

**Tourism Council
Virtual Teams Meeting
Tuesday, April 27, 2021
10:00am
DRAFT**

Present: Amanda Arling, Peter Armstrong, Karen Bachofner, Stephen Coan, Elizabeth Craig, Becky Critchley, Gregg Dancho, Don Devivo, Scott Dolch, Matt Fleury, Ginny Kozlowski, Robert Kret, Carol Lugar, Larry McHugh, Michael Price, Robin Rifkin, Thomas Sheridan and Tina Tison

Absent: Rebekah Beaulieu, Charles Bunnell, Irene Dixon, Jason Guyot, Jeff Hamilton, Scott Laurence, Dexter Singleton and Stephen Tagliatela

Staff: Kyle Abercrombie, Rose Bove, Christine Castonguay, Rob Damroth, Jennifer Haag, Jean Hebert, Maribel La Luz, Alfred Strong, Ellen Wolf

Other: Carlo Leone, DOT

Guests: Jill Adams, Adams & Knight; Jerry Henry & Ashley Garoutte, H2R

I. Call to Order – Interim Chair Steve Coan

Interim Chair Steve Coan called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and led the roll call.

II. Approval of March 30, 2021 Minutes – Steve Coan, Interim Chair

On a motion by Larry McHugh and seconded by Tina Tison, the Tourism Council approved the March 30, 2021 meeting minutes as circulated. (Y-18, N-0)

III. DECD Commissioner David Lehman Remarks

- Governor announced his proposal for the money coming into the state
- Total initiative 45 million will go through discussion with legislator
- 20 million focused on brand and marketing as well as economic development and travel tourism and hospitality business hit hardest
- Looking at dispersing these funds through a grant program end of this year or beginning of next year
- Commissioner also shared the link to the Governor's entire presentation on the State's website

A question and answer followed.

IV. *Say Yes Campaign – Christine Castonguay, Interim Director*

- *Say Yes* Summer campaign kicking off
- Receiving great feedback from the Tourism Council
- Seasonal campaign theme carries from May to August
- Many partners echoed they will be incorporating the *Say Yes* in their campaigns
- Stressing overnights, getting longer visitations
- A lot of excitement for Tourism a new energy

V. *Brand Awareness Study – Jerry Henry & Ashley Garoutte, H2R Research*

- H2R has been working on Ct Brand awareness since 2014
- Ashley presented a Powerpoint on the Market Research Study of 2020
- The presentation is available on the tourism portal CTvisit.com/partner

A discussion followed.

VI. *National Tourism Week – Christine Castonguay, Interim Director*

- *National Tourism Week* starts Monday May 3rd
- Posting ever day on our social channels
- Preparing a tool kit to share with our partners
- Each day will be highlighting different sectors that make up tourism
- Working with agricultural, state parks, beaches, lodging association, restaurant association and regions
- Share the same hashtags with the same message for a cohesive messaging
- Virtual outreach partner meetings May 4th and 5th
- Will be a hybrid of what we have done in past
- Three sessions scheduled, lodging, attractions and restaurant and beverage
- Will be sharing all info that comes out from these sessions

Question and answer session followed.

VI. *Summary*

- Looking for how the Tourism Council can tap into the knowledge and resources of its members to help shape the strategic marketing efforts for the State moving forward as well as how best to serve as an appointed member of this Council
- Kyle Abercrombie will share bills going through the legislator affecting Tourism in an upcoming Council meeting

- The next meeting will be focused on the development of the marketing plan
- Key piece to strategic marketing plan for FY22 depending on funding

VII. Adjournment

A motion was made and so moved to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting of the Tourism Council will be held virtually on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Haag, Administrative Assistant

Connecticut Office of Tourism, DECD