

**Tourism Council**  
**Thursday**  
**November 20, 2025**  
**2:00 PM**  
**Virtual TEAMS**

**draft**

**Present:** Amanda Arling, Karen Bachofner, Jeff Brown, Charles Bunnell, Elizabeth Craig, Sarah Bishop DellaVentura, Don Devivo, Scott Dolch, Jennifer Dum, Koray Gurz, Fran Kefalas, Ginny Kozlowski, Paul Mayer, Larry McHugh and Stephen Tagliatela

**Absent:** Becky Critchley, Gregg Dancho, Irene Dixon, Matt Fleury, Jason Guyot, Jeff Hamilton, Robert Kret, Scott Laurence, Carol Lugar, Michael Price, Robin Rifkin, Tony Sheridan and Dexter Singleton

**Staff:** Anthony Anthony, Rachel Lenda, DECD.  
Jeff Shaw, DEEP, Brie Wolf, DECD, Ellen Woolf, DECD

**Guests:** Lisa Brandes, Sean Nadeau, Connecticut Science Center; Sue Henrique, Candy Iannucci-Guay, Robert Murdock, CTCSB

**1. Call to Order / Roll Call – Rachel Lenda**

Rachel called the meeting to order at 2:06 pm. A role call was made, and all guests announced.

**II. Approval of September 10, 2025, Tourism Council Minutes – Rachel Lenda**

On a motion by Jeff Brown and seconded by Paul Mayer, the Tourism Council approved the October 10, 2025, meeting minutes as circulated. (Y-14, N- 0 A- 3).

**III. Updates from -DECD**

- New council members, Fran Kapalis, Last Green Valley; Jennifer Duns, Niantic Children’s Museum were introduced.
- Ending the year with more state pride than ever, will continue social media campaigns.
- Connecticut Content Creator Collaborative is in its pilot stage of development
- It’s a statewide collective of Connecticut based content creators with a goal for all these content creators

**IV. Updates from DEEP-Jeff Shaw**

- Looking to explore, evaluate, entertain new ideas to do more outdoor recreation experiences and amenities
- DEEP has a standing request for information through “partnership and parks initiative’ for new ideas from residents
- Jeff is available to speak to members or colleagues that would be interested in learning more

- DEEP released a draft RFP a few weeks back for a new paddle craft rentals in five state parks and the comment period has closed.
- A final RFP for bids and potentially new services coming next
- Parks team is working on a lot of new programming for 2026 with the America 250 themes.
- First day hikes will be announced and some other things related to CT parks.com shop

**V. Updates from Office of Statewide Marketing-Rachel Lenda**

- Rachel introduced the first of its kind C4 Content Creator Collaborative Consortium
- It's in the pilot stages and is comprised of a statewide collective of Connecticut based content creators
- The goal is for the creators to come together to help spotlight the state's local businesses, their experiences and community causes as well.
- This will drive real engagement and real impact because these are people who have dedicated audiences. The key here is to make it simple for partners and communities to tap into the storytelling power, because that's what matters most in how we've been able to elevate Connecticut's branding and messaging over the last couple of years.
- Con Con 26.1 is coming up on January 13<sup>th</sup> at the New Britain Museum of Art
- This event will have Connecticut's top influencers and set up a mini trade show where constituents and business owners can talk to the content creators, figure out who they are, who they market to, how many followers they have etc.
- There will be a panel of content creators who will give an overview of how their business works, what their business model looks like and how you as a business owner can tap into these resources and bring about pricing transparency.

A brief discussion followed with Q & A.

**VI. 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 Statewide Marketing & Tourism

