

**WETHERSFIELD TOURISM COMMISSION**  
**Meeting: Tuesday May 26, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.**  
**Town Manager's Conference Room**  
**MINUTES**

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

**Roll Call/Attendance** (5 required for quorum):

<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Excused</b>
Charlie Forsdick, Chair	✓		
Chris Traczyk, Vice Chair 6:15	✓		
Shireen Aforismo	✓		
Jenna Delay	✓		
Charles Ford	✓		
Carol Hall	✓		
Dorcas McHugh		✓	
Geraldine Munroe	✓		
Elaine St. Onge	✓		
Katie Sullivan	✓		

Also present: Peter Gillespie, Town Planner

**Public Comments:** Dr. Ken Sokolowski was present and provided copies of photos from the Memorial Day Parade and Encampment at the WDS Museum. Mr. Sokolowski was thanked for his efforts.

**Approval of Minutes:** April, 2009 - Mr. Forsdick asked if there were corrections needed for the draft minutes.

**Motion:** Elaine St. Onge motioned to table approval of the minutes.

**Second:** Carol Hall seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 8 - 0 - 0

**Announcements/ Introductions:**

- Mr. Forsdick announced his impending resignation as Chair and asked if the election of officers could take place at the next meeting.
- Gerry Munroe reminded members that the State Tourism Conference was being held at the Mohegan Sun.

- Mr. Forsdick announced that the 2009 Regional Tourism Awards meeting was being held on June 17.

### **Reports:**

- **Central CT Culture & Tourism Commission** – Gerry Munroe announced that the Convention and Visitors Bureau staff was being downsized.
- **Economic Development and Improvement Commission** – Peter Gillespie stated that the EDIC was initiating a Shop Local program which may be of some benefit to the Tourism Commission.
- **Budget – 08-09 status, 09-10 proposed** - Peter Gillespie reported that the Council has approved the final budget and has added some Tourism funds: \$3500 for Brochure printing and \$4000 for brochure distribution. Additionally the budget freeze for the brochure distribution for 2009 has been lifted and some funding for brochure printing will also be available. Mr. Gillespie was asked to thank the Council for the additional funding. Mrs. Munroe made a motion to contract with CTM for the brochure distribution, Kate Sullivan seconded the emotion and the vote showed all members in favor 8-0. Elaine St. Onge motioned to direct Mr. Gillespie to collect 3 proposals for brochure reprinting, Kate Sullivan seconded the motion and the vote showed all in favor 8-0.
- **Grants** – Peter Gillespie confirmed that he had filed a request for a 9 month extension for the state contract for the strategic marketing plan. He is waiting for signed copies of the approved request. Mr. Gillespie noted that the grant requires a \$2500 match and an RFP needs to be prepared for the consultant selection.

Mr. Gillespie reported that the RFP for the way-finding consultant is due June 3 and the committee will be meeting June 4 to start the review process.

- **GHC&VB, Potential Events** - Carol Hall reported that the number of conventions and events is down from last year. She stated that there are no additions to the list she published last week.
- **375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee** – Peter Gillespie, reporting for Chris Traczyk, distributed a flyer listing the 375<sup>th</sup> events and highlighted the three events scheduled for June.
- **Web Site Update** - Jenna Delay said that website hits were rising according to the usual seasonal pattern. She is submitting our suggested revisions and will be waiting for the revised header design for the website from Keiler.
- **Event Calendar** – Jenna Delay reported that she has been adding events as they are given to her. Several changes to the dates on the 375<sup>th</sup> calendar were noted.

**Old Business:**

- **Farmers Market** – Jenna Delay distributed additional copies of the flyer. She said that the banners and signs had been constructed and she will get the invoices to Peter Gillespie for payment. 10 confirmed vendors and several possible additions are in the works. Volunteers are still needed for this Thursday.
- **Stakeholder Meeting** - It was decided that a meeting would be held June 3 in the am. Peter Gillespie will be sending out confirmation notices about this meeting. The need for a mission statement was discussed and the need to expand the list of stakeholders. Charlie Forsdick offered to work on both.
- **Horse and Carriage Rides** – Peter Gillespie reported that there is a small amount of funding left and that it was advisable to save the funds for use in the Fall. It was suggested that Sen. Fonfara should be contacted for additional funds. The commission asked Peter Gillespie to contact Rae Ann Palmer and request that she solicit additional grant funds to continue this popular attraction.

**New Business:**

- Considering current budget restraints and current and impending changes to the tourism “landscape,” Mr. Forsdick suggested the Commission re-evaluate its priorities and operation. Following a lengthy and thorough discussion, the following list of responsibilities was established. Mr. Forsdick agreed to suggest priorities and divide them into areas of responsibility for discussion and approval at the next meeting.

Brochure Updating, Printing  
Budget Proposals & Administration [ ]  
Display Advertising  
Distribution  
Event Production  
Funding Solicitation  
Meeting Planners  
Photo Library  
Publicity Article Placement  
Special Projects  
Special Promotions  
Stakeholder Relations  
Tour Operators Solicitation  
Visitation Tabulation & Reporting  
Website Management & Event Calendar

**Follow Up Items:** None.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Next Meeting Date:** June 30, 2009 at 5:30 PM, Town Manager's Conference Room

**Call to Adjourn:**

**Motion:** Elaine St. Onge motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 PM

**Second:** Geraldine Munroe seconded the motion

**Vote:** 8-0-0

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Gillespie

Town Planner/Acting Recording Secretary