a copy to me. Most groups do this anyway at the door. I ultimately will encourage them to subscribe to my free e-zine.

**Pre-Event Communication** – I’m happy to have *one in-depth telephone conversation for planning*, up to one hour, with you and your colleagues about the content, title, format, etc. Most of what sponsors need, including photos, descriptions, biographical material, quotations for press releases, etc., will soon be available on my web site, [www.michaelshuman.com](http://www.michaelshuman.com).

**My Preparation** – I’m always grateful if you and your colleagues can send me articles, reports, studies, whatever that provides me with background on your community. Best to email this to me or send to my personal address (2203 Quinton Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20910).

**Book Sales** – I ask that you sell my two most recent books (*The Local Economy Solution* and *Local Dollars, Local Sense*) at the event, unless the venue specifically prohibits sales. It’s up to you to contact in a timely way my publisher, Chelsea Green (best to e-mail Michael Weaver at [mweaver@chelseagreen.com](mailto:mweaver@chelseagreen.com)). To keep shipping expenses down, this should be done at least 30 days in advance of the event. You’re welcome to use a local bookseller who also sells other books on the topic. Please note that I cannot carry books to the event in my luggage.

**Op-Eds** – Many groups want me to write an op-ed for the local paper before the event, and this almost always pays off in attendance. But a good op-ed – researching, writing, communicating with the paper, revising – takes half a day of my time, so this would cost an additional \$1,000. You are welcome to lightly edit and submit one of my existing blog pieces without charge.

**Workshops** – Generally, workshops require more pre-event communication than speaking events—usually two or three one-hour conversations. I have separate descriptions of each workshop that layout what the preparations should look like.

**Filming** – I’m happy to have you film or record a speaking event and post it online, provided that you don’t sell it for money. *Filming or recording a workshop, however, is strictly prohibited without special permission.*

## **NEXT STEPS: BOOKING & PAYMENT**

**Booking Procedures** – To move ahead, please let me know that these terms are acceptable and let me know the dates, topics, talk lengths, audience sizes, and any other relevant details. E-mail communication is usually fastest ([shuman@igc.org](mailto:shuman@igc.org)). I’ll then send you a contract for signature (usually just an exchange of e-mails suffices).

**Payment for Speaking** – If possible, please have a check covering my honorarium and speaking days ready on the day of the event. For remaining expenses, you should expect an invoice from me within 30 days after the talk, and payment is expected within 15 days after receipt of the invoice.

**Payment for Workshops** – Half the anticipated total fee (for both the workshop and speaking days) must be paid at least 30 days in advance of the event. Per above, I would like the other half of the fees to be paid the day of the event, and expenses to be paid upon my invoicing.

**Tax Issues** – I’ve discovered that a few states (like North Carolina and New Mexico) and some countries (like Canada) impose crazy local and state taxes on nonresident independent contractors. If your state or country is one of these, the gross pay should be increased so that the net equals the terms laid out above. *In other words, your check to me must equal the honorarium level we agreed to. Foreign payments should be in U.S. dollars.*

## **UNLIKELY SCENARIOS**

Please rest assured that all of the scenarios below are exceedingly rare (each occurs maybe once every couple of years). But just in case they happen, here’s how we should handle them:

**Cancellation** – Stuff happens: illness, a sick kid, a death in the family, tornadoes.... Either of us can cancel an event within 45 days without penalty. If one of us cancels after 45 days, we agree to make best efforts to rearrange ASAP. If rearrangement is impossible, the canceller agrees to pay the cancellee another \$1,000 to cover for the hassle of finding a substitute speaker or speaking event. Additionally, if cancellation occurs within 45 days of the event and a nonrefundable plane ticket is purchased, the canceller is responsible for paying that as well.

**Getting Stuck Before** – If my plane is canceled (perhaps because of mechanical difficulties, a weather event, or whatever) and I wind up arriving late, you’ll make best

efforts to move speakers around so that we can still fulfill this contract. I pledge to schedule flights to arrive well in advance of the event, so that most Plan B's will still work. (If I plan to arrive too far in advance, though, it may mean unnecessary expenses for hotel and travel days, so there's a reasonable balance here.) And I also pledge to call you immediately, if I know a problem has arisen.

**Getting Stuck After** – If my plane is canceled and I wind up needing to stay another day, we agree to split, 50/50, additional expenses incurred (e.g., another night of hotel, another meal).