



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

Regular Meeting

July 9, 2026 - 9:00AM

Zoom:

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

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Meeting ID: 893 4875 4065

Passcode: 836268

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Jill St. Clair, Chris Regan, Fran Kefalas, Patti George, Charlie Tracy, Jordan Lumpkins, Angela Adams, Kathleen Paterson

Guests: Megan Gllbert, Jillian Lozier

1. Call to Order
 - a. The meeting came to order at 9:01am.
2. Approval of Minutes - 6/4/2026
 - a. Patti George made a motion to approve the June 4, 2026 meeting minutes, seconded by Fran Kefalas. All in favor; the motion passed.
3. Board Chair Report
 - a. Chair Jill St. Clair announced committee chair appointments, including Shannon Fagan (Finance), Fran Kefalas (Marketing), Charlie Tracy (Bylaws), Angela Adams (Nominating), Patti George (Legislative Advocacy), and Kathleen Paterson (Grants).
 - b. The Executive Committee discussed holding an extended in-person Board meeting in September to begin strategic planning for the district and to begin planning for Discover New England.
4. Treasurer Report - Jill likely presenting
 - a. P&L
 - b. Balance Sheet
 - i. The Executive Committee reviewed the current Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet, noting they reflected preliminary year-end figures pending final closeout.
 - ii. Patti George made a motion to approve the financial reports, seconded by Fran Kefalas. All in favor; the motion passed.

5. Committee Chair Updates

a. Finance

- i. No report

b. Marketing - Jill / Fran may present

- i. The committee reviewed the draft one-page strategic marketing plan requested by the Office of Statewide Marketing & Tourism.
- ii. Members discussed expanding ERTD's digital presence through YouTube, including opportunities to repurpose existing video content while recognizing that more extensive programming would require additional planning and resources.
- iii. Jillian Lozier of Quinn & Hary noted that a phased approach to YouTube content could be explored in collaboration with the Marketing Committee.
- iv. Charlie Tracy made a motion to approve the strategic marketing plan for submission to the state, seconded by Fran Kefalas. All in favor; the motion passed.
- v. Fran Kefalas reported that the Marketing Committee will meet in the coming weeks to establish priorities and continue discussions on future marketing initiatives.

c. Bylaws

- i. Charlie Tracy reported that the committee will review current committee membership and resume work on outstanding bylaw questions, including representation of industry members and organizations.

d. Nominating -

- i. Angela Adams reported progress filling Board vacancies and obtaining municipal appointment letters. A current vacancy list will be shared with committee members to assist with recruitment recommendations.

e. Legislative Advocacy

- i. Patti George presented a draft legislative advocacy work plan focused on preparing for the 2027 legislative session. The strategy includes building supporting data, engaging tourism partners and municipalities, and developing materials to educate legislators on tourism's economic impact prior to the legislative session.

f. Grants -

- i. Fran Kefalas reported that final Regional Marketing Partnership grant reports are due July 31 and that the Grants Committee will meet in early August to review submissions.
- ii. Megan Gilbert shared an administrative update noting that financial reports have been received and are currently aligned with grant requirements, providing sufficient documentation to support the upcoming audit.

6. Connecticut Office of Statewide Marketing and Tourism Update

- a. No report
- 7. Quinn & Hary Update
 - a. Quinn & Hary reported continued growth in ERTD's digital marketing performance during June, including approximately 717 new Instagram followers, a 63% increase in Instagram content views, 1.4 million Facebook views, a 44% increase in Facebook profile visits, and 2.19 million paid campaign impressions. Blog promotion generated an additional 257,000 paid impressions.
 - b. Top-performing content included features on the Mansfield Flea Market, seasonal strawberry events, collaborative CTvisit posts, and Pride Month content created with an influencer partner. Upcoming content will feature Hop Culture, Celebrate New London, rail travel to New London, the River Taxi, regional wineries, the North Stonington Fair, and other summer attractions.
 - c. Members discussed opportunities to expand marketing partnerships with Cross Sound Ferry and rail services to better reach visitors arriving from New York and other markets. Additional discussion focused on future opportunities to utilize digital advertising and promotional materials to encourage visitors to explore destinations throughout Eastern Connecticut.
- 8. Administrator Report
 - a. Megan Gilbert presented the Administrator's report on behalf of Andrea Manning. Updates included completion of the June Annual Meeting, continued progress toward year-end financial closeout, preparation of FY26 audit materials, and ongoing administration of Regional Marketing Partnership grant reporting.
 - b. Final vendor payments were being processed, with July reconciliation and audit preparation underway. The FY27 Regional Marketing Partnership application had not yet been released by the state and would become the Administrator's highest priority upon availability. Grant narrative reports remain due July 31, after which the Grants Committee will convene to review final submissions as part of the annual audit process.
 - c. Upcoming outreach activities include Third Thursdays in Willimantic, the Mystic Outdoor Art Festival, and Celebrate New London, where ERTD visitor information will be distributed. The next Marketing Committee meeting was scheduled for July 17, and volunteers were requested for upcoming outreach events.
- 9. Other Business
 - a. Fran Kefalas shared updates on an upcoming WCVB Boston feature highlighting communities in the Quiet Corner and provided reminders regarding Walktober submissions.
 - b. Members discussed current tourism trends across the region, including concerns regarding visitation and spending patterns despite strong attendance at individual events.

- c. The committee discussed opportunities to strengthen promotion of live music, regional events, and tourism assets through coordinated marketing and future legislative advocacy efforts.
- 10. Adjournment
 - a. Fran Kefalas made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Angela Adams. All in favor; the meeting adjourned.