



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

Thursday, June 11, 2026
9:00am

Location

Southeastern Connecticut Council of Government
5 Connecticut Ave, Norwich, CT 06360, USA
In-Person Only / No Zoom or Hybrid Video

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Chris Regan, Jill St. Clair, Bruce Flax, Shannon Fagan, Patti Larrow-Geore, Robert Ignatowicz, Fran Kefalas, Rich Kohlbrecher, Gail MacDonald, Amy Monahan, Kathleen Paterson, Charlie Tracy

Guests: Andrea Manning, Tony Sheridan, Jillian Lozier, Jill Larsen, Amanda Kennedy

1. Call to Order
 - a. Chris Regan called the meeting to order at 9:08am.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes 03/18/2026
 - a. Bruce Flax made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from 3/18/26, seconded by Shannon Fagan. 4 abstentions, all else in favor, the motion passed.
3. Board Chair Report
 - a. Chris Regan delivered a board report, reflecting on the results of his three year tenure as Chair. Highlights include 50 million impressions, 2.4 mill. engagements, 500k clicks to CTvisit, and more. Looking ahead, the district will begin work on a comprehensive strategic plan moving forward. He encourages all reps to find the #1 highlights in each town in the district to bring visitors to the region. He reflected on the good traction tourism had legislatively this year, despite the last minute failure to make it into the governor's budget, and urged the group to continue pushing. to advance funding. Finally, he is conducting a Tourism Impact study for the whole state, with data through August 2026 - expected completion date in September 2026. This study will arm advocates with up to date data to talk to legislators about tourism's impact on the state economy.
4. Treasurer Report
 - a. P&L Budget v. Loss and Balance Sheet
 - i. P&L
 1. Angela Adams made a motion to approve the P&L, seconded by Fran Kefalas. One abstention, all else in favor, the motion passed.
 - ii. Balance Sheet



1. Angela Adams made a motion to approve the Balance Sheet, seconded by Patti Larrow-George. One abstention, all else in favor, the motion passed.
- b. FY2027 Budget Approval
 - i. Amy Monahan motion to approve the FY27 budget, seconded by Patti Larrow-George. All in favor, the motion passed
5. Officer Elections
 - a. Angela Adams, Chair of the Nominating Committee, conducted the process of Officer Elections. The Executive Committee put forth a slate of Officers for recommendation: Jill St. Clair – Chair, Chris Regan – Vice Chair, Jordan Lumpkins – Secretary, Shannon Fagan – Treasurer, and Bruce Flax – Assistant Treasurer. A vote was conducted by a show of hands.
 - i. Chair: The election began with the Executive Committee’s recommendation of Jill St. Clair as Chair. Angela Adams called for nominations from the floor three times. Hearing no additional nominations, Angela Adams closed nominations for Chair.
 1. One ballot will be written for the uncontested Chair position.
 - ii. Vice Chair: The election proceeded with the Executive Committee’s recommendation of Chris Regan as Vice Chair. Angela Adams called for nominations from the floor three times. Hearing no additional nominations, Angela Adams closed nominations for Vice Chair.
 1. One ballot will be written for the uncontested Vice Chair position.
 - iii. Secretary: The Executive Committee recommended Jordan Lumpkins as Secretary. Angela Adams called for nominations from the floor three times. Hearing no additional nominations, Angela Adams closed nominations for Secretary.
 1. One ballot will be written for the uncontested Secretary position.
 - iv. Treasurer: The Executive Committee recommended Shannon Fagan as Treasurer. Angela Adams called for nominations from the floor three times. Hearing no additional nominations, Angela Adams closed nominations for Treasurer.
 1. One ballot will be written for the uncontested Treasurer Position.
 - v. Assistant Treasurer: The Executive Committee recommended Bruce Flax as Assistant Treasurer. Angela Adams called for nominations from the floor three times. Hearing no additional nominations, Angela Adams closed nominations for Assistant Treasurer.
 1. One ballot will be written for the uncontested Assistant Treasurer Position.
 - b. Fran Kefalas Made a motion to accept the slate of officers, seconded by Charlie Tracy. All in favor, the FY2027 Officer Elections concluded.



6. Committee Chair Reports

a. Finance

i. No further report

b. Marketing

i. Jill St. Clair shared updates on the Committee's work this quarter.

