



Mystic Country

ERTD Marketing Committee
Minutes
October 9, 2020 9:00AM
Zoom

Attendees: Chris Regan, Jill St. Clair, Delpha Very, Fran Kefalas, Tyra Penn Gesek, Stephen Gencarella, Gina Kunst, Wendy Russell.

Guests: Peggy Roberts, Dave Quinn, Tony Sheridan, Courtney Assad, Rosemary Bove, Jay Stapleton, Jillian Lozier, David Jensen, Pete Hary, Jason Vincent, Mary Brodeur, Mark Simmons, Wells Howe

Meeting called to order at 9:02AM.

1. TravelStorys Presentation

Wells Howe presented their technology solution for guided audio tours.

2. Update from Quinn + Hary

David Jensen stated they had a great meeting with the CT Office of Tourism to make updates to the Mystic Country section of the state website and will have updates for the committee next week. Organic social media was launched Monday 10/5, the first round of analytics will be presented November 11th. Regional attractions, destinations and businesses can submit content through a form. David presented creative for approval to launch the general branding campaign. The committee expressed their approval of the general themes.

3. Regional Marketing Partnership Program Applications

a. Passport to Norwich

Jason Vincent presented the application. They are hoping to leverage existing assets and collateral and market their offerings as a destination. Their Walk Norwich trails and diverse restaurant scene are among those assets. Jason provided an overview of the application and their goals. Chris asked what website they plan to drive traffic to. Jason responded that they plan to recreate the same page on several partner websites with linkage. Peggy asked about linking the trails to other areas down the river. Jason stated they are planning to link the Benedict Arnold story with New London and will have four operational marinas next year. Delpha asked about preparations for the pandemic. Jason stated that they will be working with restaurants and will be pressing take out opportunities. Stephen expressed that this is a great application and exactly what they are looking for.

b. Voluntown Tourism Campaign

Mark Simmons, Chair Voluntown Economic Development Commission, presented the application. Mark stated that they lack a portfolio of professional photography and videography to showcase their town to visitors. Their application is to hire a professional photographer/videographer to capture high quality imagery for social media campaigns and to refresh their website. The images and videos would also be supplied to the CT Office of Tourism and DEEP. A portion of the grant will also be used to fund a part time social media manager to increase their activity and visibility for the Friends of Pachaug Forest. They have selected Eagle Eye, a local Voluntown resident, for the photography. The photos would also be used to update their trail map and funds would be used for printing. Chris asked how many trail maps they print and distribute. Mark replied that they produce 2,000 and their designer has been approached to create one for neighboring towns. The map also includes a guide for local businesses.

c. CT Airline Trail

Tyra Penn Gesek presented the application. They are planning to produce Z Card Maps for the CT Airline Trail. One side would have the full trail and the other side would have the town's section of the trail with some illustrated attractions on the trail with QR codes. There is a 12 town task force working on the marketing of the trail. The grant funds would be used for the design work of the maps and the digital tie in of QR codes along the trail.

Jill disclosed a past relationship with Global City Norwich. The committee did not feel it required recusal. Gina stated that Colchester is part of the Airline Trail but not a partner in this application.

Tyra moved to approve the Passport to Norwich application, seconded by Bruce, all in favor, motion approved.

Bruce and Fran spoke about DEEP's role in promoting state forests and trails. Delpha spoke about supporting rural outdoor experiences. Tyra spoke about the increased numbers of users of trails. Jill and Fran talked about different uses of the trails for biking, snowshoeing and cross country skiing.

Bruce moved to approve the Voluntown Tourism Campaign application, seconded by Delpha, all in favor, motion approved.

Tyra, Fran, and Delpha left the meeting.



Mystic Country

Bruce moved to approve the CT Airline Trail application, seconded by Stephen, all in favor, motion approved.

Tony discussed researching similar solutions to TravelStorys for comparison.

Chris encouraged everyone to attend the next full board meeting to discuss the state guidance on website use for the grants.

Adjournment 10:27AM.