



**Eastern Regional Tourism District (ERTD)
Board of Directors - Meeting
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, September 14, 2023 - 9:00AM

Location

The Meeting House
Olde Mistick Village
27 Coogan Blvd
Mystic, CT 06355

MINUTES

Attendees: Paige Bronk, Gina Kunst, Mary Arcuri, Stuart Peaslee, Fran Kefalas, Miria Gray, Mike Urgo, Lori Corriveau, Angela Adams, Chris Regan, Gary McKeon, Steve Gencarella, Christine Strick, Catherine Foley, Jill St. Clair, Alexandra (Ali) Formica, Mark Walter

Guests: Rachel Lenda, Tony Sheridan, Dave Quinn, Dave Jensen, Julia Florence, Pete Hary,

1. Call to Order
 - a. The Eastern Regional Tourism District Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 9:08am.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes 06/08/2023
 - a. A motion was made to accept the minutes as presented. Catherine Foley made the first motion and Stephen Gencarella made the second motion. No further discussion. Abstentions: Miria Gray, Mary Acuri, Ali Formica, Mike Urgo, Lori Corriveau, Gary McKeon. No opposition; motion passed.
3. Board Chair Report
 - a. Chris Regan made his Board Chair report and discussed Anthony Anthony's positive representation for the Office of Tourism. Chris also shared his own attendance and promotion of tourism at NECOG and SECOG, his time as chair so far, and activating board members to nudge towns to come up with three places in their town for tourists to visit. Chris also discussed the State of CT tourism map and its process.

7. Three Tourist Attractions in Your Town

- a. The Board held a discussion on what three tourist attractions in their town are. This led to a conversation on what constitutes a tourist attraction and the need to have a categorical list to identify. Ideas for each town should be emailed to Rachel before the next board meeting in December. Reminders will be sent. It should include obvious and not obvious places to visit such as eateries, farmers markets, live music, concert series, festivals, etc.
- b. The Board requested prompts in a quarterly calendar format in the next months for things Q&H are focusing on. This is thinking 'quarterly ahead' to assist the towns in building synergy. The Board would like to talk with Anthony Anthony to see if there is a way to integrate a calendar or widget on the website to integrate events in a calendar format.

8. Committee Chair Reports

- a. Finance
 - i. No new report.
- b. Marketing
 - i. Lori shared with the Board the Marketing Committee's follow up with Quinn & Hary, the viability of a physical brochure for the District and the need for state money to make that happen, and getting input from all to get itineraries up for the area. Other states have books/magazines. The Board would like to know if the State would do it regionally.
 - ii. Trade show participation was discussed. Since it is not in the budget this year, the District will not be attending any trade shows.
- c. Bylaws
 - i. No new updates.
- d. Nominating
 - i. Several vacancies were discussed including East Lyme and Plainfield. Ali Formica stated she could look into East Lyme for a Board rep.

- e. Legislative Advocacy
 - i. No new report
 - f. Grants
 - i. Fran gave a report and concluded that the final reports were fulfilled. The announcement and reporting of the grant is getting some restructuring. Funds will be available in the Q3 installment. The RMPP will be marketed through chamber friends, TLGV, newsletters, radio, and print.
9. Marketing Agency Report
- a. Quinn & Hary presented their marketing update via deck. They went over 2023 status of paid digital advertising on google and facebook in the last 30 days, facebook traffic is declining because the application is becoming less relevant compared to Tik Tok and Instagram. Organic social media performance was discussed from the last 30 days as well as using influencers and digital creators on collaborative partnerships. Keyword searches and then topics written on those keywords and social calendar with topics that are coming up were discussed.
10. Connecticut Office of Tourism Update
- a. Rachel presented a deck prepared by Anthony Anthony and the Connecticut Office of Tourism. The comprehensive deck discussed the current focuses and thrusts in CTvisit including arts, culture, and culinary with a more local and regional focus. It also gave an update on the welcome centers and Big E. The CT tourism map was also discussed. And finally, the fall campaign was highlighted.
11. Administrator Report
- a. Rachel gave a presentation on the administrative support they have been providing the District. This included completing the audit two months earlier than prior year with a strong internal control on proper accounting processes with no errors reported. The Chamber also negotiated on behalf of the District to get their first installment before the completion of the audit. This has never been done since the District's restructure. The



Chamber also highlighted the Mystic Outdoor Art Festival Participation and Woodstock Fair. Additionally effort has been placed on ensuring brochures were ordered and delivered to the Connecticut Building at the Big E as well as working on tasks for the Grants committee.

12. Other Business

- a. No other business.

13. Adjournment

- a. Catherine Foley made a motion to adjourn and Fran made the second motion to adjourn. No abstention or opposition. Meeting adjourned at 10:37am.