



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

Thursday, September 18, 2025
9:00am

Location

ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86831152412?pwd=RWowMG5LYTUrRVdYWZH6a3doV016dz09>

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Chris Regan, Angela Adams, Bob Ignatowicz, Daniela Gjergjaj, Barry Kaplan, Ellie Greenberg, Fran Kefalas, Jill S Keith, Jordan Lumpkins, Kathleen Paterson, Lori Corriveau, Mike Urgo, Nikki Cabrera, Patti Larrow-George, Shannon Fagan, Tyra Penn-Gesek

Guests: Andrea Manning, Megan Gilbert, David Quinn, Jillian Lozier, Emma Briody, Matt Reich

1. Call to Order
 - a. The meeting came to order at 9:00am
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes 06/12/2025
 - a. Jill Keith made a motion to approve with noted edit, seconded by Jordan Lumpkins.
3. Board Chair Report
 - a. Chair Chris Regan reported that while proposed federal budget cuts may have potential impacts on the region, tourism indicators for Eastern Connecticut remain strong, with visitation and economic activity continuing to trend upward. He emphasized the importance of maintaining this momentum through the remainder of the year, expressing optimism that the region can achieve its strongest fourth quarter to date. Regan encouraged continued outreach to local employers to help build enthusiasm for the tourism industry and to underscore for legislators that tourism is a key driver of the regional economy and workforce retention.
4. Treasurer Report
 - a. P&L and Balance Sheet
 - i. Jordan Lumpkins made the motion, seconded by Lori Corriveau. All in favor, the motion passed.
5. Administrative Partner RFP
 - a. Vote on recommendation from the Executive Committee to renew the contract for Administrative Partner with the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut for a two-year contract subject to a performance review after the first year.
 - i. Fran Kefalas made a motion to renew the Administrative partner contract, seconded by Nikki Cabrera. All in favor, the motion passed.
6. Approval of Meeting Dates for 2026.



- a. Fran kefalas made a motion to approve the meeting dates, seconded by Patti Larrow-George. All in favor, the motion passed.
- 7. Committee Chair Reports
 - a. Finance
 - i. No further report.
 - b. Marketing
 - i. Lori Corriveau reported on the recent efforts of the marketing committee, which include a visual asset expansion to capture visuals around the
 - c. Bylaws
 - i. Frank Kefalas reported no changes or updates at this time.
 - d. Nominating
 - i. Vote to approve the following Industry Representative seats:
 - 1. Amusement Attractions
 - 2. Agritourism
 - a. Tyra Penn-Gesek made the motion to approve the addition of Amusement Attractions and Agritourism industry representative seats, seconded by Angie Adams. All in favor, the motion passed.
 - 3. A discussion took place on the definitions and board strategy in filling the 21 industry representative seats, 14 of which are currently vacant, including a review of guidance on industry reps per the bylaws. Concerns were raised over approaches that carve out seats for specific businesses. Per the bylaws, there is no limit on the number of reps for any given category, but there is language that indicates that appointments should reflect the range of types, sizes and geographic distribution of tourism interests within the District.
 - e. Legislative Advocacy
 - i. Patti Larrow-George updated the committee on her recent efforts including meeting with the committee several times, and outreach to business associations to distribute the message, and rally folks around the need for advocacy on the issue.
 - f. Grants
 - i. Nikki Cabrera delivered updates from the grants committee, including the recent approval of the package of final grant reports for FY2025. In the upcoming weeks the committee will meet to update documents, discuss successes and areas where updates will be needed for the next grant cycle.
- 8. Connecticut Office of Tourism Update
 - a. No update.
- 9. Marketing Agency Report
 - a. Jillian Lozier reported on behalf of Quinn & hary
 - i. She reported strong August–September results, with the District gaining 494 new Instagram followers (20.3K total) and 122 Facebook followers,



and paid campaigns delivering 1.29 million impressions. Blog content promoting experiences in Eastern Connecticut reached over 274,000 impressions, reinforcing steady audience growth.

- ii. Top-performing posts featured East Lyme and Woodstock, each generating thousands of views and strong engagement.
- iii. Upcoming outdoor adventure influencer trips will spotlight hiking, farms, and fall recreation across the region, with creators reaching 30K–60K followers.
- iv. The fall calendar highlights major regional events including Walktober, the Garlic Festival, and holiday celebrations across Mystic, Norwich, and New London.
- v. New visual assets have been completed for the Brooklyn Fair, Celebrate New London, and Woodstock Fair, with additional content development guided by the approved FY26 Marketing Plan and visual asset sharing policy.

10. Administrator Report

- a. Andrea Manning reported on the previous three months' efforts.
 - i. She reported that over the past three months, 15 committee and working meetings were held, including sessions of the Executive, Marketing, Grants, Finance, Nominating, and Legislative Committees. Additional meetings for onboarding a new director and meeting with potential industry reps were held.
 - ii. The Regional Marketing Partnership Matching Grant Program entered its final reporting phase, with a heavier review workload this cycle. The reporting timeline will be advanced next year to support smoother financial close-out.
 - iii. The District's FY26 grant application has been submitted, accepted, and contracted, and disbursement of funds is pending. Once received, all outstanding vendor invoices will be paid.
 - iv. The annual audit is currently in progress.
 - v. A call for committee participation remains open, with the Nominating and Legislative Committees identified as most in need of volunteers.
 - vi. Upcoming efforts include reconvening the Grants Committee to begin the FY26 process, continued outreach and onboarding for new directors, and rollout of the Visual Asset Sharing Policy. She encouraged directors to stay engaged through committee work, emphasizing that participation is key to representing the full region.

11. Other Business

- a. No other business.

12. Adjournment

- a. Jordan Lumpkins made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Nikki Cabrera. All in favor, the meeting adjourned at