

[NOTE: These minutes are made available to the public prior to Tourism Commission acceptance.]

WETHERSFIELD TOURISM COMMISSION
Meeting: Tuesday, November 27, 2007 at 5:30 p.m.
Town Hall Conference Room #1
MINUTES

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Chair Charlie Forsdick.

Roll Call/Attendance: Members in attendance: Charlie Forsdick, Chair, Charles Ford, Carol Hall, Elaine St. Onge, Katie Sullivan and Chris Traczyk. Also in attendance: Joan Hughes, EDIC Liaison; and Peter Gillespie, Town Planner/Economic Development Manager.

Members absent: Gerry Munroe; and Paul Montinieri, Town Council Liaison.

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes: [October 30, 2007](#). Charlie Forsdick asked if there were corrections needed for the draft minutes, and none were requested. Chris Traczyk made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, Elaine St. Onge seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.

Announcements/ Introductions:

- Charlie Forsdick read aloud a letter from Anne Kuckro in which she resigned her Commission membership, with regrets. Charlie said that he had talked with Anne, and he left it with her that she would be welcome to rejoin as a member at any time in the future.
- Charlie Forsdick said that he planned to recommend Jenna Delay to the Town Council for consideration as Commission member. Charlie said that Jenna is currently doing work as a webmaster for the Town, and was a tourism and marketing major in college, so she would be an asset to the Commission.

Old Business:

- **GHCVB - Primary contact:** Charlie Forsdick said that he needed someone other than himself to serve as a primary contact for correspondence from the GHCVB. Carol Hall volunteered. Peter Gillespie said that he gets the GHCVB correspondence, too.
- **Greeter Manuals - Update:** Katie Sullivan said that she talked with Carol Bruce, the last person to have prepared the manuals. Carol strongly suggested waiting until March when most organizations would start a new season and would have set their contacts, calendars, hours, etc. Charlie Forsdick agreed that March sounded like the time to do the updating.
- **Display Ad Schedule** - Charlie Forsdick said that the Economic Development and Improvement Commission approved the ads that the Commission recommended for the Visitor's Guide and Journeys magazine. Charlie said that he asked Pita Communications to redesign an existing ad so it fit in a 1/3 page space, as discussed previously by the Commission. He distributed a draft of the redesigned ad. Chris Traczyk motioned to approve using the redesigned ad, Elaine St. Onge seconded, and the vote showed all in favor of approval.
- **Promo Packet** - Charlie Forsdick said that he had gotten a price of 4 cents per page to have the Town Data Services Department print 500 inserts for the packet. This would cover the cost of printing cartridges and paper, using the same stock as last time. Chris Traczyk motioned to approve having the Data Services Department do the print job, Carol Hall seconded, and the vote showed all in favor of approval.

- **GHCVB Liaison - Rotation Schedule:** Charlie Forsdick said that the GHCVB had not yet set its meeting schedule, but would be looking for members to take turns going to their meetings. Katie Sullivan said that she went to the last one, at which she relayed the plans for holiday decorating in Old Wethersfield.
- **Event Calendar Update** - Charlie Forsdick said that Keilor Associates is doing some polling and a press release on holiday events. As a result of this publicity, Scott Haney of WFSB is planning to do a broadcast from Old Wethersfield on Friday 11-30-07.
- **Horse & Carriage Ride Grant Update:** Charlie Forsdick said the Ride Subcommittee met 11-21-07 and selected Allegra Farms of Haddam to operate the rides. Allegra has experience with operating rides like this, for example, at Mystic Seaport. Allegra brings all of their own supplies (e.g. water) for the horses, to ensure they are treated well. The rides will run for 4 hours each of the following dates: December 4, 8, 9, 15 (tentative), 16, 22, 23, 29 and 30. There may be dates in January, too. Each ride would be about 20 minutes long, and follow this route: starting at the Keeney Cultural Center, then going to Church Street, Marsh Street, Broad Street Green, Garden Street and back to Main Street. The Historical Society has given permission to use of the Keeney parking lot for car and horse trailer parking. Peter Gillespie said that the cost for Allegra is \$850 for 4 hours. Riders will be charged \$4 per person, or \$10 per family. The Allegra driver will collect the money, track the number of riders, and give hand-outs about Wethersfield to the riders. Peter Gillespie said that he would draft a press release and have Keilor Associates distribute it.
- **Vacancy - Berlin Tpke. Bus. Rep:** No representative designated at this time.
- **Vacancy - Chamber of Commerce. Rep:** No representative designated at this time.

