

Tourism Council
Wednesday, June 12, 2024
2:00 PM
Hartford Yard Goats
and
Virtual TEAMS
Draft

Present & Teams: Amanda Arling, Karen Bachofner, Jeff Brown, Charles Bunnell, Elizabeth Craig, Becky Critchley, Gregg Dancho, Scott Dolch, Ginny Kozlowski, Robert Kret, Paul Mayer, Larry McHugh, Robin Rifkin and Dexter Singleton

Absent: Amanda Arling, Peter Armstrong, Rebekah Beaulieu, Don Devivo, Irene Dixon, Matt Fleury, Jason Guyot, Jeff Hamilton, Scott Laurence, Carol Lugar, Michael Price, Tony Sheridan, and Stephen Tagliatela

Staff: Anthony Anthony, Rachel Lenda, Ellen Woolf, and Rob Damroth

Other: Karen Kitsis, DOT

Guest: Jill Adams, Michelle Bonner, Felicia Lindau; Adams & Knight; Bob Murdock, Taia Lionetti, Gisele Musumano from Connecticut Conventions & Sports Bureau

1. Call to Order – Rachel Lenda

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

II. Approval of March 13, 2024 Minutes – Rachel Lenda

The minutes were not entered into the record. They will be entered at the next Council meeting.

III. Update from State- Anthony Anthony

- COT is working with DOT on new highway signs to come into Connecticut with new messaging.
- Just finished a legislative session and the extra \$1,000,000 the governor proposed for the tourism budget did not make it through the legislature.
- They swept all ARPA funding
- We are working with what we have for the upcoming legislative session
- Working on how to make our dollars go farther through agency partnerships as well as other places as we begin to look at what we're going to in the next legislative session.

- We are starting to see the impact of a reduced budget CT. Visit las year got 9.4 million unique hits unfortunately year to date we are down 30% compared to last year.

IV. Update from Tourism Director – Rachel Lenda

- Rachel presented a PowerPoint on what's new
- Ct is now the Pizza capital of the US
- The Oyster initiative we did with the Department of Agriculture and the oyster map has received an unprecedented half a billion impressions
- Our PR has improved and we're up over 100% year to date already
- Tourism created 124,000 jobs and state and local taxes generated 1.2 billion

A brief discussion followed.

V. Adjournment

A motion was made and so moved to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting of the Tourism Council is scheduled for Wednesday, June 12th location TBD.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Haag
Connecticut Office of Tourism, DECD