

Tourism Council
Wednesday, December 20, 2023
2:00 PM
Powder Ridge Mountain Park & Resort
and
Virtual TEAMS

Present: Jeff Brown, Charles Bunnell, Elizabeth Craig, Becky Critchley, Gregg Dancho, Don Devivo, Paul Mayer, Larry McHugh, Michael Price, Robin Rifkin and Stephen Tagliatela

TEAMS: Karen Bachofner, Rebekah Beaulieu, Jason Guyot, Ginny Kozlowski, Robert Kret, and Dexter Singleton

Absent: Amanda Arling, Peter Armstrong, Irene Dixon, Scott Dolch, Matt Fleury, Jeff Hamilton, Scott Laurence, Carol Lugar, and Tony Sheridan

Staff: Anthony Anthony, Chief Marketing Officer, Ellen Woolf, Commissioner Alexandra Daum, Rob Damroth, Jennifer Haag, Alfred Strong

Other: Mason Trumble, DEEP

Guest: Jill Knight & Felicia Lindau, Adams & Knight; Sue Henrique, Gisele Musumano, Candy Iannucci-Guay, Laura Soll and Bob Murdock, CTC SB; Alisa Sisic, Julie Nash, Rachel Lenda, and Sean Nadeau

1. Call to Order – Anthony Anthony

Anthony called the meeting to order at 2:10pm. A role call was made, and all guests announced.

II. Approval of May 10, 2023, Minutes – Anthony Anthony

On a motion by Gregg Dancho and seconded by Michael Price, the Tourism Council approved the May 10, 2023, meeting minutes as circulated. (Y-16, N-0)

III. Approval of September 26, 2023, Minutes – Anthony Anthony

On a motion by Larry McHugh and seconded by Stephen Tagliatela, the Tourism Council approved the September 26, 2023, meeting minutes as circulated. (Y-16, N-0)

IV. Update from the State – Alexandra Daum

- Alexandra expressed gratitude to the council members for their enthusiasm and reiterated the seriousness of the role they play in supporting the Tourism Office and DECD.
- She also updated the council on the search for the new Tourism Director.

Anthony jumped in to announce that the Tourism Director has been chosen and introduced Rachel Lenda, the administrator of the Eastern Regional Tourism District was offered the job and accepted it. Rachel introduced herself and shared her enthusiasm for joining the tourism team

V. Deep – Deputy Commissioner Mason Trumble

- Mason presented a PowerPoint presentation which included:
 - The launch of a new website that augments the CTvisit website and includes businesses and tourism destinations in and around CT's state parks.
 - A sneak peak of a new initiative called partnerships in parks is launching an RFI to ask businesses, nonprofits, individuals what type of services they would like to see offered in CT state parks.
 - The initiative has four goals. Revenue generation, equitable access to the outdoors, elevate and enhance the outdoor recreation experience and lastly to elevate Tourist zones in CT.
 - The RFI will be launched in January and remain open through April for comments and feedback.

A brief discussion followed.

VI. Overview of Strategic Marketing Plan – Chief Marketing Officer Anthony Anthony

- Anthony shared the entire statewide marketing plan prior to the meeting for the Council to review.
- A two-page document was handed out at the meeting with the high-level objectives, strategies and goals of the marketing plan.
- The Budget is smaller, so the plan is focusing on what makes the biggest impact.
 - Paid advertising and social media while elevating public relations.
 - Impactful spending focusing more on ROI in our drive markets as well as fly markets.
 - Make CT stand out for its rich culinary arts and culture, great sports teams, casinos and shoreline.
 - CTvisit has been working as our content hub and that will drive everything as we continue to build our visitor experience.
 - Lastly working very closely with our partners at the Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau to make sure we are getting our global sales, convention sales and sports sales in line with our CT visitor experience.

Q & A followed by a unanimous vote by the Council to accept the new Strategic Marketing Plan.

V. Adjournment

A motion was made and so moved to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting of the Tourism Council is TBD.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Haag
Connecticut Office of Tourism, DECD