

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the
Western Connecticut Tourism District
Wednesday, November 17, 10 am, via Zoom**

Directors present were: Gregg Dancho, chair; Barbara Breor, Laura Budd, Joe Buhler, Bob Burns, Jeffrey Dunn, Annette Einhorn, Michelle Falcone, George Frantzis, Lorenzo Gaudio, Tim Good, Lara Green-Kazlauskas, Rachel Kelly, Jeff Luff, Craig Nelson, Dawn Nielsen, Ben Paletsky, Christal Preszler, Tom Roman, Carmen Romeo, Nancy Saggese, Jen Wastrom, and Rowena White. Others present included: from Storytellers, Chris Smith and Joe Giaccone; from the Waterbury Regional Chamber, Terry Macary and Lynn Ward; guests Andrew Baklik and Mary Alice Limperopulos.

Welcome

Mr. Dancho called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

Election of Temporary Chair

Mr. Dancho reviewed the process for the annual meeting. Ms. Einhorn nominated Dawn Nielsen as temporary chair, seconded by Mr. Romeo; the motion carried.

Election of Officers 2022

Ms. Nielsen read the slate of officers as presented by the Nominating Committee: Chair: Gregg Dancho, Stratford; Vice Chair: Jeff Dunn, Thomaston; 2nd Vice Chair: Lorenzo Gaudio, Roxbury; Secretary: Michelle Falcone, Easton; Treasurer: Carmen Romeo, Wolcott; Assistant Treasurer, Rachel Kelly, Torrington; Past Chair: Craig Nelson, Warren; At Large: Ben Paletsky, Morris; Jen Wastrom, Redding; Christal Preszler, Newtown and Bob Burns, Waterbury with one open seat. Ms. Nielsen asked for nominations from the floor; no nominations were given from the floor. Mr. Romeo moved to accept the slate of officers as presented; Ms. Kelly seconded. The motion carried.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned to the Regular Meeting at 10:06 am.

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the
Western Connecticut Tourism District
Wednesday, November 17, 10:06 am, via Zoom**

The Directors remained present for the Regular Meeting.

Welcome

Mr. Dancho called the meeting to order at 10:06 am. He thanked the marketing committee and the executive committee for their hard work over the previous year.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Kelly moved to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2021, meeting as presented; Ms. Falcone seconded. The motion carried.

Additions to the Agenda/Communications/New Business

Mr. Dancho added a discussion of in-person meetings to the agenda. There were no other communications or new business brought to the Board.

Financial Report

Ms. Macary reviewed the P&L, noting that it showed only expenses at this time, as the District is awaiting the deposit of the annual state funds. Mr. Frantzis moved to accept the financial report as presented; Ms. Kelly seconded. The motion carried.

At-Large Board Members

Mr. Dancho reviewed the proposed At-Large Members as presented by the Nominating Committee. He explained the by-laws allow for up to 20 At-Large members, five from each of the previous tourism districts. He said the committee focused on Fairfield County for this meeting and would be seeking nominations for the other areas for future meetings. The proposed members were: Kathy Maher, Barnum Museum; Dan Onofrio, Bridgeport Regional Business Council; David Green, Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County; Carey Mack Weber, Fairfield University Art Museum; and Jacob Conover, Silverman's Farm. Ms. Falcone moved to accept the proposed members; Ms. Einhorn seconded. The motion carried.

Tools and Tips for Outreach

Ms. Falcone shared several document templates for Board members use in their outreach to their constituent venues and tourist locations. She said that part of the challenge for Board members is to educate their cities and towns on how the District can support their businesses and venues. She asked Board members to do some personal outreach either via email or letter to those venues and explain the free service and marketing the District and the state offer.

State Marketing Update

Ms. Bove gave an update on state of Connecticut marketing efforts. She said the fall Full Color Connecticut campaign is continuing, while the state prepares for winter marketing. The CTVisit.com website will switch over to winter November 26, and she asked for any updates or information for the site to be updated for winter as well. She said the COT will be launching its first ever full winter marketing campaign as well. She said the state had appointed a new Director of Tourism, Noelle Stevenson, who started work that Monday. She also reported that the state has put out a Request for Quote for both creative and media buying contracts. She said the contracts with Adams and Knight and MediaStorm were each expiring at the end of the calendar year.

Marketing Committee/Storytellers

Ms. Smith reported Facebook followers increased from 12,420 to 15,341 since the July 2021 meeting. Instagram also grew from 537 to 767 followers. She shared the positive feedback from Facebook followers and those attractions and venues that had been featured. She also shared the locations of the billboard campaign, including in Westchester County, near Citi Field, in western

Massachusetts and in Waterbury and Bridgeport. She reviewed which articles on CTVisit.com were going to be reviewed for winter updates and noted the upcoming potential “National Days” to be recognized in upcoming social media posts. She asked for any suggestions or recommendations for topics.

Meeting Location Discussion

Mr. Dancho briefly noted that there could be the potential for in-person meetings in 2022. He asked Board members to consider if they would be able to attend an in-person meeting, or if they preferred a hybrid meeting. Several Board members said they would prefer a hybrid meeting. He asked members to think about options, and that a decision would be made in the future.

Suggestions for the Good of the Order/Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Macary
Administrative Partner

Directors Present:

Rowena White -- Bridgeport
Dawn Nielsen -- Bristol
Michelle Falcone -- Easton
Barbara Breor -- Goshen
Tim Good – Kent
Tom Roman -- Litchfield
George Frantzis -- Middlebury
Ben Paletsky -- Morris
Laura Budd -- New Canaan
Nancy Saggese – New Milford
Christal Preszler – Newtown
Jeff Luff -- Oxford
Jen Wastrom -- Redding
Lorenzo Gaudio- Roxbury
Annette Einhorn – Stamford
Gregg Dancho – Stratford
Jeffrey Dunn -- Thomaston
Rachel Kelly -- Torrington
Craig Nelson -- Warren
Bob Burns – Waterbury
Joe Bulher – Wilton
Lara Green-Kazlauskas -- Winsted
Carmen Romeo -- Wolcott