



Mystic Country

**Eastern Regional Tourism District (ERTD)  
Executive Committee**

MEETING Minutes

Regular Meeting

Thursday, October 7, 2021 - 9:00AM

Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89348754065?pwd=cDV1M2J5S2ZNZ2hkNWJKa3RSbXpTZz09>

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Meeting ID: 893 4875 4065

Passcode: 836268

**Minutes**

1. Tracey Hanson calls a meeting to order.
2. Approval of minutes from 9/2 meeting Jill motion, Cathy second. I's have it.
3. Treasurer's report – did not meet as a finance committee. Outstanding invoice with Quinn & Hary – motion to address. From the tourism marketing conferences. 11462.28 in coffers. Requesting for motion – Tracey first, Cathy second. Reimburse on the invoice. I's have it.
4. Approval of the FY22 marketing plan. David Quinn did an overview on the FY22 marketing plan that was submitted to the board, prior to the meeting. He explained the various points mentioned in the document. Tracey's feedback was positive – it was clear. Jill stated giving marketing agency flexibility with language and COVID restrictions. Tony asked Christine to weigh in on the marketing plan. Christine asked about the status of Mayor Passero's concerns with the Mystic Country regional name for ERTD. Christine suggested it is a regional discussion and to see what kind of progression is happening with the regional name. Tony shared: he and Jim briefly discussed the Mystic Country brand name. The regional brand name Mystic Country has been well marketed. There are other opportunities to brand the region where it is

more inclusive of all 41 towns in the district. Jill: discussion is 15 years old, we don't want to confuse the consumer. Does the shoreline identify with the Mystic brand? Next was a motion to approve the marketing plan. Tracey – motion to approve? Jill motioned, Cathy second. I's have it.

5. Approval of the FY22 fundraising plan. Only proposed changes are the dates. Jill asked about the corporate cultural heritage sponsorships. Small entities are really strapped for cash – funding opportunities where they don't have to do a buy-in for the coalition of arts. Are we going to act on this? Can we change this out? That was the discussion last year. Tony: intent was to leave it in. Jill is correct – one of the concerns is the branding of Mystic Country. The small venues really need help and must remain flexible. Tony's recommendation is to leave it in the report and leave the details up for decision. Jill – concerned if it is a “pay to play” system. Jill additional question about corporate sponsorships: is there competition for the same dollars? I.E. Are we all going after EB, for example? Example, each bank has a foundation of their own and wants to contribute via their own internal committees. Offered a letter of support for smaller organizations on behalf of the ERTD. Jill – are we competing with the people we are trying to help. Tony answered to be supportive and a promoter for the smaller venues. Next is the motion to approve: Tracey made a motion to approve, Cathy Barnard seconded. No further discussion. All were in favor. Plan approved.
6. Regional marketing partnership program – Rachel stated it is the time of year to begin the RMPP protocol. Tentative budget is \$50k for FY22. Marketing committee needs to make more decisions. Next marketing meeting is 10/22/21. We do not have the funding in hand right now, so being behind might be an advantage. Tony: please notify your local communities, art centers, etc. for a broad range of partners. Pass the word on to as many people as possible. Jill – the idea is the collaboration.
7. Committee Chair updates
  - a. Finance committee no report as they did not meet.
  - b. Marketing committee – Jill to Dave: what to do in the winter in Eastern CT. Holiday travel and what to do. Christine: the state is doing a more robust winter campaign this year. Pass along and share any events and happenings in our region to Gene and Rose along with the media to add to that. Inventory is

low for winter regarding assets. Anything that can be provided will be showcased. The ERTD Newsletter is going out at the end of day today and it has the winter tourism campaign information.

- i. Dave Quinn – winter photography they are happy to share including fireside dining and igloos. Captured fall imagery the last few weeks and are in The Last Green Valley on October 18, 2021 – a Craig Orsini group. Dave gave a list of all the different places in this regional area that they captured video and photography.
  - ii. Update on the workshops: 20 organizations 19/21. Intentionally interactive with Q&A – individual challenges. Evaluation forms were taken and the results were positive. By being in Northeast, CT, the area was reignited with inspiration. Overall, the feedback was positive.
  - iii. September programmatic marketing report update. Various statistics were reported by Dave Quinn. Reminder on Miss America competition in December. Recap on the tech savvy contestants who were active on social media while on their promotional tour in Eastern CT.
  - iv. Christine described the vision behind COT's marketing campaign to involve more experience rather than scenic and landscape. Dave then described what Q&H vision is that they are both on the same page. Asked for feedback and suggestions. Sinead will be following up with Christine on the content that was discussed.
- c. Bylaws committee – no changes
  - d. Nominating committee – no update
  - e. Legislative advocacy – no update
  - f. Administrator report
    - i. Focused on the funding for FY22 money; waiting for the audit to be finished. Fundraising plan and marketing plan approval helps tremendously.

- ii. FY21 is due on October 30- 6 recipients who received money, have been contacted. Final date to spend the money.

g. COT Update

- i. Full Color Connecticut campaign update from Christine. She described the positive feedback, reacting to the creative, and participating in the paint chip artwork.
  - ii. Summer campaign – say yes! CT Summer at the Museum. Focused effort on all this information is on the portal; all decks on this portal for resources. The portal has a search tool to see where the tourism partner business has been supported by the COT. The benefit of pulling reports is to see how much ‘love’ the particular area receives in campaign efforts.
  - iii. Dave asked, \$23.5 million budget, Christine will follow up with Rachel on the information.
- h. Tony and Rachel attending the Black Heritage Trail Unveiling Ceremony. Pictures will be taken.
- i. Adjournment.