



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

Regular Meeting

September 3, 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:

Guests: Andrea Manning, Tony Sheridan, David Jensen, Jillian Lozier,

1. Call to Order
 - a. Jill St. Clair called the meeting to order at 9:02am
2. Approval of Minutes - 8/6/2026
 - a. Jordan Lumpkins made a motion to approve, seconded by Bruce Flax. All in favor the motion passed.
3. Board Chair Report
 - a. Chair St. Clair outlined priorities for the coming year, including board and committee development, sustainable and increased funding, and continued communication and collaboration with the State.
 - b. The Committee reviewed plans for a marketing visioning workshop at the upcoming Board meeting.
 - c. Shannon Fagan made a motion to extend the contract with the District's current administrative partner for an additional year, seconded by Bruce Flax. Motion carried.
 - d. Jill St. Clair raised the need to extend the administrative partner contract for an additional year -
 - i. Shannon Fagan motioned to extend the administrative partner contract with the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut for one year, seconded by Bruce Flax. All in favor the motion passed.
4. Treasurer Report
 - a. P&L
 - i. Bruce Flax made a motion to approve the Profit & Loss Statement, seconded by Angela Adams. Motion carried.

- b. Balance Sheet
 - i. Bruce Flax made a motion to approve the Balance Sheet, seconded by Kathleen Paterson. Motion carried.
 - c. Revised FY2027 Budget
 - i. The Committee reviewed the revised FY2027 budget, reflecting the increased marketing agency fee and a \$4,800 reallocation from brochure distribution. Bruce Flax made a motion to recommend approval of the revised FY2027 budget to the Board, seconded by Kathleen Paterson. Motion carried.
- 5. Committee Chair Updates
 - a. Finance
 - i. No further report
 - b. Marketing
 - i. Bruce Flax reported that the Committee has been reviewing marketing performance data with Quinn & Hary to better understand audience trends, campaign effectiveness, and opportunities to strengthen future marketing efforts.
 - c. Bylaws
 - i. No updates.
 - d. Nominating
 - i. Angela Adams provided an update on outreach to municipalities with vacant or expiring appointments. Several appointments and letters remain in progress, with Committee members assisting with outreach where appropriate.
 - ii. Jordan Lumpkins made a motion to appoint Paul Whitescarver, representing seCTer, and David Quinn, representing the Connecticut Tourism Coalition, as industry representatives. Bruce Flax seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.
 - e. Legislative Advocacy
 - i. No updates.
 - f. Grants
 - i. Kathleen reported that the Committee is working to schedule a September meeting to review and formally close out the FY2026 Regional Marketing Partnership program and begin discussion of the next grant cycle.
- 6. Connecticut Office of Statewide Marketing and Tourism Update
 - a. Jill Larsen provided an update on statewide marketing initiatives, including the transition to fall-focused marketing and the upcoming launch of the Haunted History Trail and TV to Table Trail.
 - b. Planning continues for Connecticut's presence at the Big E, including Eastern Connecticut representation, distribution of regional tourism materials, and Connecticut Day activities.
 - c. Larsen also reported that the State's strategic marketing plan is nearing completion and thanked the District for its participation in the planning process. Discover New England is scheduled for March 8–10, with additional coordination on familiarization tours to follow.
- 7. Quinn & Hary Update
 - a. Quinn & Hary reported continued growth across digital marketing channels, including strong Instagram follower growth and paid advertising performance. Upcoming

content will highlight seasonal events, attractions, agriculture, and quality-of-life experiences throughout the region.

- b. David Jensen presented a high-level review of three years of marketing and visitor data. Overall findings showed improved advertising efficiency and significant growth in digital reach, while also identifying changes in visitor markets, trip patterns, and audience engagement.
 - c. The analysis identified opportunities to refine geographic targeting, strengthen authentic place-based content, and better align future marketing investments with demonstrated visitor behavior. The findings will help guide recommendations for the District's 2027 marketing strategy.
8. Administrator Report
- a. Andrea Manning reported on recent work including the Mystic Outdoor Art Festival, preparation of the FY2027 DECD funding application, the annual audit, upcoming Board meeting, and ongoing committee support.
 - b. Manning highlighted two recent ECTy Award recipients with connections to the Regional Marketing Partnership program: Thames River Heritage Park, recognized with the Tourism Award, and Willimantic Renaissance/River Room, highlighted through the Chamber's partnership with the Cultural Coalition.
 - c. Manning also shared an update on the Chamber's Relocation Toolkit project, which will include new video and digital resources promoting Eastern Connecticut as a place to live and work. Tourism assets will be incorporated as an important component of the region's quality of life.
 - d. Looking ahead, priorities include submission of the FY2027 funding application following Board approval of the revised budget, completion of the annual audit, and preparation for the next Regional Marketing Partnership cycle.
9. Other Business
- a. No other business.
10. Adjournment
- a. Angela Adams made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jordan Lumpkins. All in favor, the meeting adjourned at 9:46am.