

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

WETHERSFIELD TOURISM COMMISSION

Meeting: Tuesday, July 26, 2005 5:30 PM

Town Manager's Conference Room

AGENDA

Call To Order - Chairman Forsdick called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Roll Call - Members in attendance - Chairman Charles Forsdick, Peter Patel, Chris Traczyk, Charles Ford, Elaine St. Onge, Anne Kuckro, EarlMunroe and Donna Hemman.

Also in attendance - Carmela Moore - Chamber of Commerce, Peter Gillespe - Economic Development Manager/Town Planner and Paul Gionfriddo.

Public Comments - There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes - [June 2005 meeting](#) - Elaine St. Onge motioned to approve the minutes, Anne Kuckro seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.

Announcements/Introductions - Chairman Forsdick welcomed Geraldine Munroe to the Commission as a new member.

Election of Vice-Chairperson - Chairman Forsdick stated that his schedule will take him out of Town for several months over the winter and he has considered resigning as Chair and from the Commission due to this schedule because he may not be able to give his full attention to the work of the Commission. Mr. Forsdick suggested electing a Vice Chair to act as Chairman in his absence and run the meetings. Carol Bruce suggested a trial one year run with a Vice Chair and the other members agreed. Carol Bruce motioned to elect Chris Traczyk as Vice Chair of the Commission, Anne Kuckro seconded the motion. Chris Traczyk agreed to accept the position as long as help from all of the Commission members provide help and her job responsibilities permit. All members voted in favor.

Reports:

Grant Funding - RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant to the Town Manager was present and reported that the Preserve America grant will be on the Council agenda for the August 15 meeting and will be submitted by the September 1 deadline. The Town Planner will be assisting with the grant application.

Ms. Palmer also reported on an additional grant possibility - Interpreting America's Historic Places - which contains funding opportunities up to \$15,000 for consultation and planning grants. These funds are available through the National Endowment for the Humanities and the first deadline is September 15. A lengthy debate ensued regarding specific projects to fund and it was determined that Ms. Palmer and Mrs. Kuckro will conduct some additional research and get more information on possible projects to fund.

Marketing and Publicity Committee

Brochure Revision and Printing - Chair Forsdick reported that 100,000 new brochures have been printed and delivered to our storage unit on Oleson Road. 10 boxes have also been delivered to CTM for distribution. This should be enough for a 2 year supply.

WR3 Brochure - Anne Kuckro distributed a proof of the Washington Rochambeau brochure which has been approved by the State and reported that planning is underway for May 2006 for a symposium on the Franco American Revolutionary War experience and the 225th anniversary re-

enactment. Mr. Forsdick suggested that the brochure should not be date specific therefore it could be used for years to come.

Fam Tour Meeting - Chair Forsdick handed out a 1 page summary of the agreement negotiated with Destination Connecticut and Mr. Montinieri. A brief discussion ensued regarding the responsibilities that the Town has agreed to implement. It was agreed that the Marketing Committee will meet to discuss which of the recommendations they can follow up on and Mr. Gillespie will consider taking on some of the tasks.

Promotion Packet - Elaine St. Onge reported that the project has been a bit delayed due to an injury to Mr. McNaughton and the next step is to select the appropriate paper stock, finalize the 1 page tour summary and get the printing complete. In the meantime the old folders can still be utilized.

Hotel Guest Guide - Mrs. St. Onge reported that the ad has been finalized and has turned out very well.

Group Tour Magazine - Mr. Forsdick handed out information regarding a coop ad with a deadline of July 29. Mrs. St. Onge stated that she is concerned that the Commission does not have a formal marketing strategy in place and wants to hold off on any additional spending until a plan is in place.

Tourism DVD - Carol Bruce reported that Lois Clarke is working on a DVD slide show with text and has volunteers from Senior Net. Some assistance will be needed with the text and some additional photos will also be needed.

Web Site - Ellen Goldberg was not present. Carol Bruce stated that many people visiting Town have used the website as a tool to hear about Wethersfield.

Strategic Plan Committee - Mr. Forsdick reported that the Committee met and discussed the draft report and felt that the report was deficient in many areas. Mr. Ford stated that he expected a much more detailed series of marketing strategies than the report provided. Mr. Gillespie noted that the report was also submitted much later than the deadlines in the contract. Mr. Forsdick reported that the committee voted to recommend termination of the contract and to negotiate an exit strategy with the consultant. Mr. Gillespie reported that the Town Attorney reviewed the contract and felt comfortable with the committee recommendation. Chris Traczyk motioned to terminate the contract with R and R as cheaply as possible and use the savings to work with the second choice Amy Webb and the National Trust For Historic Preservation, Anne Kuckro seconded the motion and the vote showed all in favor.

Mrs. Traczyk suggested that the committee should meet before Amy Webb is contacted to clarify what is expected from her.

Way-finding Signage - Mrs. Traczyk reported that a meeting is scheduled for next Thursday August 4 at 5:30 with the Mayor and Town Manager.

Old Business:

Budget 2005-2006 - Mr. Forsdick distributed a revised budget spreadsheet and reported that the Council had granted \$29,500 in budget monies this year, \$3,000 in grants had been received and \$13,440 had been carried over from last years budget.

Vacancy, Chamber of Commerce Representative - Carmela Moore reported that Phil Santopietro is interested in replacing George Bottini on the Commission. Mr. Gillespie reported that the Town has not yet received a resignation letter from Mr. Bottini and Mr. Santopietro cannot be appointed by the Council until the resignation is received.

New Business

Coop with EDIC - Marketing Services Agency - RFP - Mr. Forsdick reported that the EDIC has agreed to partner with Tourism on the search for a one stop agency to assist the Town with a variety of marketing/PR

tasks rather than continue the practice of using a number of different firms for the various tasks needed. Mr. Ford stated that help is needed with media assistance and getting articles published in magazines and other media. Mr. Gillespie will prepare a draft of the RFP for the 2 committees to review and discuss. Mr. Forsdick stated that Kathy Bagley may have a similar RFP used for the Wethersfield Weekend event that could be useful.

Paul Gionfriddo - Documentary - Mrs. Kuckro introduced Mr. Gionfriddo and explained that he is working with a number of volunteers on a video documentary of the Revolutionary War and Wethersfield's role. Mr. Gionfriddo requested a \$1,000 contribution to assist with this effort and the money would be used to pay for food and beverages for the volunteers. Mr. Gionfriddo stated that the documentary is a great opportunity to showcase the Town and the documentary will be shopped to public television and other stations for broadcast. Mrs. Traczyk stated that she is uncomfortable with the request since it is not in our budget plan. Mr. Forsdick stated that the video is a great project however it is not necessarily a Tourism Commission project and other sources for funding should be pursued. The Commission members suggested contacting other service type agencies for funding.

Scholarship - Mrs. Munroe reported that a State scholarship of \$1,000 is available for students pursuing tourism related studies such as hotels, restaurants and film making

Next Meeting: August 30, 2005, 5:30 PM - Town Managers Conference Room

Adjournment - Mr. Forsdick adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted

Peter D. Gillespie
Economic Development Manager/Town Planner