

Wethersfield Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes - Tuesday, August 26, 2003

Chairperson Kuckro called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Manager's conference room. Members present were Chairperson Kuckro, Pat Warner, Paul Courchaine, Carol Adil, Charles Ford and Staff Liaison Kathleen Bagley.

1. Public Comments.

No public comments.

2. Approval of Minutes.

Charles Ford moved to approve the minutes for July 29, 2003. The motion was seconded by Carol Adil and voted unanimously. Paul Courchaine abstained from voting.

3. Old Business.

1. Fall Calendar.

Chairperson Kuckro thanked Charles Ford and Pat Warner for their work on the fall calendar. Charles Ford gave Commission members an update on the process for the design and printing of the fall calendar. The cost for printing the fall calendar was \$422 and was given to the printing firm of Eastwood, a Wethersfield business. Chairperson Kuckro thanked everyone for their input in this process and expressed her thanks to the Magee Marketing firm for the good job in the design work. Charles Ford mentioned that he placed a phone number for each event in the flyer. Commission members had some additional suggestions regarding the fall calendar.

- Send a copy of the fall calendar to all the organizations in the calendar and thank them for their information. Explain to them the distribution of this calendar and ask them for a continued list of events for promotion.
- Discussion centered on the Tourism Commission's Web Site and the hope that in the near future information for the calendar will be electronically transferred to our Web Master and placed on the Tourism Commission's Web Site. Currently, the Web Master is entering this information by hand. The Commission will work on developing an electronic transfer system for this process.
- Commission members discussed the formal criteria for inclusion in the calendar of events. Chairperson Kuckro reported that the Heritage Partnership is working on a draft of rules of criteria for entry into the event calendar. Commission members felt the Partnership would be the appropriate place to begin to develop criteria for inclusion in the calendar.

2. Distribution of Event Calendar.

Chairperson Kuckro identified that 2,000 calendars had been printed for the fall. The distribution list is as follows for the calendar:

- a. Ten museums in the Greater Hartford Area including the Webb-Deane-Stevens and the Keeney will receive 1,000 calendars.
- b. First Church - 50.
- c. Mainly Tea - 50.
- d. Village Tavern - 50.
- e. Main Street Bed and Breakfast - 50.
- f. Town Clerk, Town Council - 75.
- g. Pitkin Community Center - 75.
- h. Town Library - 75.
- i. Greater Hartford Arts Council, Greater Hartford Tourism Commission and the Downtown Council - 350.
- j. Camelot Inn - Silas Deane Highway - 100.
- k. Individual ones will be sent out to the organizations whose events were included in the calendar.
 1. Griswoldville Walking Tour will receive 25.

3. Web Site.

Paul Courchaine reported that questions are being sent to the Web Site regarding information about a variety of town services including real estate information. Commission members felt this feature is not

appropriate at this time for the Tourism Web Site and will discuss it with the Tourism Web Master.

4. Chairperson Kuckro reported that she will send a letter to the Keeney Visitor's Center asking the volunteers to provide information on the events listed in the event calendar. She will ask that the Historical Society provide some training for their front desk volunteers to distribute the information for the calendar of events for the fall.
 5. Coordinate Closing of Town Museums.
Chairperson Kuckro will send a letter to the presidents of the Historical Society and the Colonial Dames requesting that they review a coordinated closing of the same weekday for the museums. Commission members felt that this coordinated closing would allow a more consistent approach to tourism in the center of town.
4. New Business.
1. Update on State Tourism Commission.
Chairperson Kuckro reported that there are now five tourism districts and Wethersfield will be part of the district, which includes Hartford and towns north of Hartford. The tourism districts are funded in the state budget and the Humanities Council did receive their budget money for the upcoming year. The Humanities Council will look at grant funding opportunities for Heritage tourism events. The Tourism Commission will begin to look at the potential for applying for grants.
 2. Strategic Plan Update.
Chairperson Kuckro reported that she attended the town's meeting on updating the Strategic Plan along with other members of the Commission. She reported that tourism is included in the plan particularly to promote the historic village concept. Other ideas suggested establishing partnerships with other groups and organizations to promote tourism in town, to look at providing intra-town transportation (trolley), to develop use of the Cove and the riverfront and to provide events that will encourage pedestrian activity. Also, the meeting discussed focusing on the relationship with the business community and suggestions to reach out to the business community.
 3. Greater Hartford Arts Council Funds for Grants.
Chairperson Kuckro reported that there will be some funding for grants promoting tourism. She will look at the opportunity to apply for a grant for the Rochambeau celebration.
 4. Evaluation of Visitors Coming to Town.
Pat Warner reported that the Webb-Deane-Stevens is doing surveys about how people heard about their museum. Commission members discussed a possible survey to determine the effectiveness of their promotional materials with the brochure and calendar flyer. Commission members will talk in the future about ways to evaluate the effectiveness of these marketing ideas. Chairperson Kuckro also reported that she will be looking into utilizing Central Connecticut State University students again possibly to track visitors in the future.
 5. Lighting Lampposts around the Holidays.
Charles Ford reported that the shopkeepers are looking into decorating the lampposts around holiday time. Commission members asked for additional information on the type of decorations.
 6. Pat Warner reported that they are getting visitors from hotels in the area because of the marketing brochure and they have noticed an increase in their visitors based on this marketing promotion.
5. Adjournment.
Paul Courchaine moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Carol Adil and voted unanimously.