

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the
Western Connecticut Tourism District
Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 10 am, via Zoom**

Directors present were: Gregg Dancho, chair; Laura Budd, Bob Burns, Annette Einhorn, Michelle Falcone, Mady Flynn, George Frantzis, Sue Fritch, Lorenzo Gaudio, Sabrina Godeski, Tim Good, David Green, Rachel Kelly, Marietta Korsu, Shay Nagarsheth, Craig Nelson, Dawn Nielsen, Dan Onofrio, Tom Roman, Mare Rubin, Nancy Saggese, Ted Shafer, Rick Smith, Carey Weber, and Rowena White. Others present included: from Storytellers, Joe Giaccone and Chris Smith; from the Waterbury Regional Chamber, Terry Macary; from the state office of Tourism, Susan Henrique; from Adams and Knight, Felicia Lindau, guests Kevin Bielmeier, Michelle Gorra, Lorie Lewis, and Mary Alice Limperopulos.

Welcome

Mr. Dancho called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Frantzis moved to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2022, meeting as presented; Mr. Nelson seconded. The motion carried.

Financial Report

Ms. Macary reviewed the P&L, noting the District had received three of the four payments from the state. She noted the seemingly negative bottom line was due to some payments carrying over from the previous fiscal year. Mr. Frantzis moved to accept the financial report as presented; Mr. Gaudio seconded. The motion carried.

Addendum to the By-Laws

Mr. Dancho noted that Board members had been sent the proposed change to the By-Laws, and read the new text. Directors noted that in the editing process the word “the” was removed from the first sentence. Mr. Frantzis moved to accept the By-Laws with the correction as below; Ms. Kelly seconded. The motion carried.

SECTION 1 - OFFICERS: The officers shall be from the Board of Directors and shall include a Chairman, First Vice Chairman, Second Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Secretary, and one Officer At Large, and five Members-at- Large, all of whom (with no more than three officers from each of the original four districts) shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Board and shall serve until the next annual meeting of the Board and/or until their successors have qualified. A majority of the Executive Committee must be from municipally appointed members. After the first year, the Executive Committee shall include the immediate Past Chairman, who will replace the Officer-at-Large. The officers shall be members of the Board of Directors and shall constitute the Executive Committee.

State Marketing Update

Ms. Lindau reported that Noelle Stevenson, Director of Tourism, is on an extended leave. She said Anthony Anthony, Chief Marketing Officer of the Department of Economic and Community Development, would be filling in in the interim, and that all campaigns are going strong. She said there are three different paid campaigns: the main statewide Find Your Vibe campaign; a dedicated Ireland campaign, that also targets connecting flights through Aer Lingus; and a Connecticut Meetings and Sports campaign. She said that, while the state is going through a rebranding, it is not connected to the recent tourism rebranding.

Trade Shows/Fam Tours Update

Ms. Henrique reported on recent activities through the Connecticut Convention and Sports Bureau. She said the state and districts have taken part in Travel and Adventure Shows in Chicago, Washington, DC, and New York City; at the American Bus Association event in Detroit; and the Discover New England Summit in Boston. She said the state also, as a part of the relaunch of the Aer Lingus flights to Brandley Airport, had a large event in Dublin, with about 95 travel professionals in attendance. Ms. Macary said she took part in the Chicago and Boston events, while Mr. Nelson attended the Washington DC show Ms. Henrique and Ms. Macary also said there were three familiarization tours that took place after the DNE Summit. Ms. Macary led one of those tours, a media tour through Litchfield County. Ms. Henrique said a MegaFam took place with BrandUSA. Ms. Macary joined the tour in New Canaan and Norwalk.

Marketing Committee/Storytellers

Ms. Smith reported Facebook followers increased to 25,981 and Instagram also grew to 3,699 followers. She shared the strong engagement rates for content on both Facebook and Instagram. She noted the upcoming potential “National Days” to be recognized in upcoming social media posts. She asked for any suggestions or recommendations for topics.

Suggestions for the Good of the Order/Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Macary
Administrative Partner