Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Western Connecticut Tourism District Wednesday, July 15, 10 am, via Zoom

Directors present were: Craig Nelson, chair; Randy Fiveash, Kerry McAndrew, Dawn Nielsen, Greg Dembowski, Roger Palanzo, John Walsh, Michelle Falcone, Tim Good, Herman Olivera, Ben Paletsky, Marcelo Martins, Laura Budd, Debbie Ventre, Nancy Saggese, Christal Preszler, Sue Frisch, Irene Dixon, Jen Wastrom, Barbara Manners, Lorenzo Gaudioso, John Baroody, David Kooris, Gregg Dancho, Marietta Korsu, Jeffrey Dunn, Rachel Kelly, Kathy Champion, Craig Nelson, Fran Keilty, Sheree Marcucci, Jeff McHugh, Jennifer Tooker, Lara Green-Kazlauskas, Carmen Romeo, and Karen Reddington-Hughes. Others present included: David Green, Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County, Tod Kallenbach of the Burlington Economic Development Corp., Annette Einhorn, Stamford alternate; and Tom Roman of Litchfield; Rosemary Bove of the State Office of Tourism; from Storytellers, Chris Smith, Joe Giaccone, Matt Shea and Morgan Dotson; from the Waterbury Regional Chamber: Lynn Ward, Mandy Allen and Terry Macary.

Welcome
Mr. Nelson called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

Minutes
Mr. Nelson asked the Board members to review the minutes of the April 22, 2020 meeting as presented. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Romeo, seconded by Ms. Kelly. The motion carried. The following members abstained, as they were not present at the April 22, 2020 meeting: Ms. Nielsen, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Polanzo, Mr. Olivera, Ms. Preszler, Ms. Dixon, Ms. Wastrom, Mr. Kooris, Ms. Champion, Ms. Keilty, Ms. Tooker, and Ms. Green-Kazlauskas.

RECEIVED
2020 JUL 22 P 4:36
TOWN CLERK
BETHEL, CT.

Additions to the Agenda
No additions to the Agenda were made

Communications/New Business
Mr. Gaudioso reminded Board members that all Board meetings are public and noted that moving forward, emails to the Board may include all email addresses.

Membership Update
Appointed Members
Ms. Green-Kazlauskas reported that nearly every seat of the 63 municipalities had been filled; currently 11 seats are empty. She asked Board members who may know interested people in those municipalities to reach out to her to help fill them and that Ms. Macary would send a list of those still needing representation.

Industry/At-Large Members
Mr. Nelson noted the Board is allowed up to 21 at-large members from tourism-related industries in the District. Board members who have recommendations should send them to Ms. Macary, and those representatives will be voted in November.

By-Laws
Mr. Nelson noted the By-Laws for the District were sent to Board members in advance for their review. Ms. Nelson moved to approve the By-Laws as presented; Mr. Gaudioso seconded. The motion carried.

Financial Report
Ms. Allen, Finance Director at the Waterbury Regional Chamber, administrative partner, reviewed the balance sheet and profit and loss statement. She noted the final net income was 354,030.64. Ms. Gaudioso clarified that the balance was specifically allowed by the state of Connecticut due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Kelly moved to accept the financial reports as presented; Ms. Falcone seconded. The motion carried.

State Marketing Update
Randy Fiveash and Team
Mr. Fiveash updated the Board regarding the state's position due to the pandemic. He noted the state is in a very difficult position, as 22 states were currently on Connecticut's travel advisory list.

Good to See You, Connecticut
Ms. Bove reviewed the Good to See You, Connecticut, campaign. She noted it had two key objectives: reassuring visitors that Connecticut is open for business –safely, and to inspire those who are ready to explore Connecticut to see what is in their backyard. The campaign includes safety videos, social media marketing, and television advertising.

Marketing Committee
Chair Introductions
Ms. Nelson introduced the co-chairs of the Marketing Committee: John Baroody and Jeff McHugh.

Facebook Update
Ms. Macary reviewed the District's new Facebook page. She noted that in one month, the page went from zero to 723 page likes, 750 followers, and 1200 page views with a reach of 5,451. She noted this growth was all organic and that paid campaigns would begin according to the Marketing Committee's plan.

One-Eleven Update

Ms. Nelson reviewed the current status with the One Eleven marketing agency, noting that Mr. Nelson, Mr. Gaudioso, Mr. Fiveash and Ms. Macary recently met with the agency team to finalize a plan to spend the unused marketing dollars. The agency will provide more information to Mr. Fiveash.

Marketing Agency: Storytellers
Mr. Giaccone introduced the members of the Storytellers team to the Board. He noted that the Storytellers team was ready to support the District and promote tourism in the area. The team also showed two videos to the Board.

Committees – Call for Members
Mr. Nelson noted the need for members for several committees, including the Nominating, Legislative and Marketing committees. He noted that elections for officers would take place at the November board meeting, so a nominating committee would need to be formed. Mr. Gaudioso noted the Marketing Committee is growing, but needs representation from Fairfield County. They asked anyone interested to reach out to Ms. Macary.

Call to Action
Mr. Gaudioso reviewed the action items Board members can take next, including liking and sharing the Facebook page, asking venues to fill out the District's Google form, sharing photos and video for promotion, and joining future partner roundtables.

Adjournment
With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:08 am

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Macary
Administrative Partner

Directors Present:
Kerry McAndrew- Beacon Falls
Dawn Nielsen- Bristol
Greg Dembowksi – Brookfield
Roger Palanzo - Danbury
John Walsh-Derby
Michelle Falcone-Easton
Tim Good- Kent
Herman Olivera – Monroe
Ben Paletsky-Morris
Marcelo Martins-Naugatuck
Laura Budd- New Canaan
Debbie Ventre-New Hartford
Nancy Saggese- New Milford

Christal Preszler - Newtown
Sue Frisch- Norfolk
Jen Wastrom - Redding
Barbara Manners-Ridgefield
Lorenzo Gaudioso- Roxbury
John Baroody-Sharon
Marietta Korsu - Southbury
David Kooris – Stamford
Gregg Dancho- Stratford
Jeffrey Dunn- Thomaston
Rachel Kelly- Torrington
Kathy Champion – Trumbull
Craig Nelson-Warren
Fran Keilty - Washington
Sheree Marcucci-Waterbury
Jeff McHugh- Watertown
Jennifer Tooker – Westport
Lara Green-Kazlauskas - Winsted
Carmen Romeo-Wolcott
Karen Reddington Hughes- Woodbury