



Mystic Country

Eastern Connecticut Regional Tourism District
Board of Directors Meeting
06/10/2021
Virtual – Zoom

Attendees: Ann Lojzim, Jill St. Clair Fritzsche, Gina Kunst, Todd Babbitt, Laura McCabe, Carol Christianson, Heather Harris, Bruce MacDonald, Angela Adams, Charlie Tracy, Delpha Very, Chris Regan, Tyra Penn-Gesek, Tracey Hanson, Cathay Barnard, Jim Bellano, Thomas Borner, Fran Kefalas, Stephen Gencarella, Laurie Masciandaro, Ryan Snide

Other Attendees: Courtney Assad, Tony Sheridan, Bruce Flax, Dave Quinn, Rose Bove, Christine Castonguay.

1. Call to Order 9:02AM
2. Approval of Minutes 03-11-2021 Meeting

Tom Borner moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Bruce MacDonald, the vote was taken 18-0-1, Cathy Barnard abstained.

3. Board Chair Report

Jim provided an update on the activities of the past year and the work of the Executive Committee on the state contract. Jim asked the group about in person meetings and stated a poll would be sent around to gauge the board's interest. Some board members discussed the ease of the virtual meetings to attend from being spread across the region, but agreed an annual meeting in person would be ideal. Bruce MacDonald asked about the possibility of hybrid meetings. Jim discussed making a push for diversity on the board.

4. Treasurer Report
 - a. Financial Reports

Jill presented on the financial standing of the District and plans to close out the budget with at the end of this month. She then presented the balance sheet and profit and loss.

Tom Borner moved to approve the financial reports, seconded by Tyra Penn-Gesek, all in favor, motion approved.

b. FY22 Budget

Jill presented the draft budget for FY22 created by the finance committee. Jill read through the major revisions proposed.

Delpha Very moved to approve the budget, seconded by Charlie Tracy, all in favor, motion approved.

5. Elections

a. Officers

Todd reviewed the process.

The nominating committee put forward Jim Bellano as Chair. Todd opened up for nominations from the floor. There being none, Tyra moved to close nominations for the position of Chair, seconded by Tom Borner, all in favor, motion approved.

The nominating committee put forward Tracey Hanson as the candidate for Vice Chair. Todd opened up the call for nominations. There being none, Charlie Tracy moved to close, seconded by Bruce, all in favor, motion approved.

The nominating committee put forward Jill St. Clair as the candidate for Treasurer. Todd opened up the call for nominations. There being none, Tom Borner moved to close, seconded by Charlie Tracy, all in favor, motion approved.

The nominating committee put forward Bruce MacDonald as the candidate for Secretary. Todd opened up the call for nominations. There being none, Charlie Tracy moved to close, seconded by Tyra Penn-Gesek, all in favor, motion approved.

b. Industry Members

Jill moved to appoint Bruce Flax as an industry member, seconded by Angela Adams, all in favor, motion approved. Chris Regan abstained.

6. Committee Chair Reports

a. Finance - no further report, in search of members.

- b. Marketing - Chris Regan discussed the efforts of the committee and thanked them for their hard work. Chris asked Dave Quinn to provide an overview of the Marketing campaign. Dave reviewed the campaign analytics for the paid media buy that began in March. They have produced significant content for the Mystic Country portion of the state website through articles and have been working on organic social since October. Dave encouraged the board to submit content for them to use. They have photographers currently building additional content.
- c. Bylaws - Tracey Hanson presented the proposed bylaws amendment.

6.1.4 Voting. Executive Committee members shall recuse themselves on items that are brought before the Executive Committee for a vote that are referred by a committee of which they are a member, including Chairs.

Bruce moved to approve the amendment, seconded by Tom Borner, all in favor, motion approved. The bylaws committee is in need of a co-chair as Tracey is also the Vice Chair.

The board discussed the legislation in the pipeline to allow 2 or more towns to appoint a single representative to the board.

- d. Nominating - Todd discussed needing at least one additional member for the committee to replace Bob.
- e. Legislative Advocacy - Cathy Barnard is the new chair and will be getting up to speed.

7. Administrator Report

Jim announced that the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT was selected as the Administrative Partner for FY22-23 by the Executive Committee. Courtney Assad spoke about the close of FY20 and FY21 final payment that was received at the end of April. They have also been supporting the Marketing Committee for their efforts.

8. Media Agency Report

Dave provided a report under the Marketing committee. Jim asked for further description of the channels they are advertising on. There are a number of strategies used, paid social, internet radio, OTT, programmatic, etc. Dave offered to do a presentation to the board on how all the channels operate.



9. Connecticut Office of Tourism Update

Rose Bove provided an update from the state on the Welcome Centers that are all now open. The state will also be hosting CT Open House Day on June 12th. Their marketing campaign has launched and been very well received to date. The kids free to CT museums program is also underway and will run July 1 through Labor Day. They are currently doing regional photo and video shoots for the summer and fall that will be shared with the District. The Big E is moving forward but an official announcement has not yet been made. They will be looking for volunteers and materials. They have been working with a lot of PR opportunities for the eastern district. Fox News is also running their CT bucket list campaign this summer again.

10. Other Business

11. Adjournment

Bruce MacDonald moved to adjourn, seconded by Ann Lojzim, all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 10:00AM.