New Business:

- **Salute To Business - December 12:** Charlie Forsdick said that Commission members are invited to attend this year's Salute being held at the Wethersfield Country Club. The cost is \$15 per person.
- **Budget 2008-2009:** Peter Gillespie said that there is a budget meeting December 18th, and that the Town Manager has the meeting schedule and format. Charlie Forsdick said that he has a draft budget table ready for discussion. He hopes that the Town Council will separate the Commission's budget from EDIC this year, so their spending approval process will be simpler.
- **Event Coordinator:** Charlie Forsdick said that he is looking for a volunteer to serve as an event coordinator. The duties would be to get organizations together with planners of events to be held in Town. Charlie Forsdick said that he has a list of potential events and organizations. Charlie Ford recommended that the event coordinator form a committee with the benefactor of the event, to leverage their vested interest in success of the event.
- **Meeting Schedule 2008:** Charlie Forsdick distributed copies of the proposed Commission meeting schedule for 2008. The members discussed an alternate date for December, given that it would otherwise fall on New Year's Eve, December 31. The consensus was to schedule a Monday meeting on December 29. Chris Traczyk motioned to approve the schedule as amended, Katie Sullivan seconded, and the vote showed all in favor of approval.
- **Picture Library:** Charlie Forsdick said that he had been in contact with photographers Jack McConnell and Paula McCarthy about buying a number of their pictures to establish a library. The two photographers are long-time residents and professionals, have a large number of pictures of Wethersfield, and are willing to give the town a special price. Charlie said that the Commission needs to give the photographers an idea of how many pictures they would want, so a price could be quoted. Chris Traczyk suggested that scrap-booking software could be used as an inexpensive way of cataloging the pictures, and also making them searchable. Peter Gillespie suggested also holding a photo contest to generate some new pictures and stimulate some interest and fun in Town. Chris Traczyk recommended that the Commission sponsor the event.
- **Museum in New Book:** Katie Sullivan reported that pictures of the Webb Deane Stevens Museum were featured prominently in the latest issue of Smithsonian Magazine. The magazine was touting a new book titled "Houses of the Founding Fathers", which included pictures and content on the Museum. Chris Traczyk

suggested that there be a press release about the Smithsonian article.

- **Tourism Article in Boston Globe:** Katie Sullivan reported that she had been contacted by a reporter for the Boston Globe about an article featuring Wethersfield as a tourism destination. Katie said that the Globe plans to run the article in January 2008.
- **Tourism Article in Yankee Magazine:** Charlie Forsdick reported that Yankee Magazine had contacted him about running an article in its February 2008 issue, to include at least review of dining at J. Michaels Tavern and a stay at the Silas Robbins House.
- **Central Regional Tourism District Representative:** Charlie Forsdick said that a new representative needed to be appointed to replace Anne Kuckro. He said that he would ask Gerry Munroe to be the new representative. Katie Sullivan made a motion to approve Gerry Munroe as the new representative to the Central Regional Tourism District, provided she accepts the offer from Charlie Forsdick, Carol Hall seconded the motion, and the vote showed all members in favor.

Reports:

- **Central CT Culture & Tourism Commission** - Anne Kuckro had been the representative to this Commission, so there was no report.
- **Economic Development & Improvement Commission** - Joan Hughes encouraged members to attend the Salute to Business. She also said that the same operator doing the horse and buggy rides for the Town, will also be operating a ride for the Silas Robbins House.
- **Grant Funding - Preserve America - Status** - Peter Gillespie said that there is a meeting Tuesday December 6th. The draft report is not yet available, so a public hearing has not been scheduled, although a funding deadline is approaching December 12th.
- **Budget:** Peter Gillespie said that he would update the Commission's budget following its recent ad purchases.
- **Visitor Survey Results - Quarterly:** Peter Gillespie said that another tally would be done shortly after the end of the year.
- **Convention Center and GHCVB Marketing** - Carol Hall said that she is monitoring the GHCVB website and will forward notices to Commission members about upcoming conventions.
- **375th Anniversary Committee** - Chris Traczyk said that she had no report because she had not received notice of any meetings.
- **Tourism DVD** - Task lead Gerry Munroe was absent, so no report was available. However, Charlie Forsdick reported that a videography student contacted him about doing a promotional video as a project. The student is Nicole Couric, is a Wethersfield resident and attends Central Connecticut State University. Charlie said that he and Peter Gillespie met with Nicole and she expressed a need for help with the script. Chris Traczyk said that she would contact Anne Kuckro because Anne had written a script for a lantern tour and other events that may be useful.
- **Promotion Package** - Katie Sullivan reported that she planned to begin making contacts with hotels, shops, etc. right after the first of the year.

Completed Items/Tasks: (as discussed above)

Correspondence: None.

Next Meeting Date: December 18, 2007 - 5:30 PM - Town Hall Conference Room #1. The members discussed whether the December meeting should be canceled due to the busy holiday season. Chris Traczyk motioned to cancel the meeting, Katie Sullivan seconded, and the vote showed all members in favor of cancellation except one - Charlie Forsdick voted against cancellation. Charlie Forsdick noted that the January 2008 meeting would be chaired by Vice Chair Chris Traczyk, as he will be away on vacation.

Call to Adjourn: Chris Traczyk motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m., Katie Sullivan seconded the motion, and the vote showed all members in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin T. Sullivan
Commission Recording Secretary