1. Development of a visual asset sharing policy and form for access.
2. Updated brochures, which are in distribution for the 2026 season. Next fiscal year the group will determine whether a joint contract with CTM for distributions of brochures for all three tourism districts is possible.
3. Reprinted stickers for sharing at various tradeshow throughout the district.
4. Held a Joint Marketing and Finance meeting to develop the FY27 budget.
5. \$10k was allocated to expanding the visual assets to include alternative travel, Norwich events, fishing, boating and more.
6. Remaining funds from the FY26 grant have been allocated to ads on Trip Advisor, Waze, and Google Maps, targeting FIFA World Cup Travelers.
7. The committee discussed fall craft beverages as a potential focus for the upcoming fall season.
8. Media Agency RFP and Renewal
 - a. The Marketing and Executive committees reviewed 17 responses to the Media Agency RFP, interviewing the top 5 candidates. This group made a recommendation to approve Quinn & Hary as the Media Agency for FY2027.
 - i. Charlie Tracy made a motion to renew Quinn & Hary as the media Agency for

c. Bylaws

i. Fran Kefalas reported for the Bylaws Committee

1. The Bylaws Committee met once in November to finalize changes in the bylaws to be in-line with state contract.
2. The committee will meet again this summer to review the policy in regard to industry appointments.

d. Nominating

i. Angela Adams shared that the committee completed 8 renewals, filled 11 seats, and that there are 10 vacancies at present.

e. Legislative Advocacy

i. Patti Larrow-George reported on the recent efforts and upcoming strategies

1. Legislative session closed out with no movement forward in funding
2. She is meeting with business associations and developers to bring them into the conversation about tourism.

3. The group discussed the development of a questionnaire for restaurants and businesses to collect data, and the distribution of this survey.
4. Discussion was held on the recent success Rhode Island had in expanding their tourism funding, and the potential modelling of those strategies.

f. Grants

- i. Andrea Manning shared that the grant cycle is nearing the end of its spending period, with grants to be expended by 6/15, and final financial reports due on 6/15. The committee will meet to review these reports on 6/17. The next milestone is the narrative reporting due on 7/31.

7. Media Agency Report - Quinn & Hary

- a. Jillian Lozier delivered updates on FY26's campaigns
 - i. Quinn & Hary presented an overview of FY2025–2026 marketing performance, highlighting growth across paid digital advertising, organic social media, influencer partnerships, and video content. Overall campaign metrics included 14.3 million paid impressions, 7.3 million Facebook views, 875,900 Instagram views, and 2.3 million blog content impressions.
 - ii. The presentation noted continued audience growth, including a 342% year-over-year increase in Instagram followers and an 18.5% increase in Facebook followers, with video and seasonal event content identified as the strongest-performing content throughout the year.
 - iii. Quinn & Hary also reported on influencer campaign performance and summarized key takeaways, noting that event-based and seasonal content, video marketing, and continued audience growth have contributed to expanding the district's digital reach and engagement.
 - iv. Discussion was held on projecting what the results would look like with additional funding. They are currently working tighter on the target audience due to the limited budget. More budget would widen that to include different target markets.
 - v. Discussion on what content appeals to different generations of travelers, and the team's approach in reaching these groups, including Gen Z.

8. Office of Statewide Marketing & Tourism Update

- a. Jill Larsen shared update from the Office of Statewide Marketing & Tourism
 - i. Jill discussed the launch of an America 250 hub on CTvisit at the direction of the Governor and in collaboration with CT Humanities, and the funding.
 - ii. She shared details about SWMT efforts this season
 1. Original content is performing very strong, boosting successful posts to prolong exposure. These posts are selected based on performance.
 2. 4 pillars of focus, spanning culinary, outdoor recreation, arts and culture, and sports and entertainment.



- iii. SWMT is undergoing a strategic plan, and requests a 1-page inclusion from each of the districts.
- iv. CT Open House Day includes over 200 locations
- v. Haunted History Trail expected to launch mid-september
- vi. Content MADE CreatorCon, expected in early 2027, will focus on influencers on social platforms, podcasts, and other creative outlets.
- vii. Discover New England will be hosted at Foxwoods in March 2027. SWMT will reach out to the District for assistance with FAM tours,

9. Administrator Report

- a. Andrea Manning delivered the Administrator Report, highlighting key operational and strategic accomplishments from FY26. The Chamber supported the district through 59 committee meetings, a perfect audit, updates to the Tourism Advocacy Toolkit, expansion of the Nominating toolkit, inclusion in the Tourism Conference, and more. A comprehensive written report was provided in the meeting packet.

10. Round Table Updates

- a. Directors shared tourism strategies, attractions, events, and opportunities in their municipalities.

11. Other Business

- a. Andrea Manning mentioned the need for additional involvement from directors to serve on committees.

12. Adjournment

- a. Jill St. Clair made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Fran Kefalas. All in favor, the meeting adjourned at 10:49am.