



**Eastern Regional Tourism District (ERTD)
Executive Committee**

Regular Meeting

April 3, 2025 - 9:00AM

Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89348754065?pwd=cDV1M2J5S2ZNZ2hkNWJKa3RSbXpTZz09>

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Meeting ID: 893 4875 4065

Passcode: 836268

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Attendees: Jill St. Clair, Stephen Gencarella, Bruce Flax, Todd Babbitt

Guests: Andrea Manning, Tony Sheridan, Jill Larsen, David Quinn, Jillian Lozier, Emma Briody

1. Call to Order
 - a. Jill St. Clair called the meeting to order at 9:06am
2. Approval of Minutes - 03/06/2025
 - a. Stephen Gencarella made a motion to approve with noted edit, seconded by Bruce Flax. All in favor the motion passed.
3. Board Chair Report
 - a. Jill St. Clair passed on notes from Chris, including the need for tourism advocacy, and that all of our voices are needed to move the needle. She encouraged the committee to reach out to legislators, first selectmen and mayors, to inform them of what is important for the industry. She mentioned HB7176, which would reallocate a portion of 1% of the meals tax to fund arts, culture, and tourism. This would enable the industry to help grow assets for the state by capturing more revenue. She emphasized the importance of reaching out to legislators and local representatives to make sure our voices are heard.
4. Treasurer Report
 - a. P&L
 - i. Stephen Gencarella made a motion to approve the P&L as presented, seconded by Todd Babbitt. All in favor the motion passed.
 - b. Balance Sheet
 - i. Stephen Gencarella made a motion to approve the Balance Sheet as presented, seconded by Todd Babbitt. All in favor the motion passed.
5. Committee Chair Updates
 - a. Finance

- i. RFP Recommendation - Brochure Printing
 - 1. Stephen Gencarella made the motion to select Phoenix Press as the brochure printer for 2025, seconded by Todd Babbitt. All in favor, the motion passed
 - ii. RFP Recommendation - Brochure Distribution
 - 1. Todd Babbitt made the motion to select CTM Media as the brochure distributor for the 2025 season, seconded by Stephen Gencarella. All in favor, the motion passed
 - iii. 2025-2026 Budget
 - 1. Bruce Flax presented the proposed budget noting changes and reallocations that were made based on the actual spend from previous year.
 - 2. Stephen Gencarella made a motion to approve the draft of the FY 2025-2026 budget as presented, seconded by Todd Babbitt. All in favor, the motion passed
- b. Marketing
 - i. Jill St Clair updated the committee on the March marketing committee meeting. The committee had originally approved an update from the Mystic Pizza Brochure to a regional pizza trail, but so as to not compete with the state, has pivoted to a live music brochure.
- c. Bylaws
 - i. No report.
- d. Nominating
 - i. Todd Babbitt presented an update from the Nominating Committee. Todd discussed the production of a toolkit to inform municipalities about the value of participating in ERTD, and how involvement could benefit their community. He emphasized being as creative as possible to illustrate the importance of nominating a representative to serve on this board.
- e. Legislative Advocacy
 - i. [Legislative Advocacy Toolkit](#)
 - ii. Andrea Manning updated the committee on a new section of the toolkit featuring regular bill tracking updates and specific calls to action and bills to watch.
- f. Grants
 - i. Andrea Manning informed the committee that all grant checks have been distributed, and review of collateral is in progress as funded organizations move through their projects.
- 6. Connecticut Office of Tourism Update - Jill larsen presented updates from the office of Statewide Marketing and Tourism:
 - a. Office of Tourism's planning for America 250 is ongoing, but is not robust at this time as a result of funding. There will be a ctvisit.com landing page and special tags for America 250 events.
 - b. Pizza Trail voting is open, and participants can vote
 - c. Jill presented updates on ConnCon 25.2, at Foolproof Brewery in Bridgeport, in collaboration with the University of New Haven. The University of New Haven student-developed Ethnic Food trail, which was presented at the event.

- d. Coffee with Rachel in Pomfret focused on 'Social Media 101', with special guest Morgan Nyerick, creative director from Office of Statewide Marketing and Tourism. Participants have asked for a follow-up on this session, along the same lines.
 - e. Jill updated the committee on the ongoing registration for CT Open House Day, which is now up to 80 participants. registration is ongoing, and expected to increase in the coming weeks.
 - f. Updates and metrics from CTvisit.com will be distributed to the group following this meeting.
 - g. A discussion took place on the state's media spend for Spring and Summer 2025. At present there is no funding allocated to America250 within this budget. CT Humanities is administering a small amount of grant funding for America 250.
7. Quinn & Hary Update
- a. David Quinn introduced Jill Lozier and Emma Briody.
 - i. Jillian presents the updates on metrics from January to March.
 - 1. Digital advertising campaign highlights include
 - a. 1.7 mill impressions
 - b. 147k impressions on blog content
 - c. Increased instagram reach by 23.6%, gaining 543 new followers
 - d. delivered 1.1 million views on Facebook and drove 13K in link clicks to CTvisit.com.
 - 2. Top performing social content includes 3 reels and 2 facebook posts, highlighting blog content.
 - 3. Spring campaign spending plan for April, May, June and primary targeted audience
 - ii. David Quinn presents the creative, not yet approved, and requests by the COT weighing in on the copy.
 - 1. Discussion took place on the state's feedback, including the Office of Tourism in Marketing Committee discussions.
 - 2. Discussion was held on the locations of the businesses featured in ads, and locations in the ads, and how we are connecting people to the attractions
 - iii. Upcoming influencer visits in April featuring unique foodie finds @foodswithfinn, influencer visit in May - outdoor activities for couples
 - iv. Emma Briody presented an overview of the visual asset collateral and content, where it is stored in a google drive structured by sub-region, further broken down by towns and attraction or event
 - 1. A tentative list of locations for the spring asset expansion was presented
 - 2. Discussion about public access took place.
 - v. Upcoming social media calendar and topics were shared, along with links to recent blogs and the submission guidelines, and the calendar of events for coverage for the months of April and May.
8. Administrator Report
- a. Andrea presented last month and upcoming months efforts, which included expansion of the legislative advocacy toolkit, review of grantee's collateral for alignment with

CTvisit brand guidelines, brochure printing and distributing RFP and tabulation, and hosting of Coffee with Rachel at the Innovation center, among others.

- b. Tony alerted the committee to an effort to eliminate the aviation fuel tax, which would have serious implications on travel in our region, and across CT. He will distribute a letter of opposition to the group. He also informed the committee that the brochure rack at the Groton/New London airport has been updated and corrected with the current logo.

9. Other Business

- a. No other business.

10. Private Session Discussion

- a. Media Agency Contract - tabled.
- b. Administrative Contract - tabled.

11. Adjournment

- a. Stephen made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Todd Babbitt. All in favor, the meeting at 10:08am