

**Tourism Council
Wednesday, September
11, 2024
2:00 PM
Mashantucket
Pequot Museum &
Research Center
and
Virtual Teams**

Present & Teams: Karen Bachofner, Jeff Brown, Becky Critchley, Gregg Dancho, Irene Dixon, Koray Gurz, Jason Guyot, Ginny Kozlowski, Paul Mayer, Larry McHugh, Michael Price and Robin Rifkin

Absent: Amanda Arling, Peter Armstrong, Rebekah Beaulieu, Charles Bunnell, Elizabeth Craig, Don Devivo, Scott Dolch, Matt Fleury, Jeff Hamilton, Robert Kret, Scott Laurence, Carol Lugar, Dexter Singleton, Tony Sheridan, and Stephen Tagliatela

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

Guest: Felicia Lindau; Adams & Knight; Bob Murdock, Taia Lionetti, Gisele Musumano from Connecticut Conventions & Sports Bureau; Sean Nadeau, Connecticut Science Center

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, and June 12, 2024, Tourism Council Minutes – Rachel Lenda

On a motion by Ginny Koslowski and seconded by Koray Gurz, the Tourism Council approved the March 13, 2024 and June 12, 2024, meeting minutes as circulated. (Y-12, N-0).

III. Update from State- Anthony Anthony

- No one from DEEP or DOT was in attendance to give an update
- Big changes at the Connecticut building at the Big E. new branding and design setup
- More “CT Home Grown” products
- Deep will be tabling at the Big E for the first time
- The Big E runs from September 13th through September 29th
- The Budget is a little smaller for FY25 and we are using up the last of the Federal funds
- The State funds are flat

- We need to keep the momentum going and appreciate the support of the Council
- The new State highway signs that were put up at the borders of Connecticut earned huge media impressions

Update from Tourism Director – Rachel Lenda

- We will be presenting the Strategic Plan at the December meeting
- Excellent Collaboration with DAS on the new construction of CT building at the Big
- Created a whole new space for brochures
- A handout was given out the marketing plan for fall & winter digital
- We are rotating out electronic videos on billboards throughout the state emulating the vibrancy of our state
- The fall spend from 2023 was 1.2 million, Fall spend for 2024 much less
- CT residents make up 42% of our tourism market
- Arrivalist tells us most tourists are traveling to Foxwoods, Mystic, Niantic, New London and New Haven
- We will be doing a brand wave study
- Next year we are doing a ROI study with info coming out April to June
- In an effort to get more out of the districts we have their buy in, and they will showcase small and & large events & businesses in their regions

A brief discussion followed.

IV. Adjournment

A motion was made and so moved to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting of the Tourism Council is scheduled for Wednesday, December 11th at 2pm, location TBD.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Haag
Connecticut Office of Tourism, DECD

