



Mystic Country

Eastern Connecticut Regional Tourism District
Board of Directors Meeting
12/10/2020
Virtual – Zoom

Attendees: Ann Lojzim, Debbie Tanner, Jill St. Clair, Todd Babbitt, Laura McCabe, Christine Strick, Mia Mitoma, Heather Harris, Bruce MacDonald, Robert Boissevain, Charlie Tracy, Chris Regan, Tyra Penn-Gesek, Tracey Hanson, Katharine Brody, Jim Bellano, Thomas Borner, Fran Kefalas, Gary Baker, Stephen Gencarella

Other Attendees: Courtney Assad, Tony Sheridan, Randy Fiveash, Dave Quinn

1. Call to Order 9:02AM

Mr. MacDonald moved to move Item 6 after Item 8, seconded by Ms. Tanner, all in favor, motion approved.

2. Approval of Minutes 10-22-2020 Meeting

Mr. MacDonald requested to be added to the attendee list.

Mr. Borner moved to approve the amended minutes, seconded by Mr. Regan, all in favor, motion approved. Ms. Kefalas abstained.

3. Board Chair Report

Jim Bellano discussed a focus on filling board vacancies and having better committee participation in the new year.

4. Treasurer Report

Jill St. Clair Fritzsche presented the balance sheet and profit and loss for November. All of the Regional Marketing Partnership Program grants have been signed and distributed. Payments to the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce are

Mr. Borner moved to approve the financial reports, seconded by Mr. Regan, all in favor, motion approved.

5. Committee Chair Reports

Nominating - Bob Boissevain provided an update on municipal appointments, there are still ten vacancies.

Bylaws - no update, but they would like to meet soon and need additional members on the committee.

Finance - Jill reaching out to members and trying to schedule a meeting.

Legislative - Ed Chmielewski has stepped down as Chair and a new one will be needed. Tony Sheridan spoke about a relationship with CBIA on a legislative agenda. Randy Fiveash spoke about the CT Office of Tourism's goals and speaking with the same message. Randy spoke about the current funding situation with the Lodging Tax being significantly decreased this year. The board discussed having a conversation to learn more about what that would look like. Ms. Tanner moved to have a discussion on collaboration with CBIA on legislative advocacy, seconded by Mr. MacDonald, all in favor, motion approved.

Marketing - Chris Regan reported on the success of the Regional Marketing Partnership Program and thanked the committee for their efforts. The press release on the program will go out this afternoon likely.

6. Administrator Report

Courtney Assad provided an update on the FY21 Contract process and audit. Tony Sheridan spoke about the insurance needed for the state contract and some difficulties around securing the policy, but is hoping to resolve it soon.

7. Connecticut Office of Tourism Update

Randy Fiveash spoke about the updates made to the regional pages on the state website. The COT is currently using evergreen marketing in their approach due to the pandemic and travel restrictions. Mr. Tracy gave feedback on the state website and his concern with it not reaching a younger audience. Mr. Fiveash and Mr. Quinn spoke on their efforts and needing additional information from the venues.

8. FY21 Contract Documents

a. Private Fundraising Plan

Jim Bellano introduced the plan and spoke about its importance for the FY21 Contract. Jim proposed an amendment to have a fundraising sub-committee placed in the plan. He recommended voting on the plan subject to COT approval.

Mr. MacDonald moved to approve the plan as amended and give the Executive Committee authority to approve the final plan if edits are required by the COT, seconded by Ms. Penn Gesek, all in favor, motion approved.

9. Other Business

Dave Quinn provided an update on their agency's work. They have been working with the state to make updates to the regional page of the site and adding articles, updated photos and video. Dave encouraged the board to reach out with any content ideas for their team. The paid campaign will be strongly launched in the Spring as hopefully the pandemic restrictions are lessened. Mr. MacDonald provided feedback on the videos.

10. Adjournment

Mr. MacDonald moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Tracy, all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 10:00AM.