



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

Thursday, September 12, 2024
9:00am

Location

ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86831152412?pwd=RWowMG5LYTUrRVdYWWhZ6a3doV016dz09>

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Chris Regan, Jill St. Clair, Bruce Flax, Stephen Gencarella, Lori Corriveau, Fran Kefalas, Todd Babbitt, Stuart Peaslea, Alexandra Formica, Angela Adams, Bruce Flax, Ellie Greenberg, Mark Walter, Mike Urgo, Patti George, Robert Ignatowicz, Shannon Fagan, Tyra Penn-Gesek

Guests: Rachel Lenda, Andrea Manning, David Quinn, Jillian Lozier

1. Call to Order - Chris Regan called the meeting to order at 9:01am
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes 06/13/2024
 - a. Stephen Gencarella noted an error in the previous meeting minutes.
 - b. Bruce Flax made a motion to approve the 6/13/24 meeting minutes with correction noted. Lori Corriveau seconded the motion. All in favor the motion passed.
3. Board Chair Report
 - a. Chris Regan delivered the Board Chair Report noting the busy tourism season ahead, and our success with the Regional Marketing Partnership Grant. He discusses the importance of getting in front of legislators during election season to ensure that tourism funding does not decrease, noting the importance of speaking out about rising operation and energy costs for tourism businesses in the region.
4. Treasurer Report
 - a. FY24 Budget v. Actual



- i. Bruce Flax presented the P&L and Budget Sheet.
 - ii. Patti Larrow-George made a motion to approve the P&L and Balance Sheet as presented, seconded by Angela Adams. All in favor, the motion passed.
5. Meeting Dates for FY25 -Tabled, to be distributed by email
6. Committee Chair Reports
 - a. Finance - no further report
 - b. Marketing -
 - i. Lori Corriveau updated the Board on recent discussions in the Marketing Committee including recent and upcoming festivals, strategic marketing, and approving a pilot fund for TikTok, among others.
 - c. Bylaws -
 - i. Jill St. Clair delivered a report on behalf of Charlie Tracy. The Bylaws Committee will meet within the next month to make adjustments to the Bylaws that include updating the terms “Chairman” and “Vice Chairman”.
 - d. Nominating -
 - i. Todd Babbitt Reports on recent efforts to maintain the roster of Directors, noting existing vacancies, inactive members, and term expirations. Letters have been sent to municipalities with instructions for appointing a director to represent their town.
 - e. Legislative Advocacy - no report
 - f. Grants -
 - i. Fran Kefalas reported that all final grant reports from the Regional Marketing Partnership Grant have been received, and all but \$300 of the budget was spent, as one of the recipients underspent their award. The Grants Committee will meet in mid-fall to continue tweaking the process.



7. Connecticut Office of Tourism Update

- a. Rachel Lenda delivered an update from the CT Office of Tourism
 - i. Updates from the recent Tourism Council
 - ii. Presents the Fall and Winter Advertising Spend Breakdown and the diversified portfolio of state spending on digital advertisement.
 - iii. Reflections on the FY25 Fall and Winter spend, noting a steady decrease in funding since FY2022, resulting in just over \$1million for Fall and Winter.
 - iv. Traffic to CTvisit.com is down roughly 37%, as a result of reduced funding.
 - v. Discussion on messaging for return on investment takes place. COT is conducting another Longwood study, to be completed between March and May 2025. This report will give accurate statistics and data on the ROI for tourism marketing dollars.
 - vi. Discussion on the reception of
 - vii. Discussion of FY25 Strategic Plan took place. An overview was presented at the Tourism Council, and will be voted on in December 2024. Discussion is centered around a breakdown of seasonal budgets.

8. Marketing Agency Report - David Quinn introduces Jillian Lozier who presents the update:

- a. Jillian Lozier reports on the digital campaign success, noting the overall strong performance on google and facebook, with strong organic reach on facebook over 1 million.
- b. Top performing posts in August included links to articles and blogs posted on CTvisit.
- c. Updated visual assets from FY24 funding included 75%video and 25% photo, featuring locations in 20 towns and a wide diversity of tourism experiences in the region.



- d. Jillian Shared the latest version of the new Oddities and Curiosities brochure, developed by an ad hoc committee. The marketing committee will approve this at the upcoming meeting.
 - e. Other updates include the upcoming social media calendar, which will focus on fall festivals, campgrounds, parks, vineyards and breweries and Walktober events, and recent blog posts.
9. Administrator Report
- a. Andrea Manning delivered an administrative report noting efforts and projects through the previous three months, noting successful FY24 final grant reporting, and FY2025 Application for Funding, with the first installment of funding received and vendor payment in progress. The FY2024 Audit is in progress, with an anticipated completion within the month. Other efforts included attendance at the recent Mystic Tourism Working Group meeting and the Windham Chamber's monthly Arts, Culture, and Tourism group. Other efforts include support for the nominating committee in communicating with municipalities in which there are vacancies, and alerting directors of the need for reappointment.
10. Other Business - no other business
11. Adjournment
- a. Jill St. Clair made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mike Urgo. All in favor, the meeting adjourned at 9:42am.