

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

WETHERSFIELD TOURISM COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday January 25, 2005
Town Managers' Conference Room
Town Hall

Members Present

Members in attendance: Chairman Charlie Forsdick, Elaine St. Onge, Ann Kuckro, Chris Traczyk, Paul Montinieri, Ellen Goldberg and Charlie Ford. Also present: Peter Gillespie Economic Development Manager/Town Planner.

Chairman Forsdick called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Minutes

The [minutes of the November 30, 2004 meeting](#) were reviewed. The following changes were suggested:

Page 1 - Pat Warner was acting chair.

Page 1 - Jim Murdy and Bill Williams were present.

Page 2 - Ann Kuckro was misspelled.

Page 2 - Pat Warner not Ann Warner.

Elaine St. Onge motioned to approve the minutes with the modifications noted, Chris Traczyk seconded the motion and the vote showed all in favor.

Announcements/Introductions

Chairman Forsdick regretfully accepted the resignation of Pat Warner from the Commission and thanked her for her efforts and representation of the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum. Ellen Goldberg will be the new representative of the museum.

Old Business

Vacancies

Mr. Forsdick noted the need to recruit new members to represent the business community. Mr. Peter Patel of the Travel Inn on the Berlin Turnpike and Carol Bruce were mentioned as possible members to recruit. Chris Traczyk suggested contacting business persons through the EDIC Business Visitation Program. Mr. Gillespie will get names to Mr. Forsdick. Ann Kuckro suggested Mr. Aforismo, the Bed and Breakfast owner, as a possible candidate.

Reports

Grant Funding

Ann Kuckro stated that they are trying to wrap up the 2 grants: Rochambeau and Historical Society. They are having difficulty getting images that are not copyrighted. The Connecticut Commission on the Arts may help with the research. Saturday sessions of the open hearth cooking with Paul Courchane are planned in March.

Heritage Partnership Committee

Chris Traczyk handed out the minutes of the Heritage Partnership Committee meeting held on the 18th of January and summarized the meeting by stating that the Committee believes they can be disbanded and used on an ad-hoc basis for special projects. The main project that is outstanding is the way finding signage report which should be finished shortly. Many members of the Committee are also on the Tourism Commission. Ann Kuckro suggested that the committee could take on the Rochambeau reenactment event planned for May 2006. Chris Traczyk motioned "that the Heritage Partnership Committee has completed its role transitioning festival organizers into the Tourism Commission. The Heritage Partnership will complete its review of the Signage Report and will present to the Commission the final report and its recommendations along with the names of an ad-hoc committee to implement the first phase of the recommendations. The Heritage Partnership Committee will then turn its records over to the Tourism Commission and disband." Mr. Ford seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor. Ms. Traczyk noted that the Quilt Show scheduled for March 18/19 needs volunteers and anyone interested should contact Barb Bellas.

Marketing and Publicity Committee

1. Elaine St. Onge noted that the Committee has not met since November. Pat Warner had been the catalyst. The event calendar will continue to be posted on the web site and the funds used in the past to print the calendar it will be used for advertising and marketing the town. Elaine St. Onge motioned to utilize funds from event calendar printing on national publication advertising such a Yankee and American Life. The Committee will research where to spend funds. Mr. Ford seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.
2. Ellen Goldberg reminded everyone to get event information to Lloyd Goldberg for the spring calendar.
3. Elaine St. Onge stated that George Bottini had picked up 100 kitchen flyer packets, 500 had been printed.
4. Mr. Forsdick suggested that additional links be added to our web site to improve the visibility of the site.
5. Mr. Forsdick reiterated the need to work with the Greater Hartford Convention & Visitors Bureau to establish Historic Wethersfield as a primary destination for visitors.
6. Mr. Forsdick assured the Commission that he would schedule a meeting of The Marketing & Publicity Committee and get them back on track before the next Commission meeting.

Strategic Planning Committee

Mr. Forsdick reported that he has been in discussions with Mr. Murdy on several occasions and that they are still on schedule. The public meeting was delayed until the week due to the holidays. The Commission members were concerned about the lack of publicity. Mr. Gillespie stated that an additional meeting may be needed with more public notice. All members were encouraged to attend the meeting.

Recommendations to Town Strategic Plan Committee

Mr. Forsdick stated that he intends to get the recommendations to the Strategic Plan Committee by the end of the month. Mr. Forsdick will email a report to all members and coordinate responses. Many members had been interviewed.

New Business

2005/2006 Budget

Mr. Forsdick distributed a draft budget outline and requested members to prioritize recommendations. He suggested that additional funds need to be requested for the Tourism Budget next year and that all amounts need to be associated with specific line items.

He stated that R & R Consultants would be providing some suggestions for budget items that will be supported by their recommendations.

Mr. Forsdick stated that R &R Consultants is suggesting a Holiday Event. Members discussed the Holiday on Main Street event which had been held years ago. Ann Kuckro stressed the need to involve Silas Deane Highway merchants into the event. Mr. Forsdick asked the members to think about how this idea could be developed further.

The Commission discussed the budget draft and prioritized items in the budget request for submission to the Town manager subject to suggestions from R & R Consultants.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Commission will be held on February 22, 2005 at 7:00 PM in the Town Manager's Conference Room.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.