

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

WETHERSFIELD TOURISM COMMISSION
Meeting: Tuesday, March 25, 2008 at 5:30 p.m.
Basement Conference Room #1
MINUTES

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chris Traczyk, Vice Chair.

Roll Call/Attendance: Members in attendance: Chris Traczyk -Vice Chair, Charles Ford, Carol Hall, Joan Hughes, Elaine St. Onge, Katie Sullivan. Also in attendance: Andy Adil, Mayor; Peter Gillespie, Town Planner/Economic Development Manager and Jenna Delay.

Members absent: Charlie Forsdick, Chair, Gerry Munroe, and Paul Montinieri, Town Council Liaison.

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes: [February 26, 2008](#) - Chris Traczyk asked if there were corrections needed for the draft minutes, and one typographical error was noted. Katie Sullivan made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as amended, Elaine St. Onge seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.

Announcements/ Introductions:

Reports:

- **Central CT Culture & Tourism Commission:** No report.
- **Economic Development Commission:** No report.
- **375th Anniversary Committee:** Chris Traczyk reported that a \$50,000 budget has been requested for the event. No calendar has been set, but tentative plans include fireworks, a parade, Wethersfield Pictorial History Book Project by the Historical Society, an art show on the sidewalks of Old Wethersfield by the Wethersfield Art League, a Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary War encampment by the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum, a bus tour, a concert by the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, and commemorative souvenirs. Peter Gillespie noted that Keilor Associates is on retainer by the Town for about two more months, and several members urged Mr. Gillespie to relay that to the Committee so they could make use of their services. Charlie Ford said that he would relay the sidewalk art show idea to the Wethersfield Shopkeepers Association.
- **2006-2007 Budget Report:** Peter Gillespie said that the latest Town budget proposal included a number of reductions and cuts to the Tourism Commission budget. Reductions included advertising from \$33,000 to \$8,000; and billboard advertising from \$20,000 to \$10,080. Cut completely from the budget were funds for: the Fam Tour (\$2,500), the photo library (\$1,500), the matching funds for the marketing plan (\$5,000) and the video (\$1,500), and the horse and buggy ride (\$5,000). A total of \$38,000 remains budgeted for various Tourism items. Another notable budget reduction proposed is the 375th Anniversary Committee from \$50,000 to \$15,000. Chris Traczyk said that she plans to attend the budget workshop on April 30th.

Old Business:

- **Convention Center Future events** - Carol Hall reviewed the updated table of events that she provided. The new events planned that seemed to be a good fit for Wethersfield included: the Independent Educational Consultant Association, the American Association of Wood Turners, and the Land Trust Alliance.

Peter Gillespie said that he sent an informational letter to the New England Library Association. Those assigned to sending informational letters to the new events are: Independent Educational Consultant Association (Jenna Delay), the American Association of Wood Turners (Katie Sullivan), and the Land Trust Alliance (Carol Hall).

- **Revised Promotion Package** - Charlie Ford said that he is in the process of checking with Rob Garry on the availability of Broad Street Green Tour brochures. Peter Gillespie said that approximately 150 will be needed for the initial mailing.
- **Visitor Specials/Promotions** - It was agreed that Katie Sullivan would followed-up with the Hilton Hotel in Glastonbury to see if the reduced rates they proposed would be available on the same weekends as the conventions discussed under Convention Center events, and also whether the hotel would allow its web link to be placed on the Town's tourism webpage.
- **Billboard Grant:** Peter Gillespie reported that Wethersfield was the only town to be awarded billboard space. The other awardees were places like the New England Carousel Museum and the Norwalk Maritime Museum. The Commission by consensus authorized Peter Gillespie to approve the final design concept given the time constraints (design must be finalized prior to May).
- **Preserve America:** Peter Gillespie said that he attended the most recent meeting March 20th. Discussion at that meeting centered on intersection changes to improve traffic flow, pedestrian safety and appearance. Some of the intersections targeted include: Main and State Streets, Main and Church Streets, Main Street and Hartford Avenue, and the State Street-Hartford Avenue-Nott Street-Garden Street area. Also discussed at the meeting were signage for the Silas Deane Highway and the Keene Memorial Sports Center. A public hearing on the Preserve America report is tentatively scheduled for May 20th, and the report would be made available on the Town's website approximately two weeks in advance of the hearing.

New Business:

- **Quarterly weekends** - Peter Gillespie said that the horse and buggy ride may be run on Mother's Day weekend.
- **Web site advertising - GHVCB:** Chris Traczyk said that there was no progress to report.
- **Photo contest:** No report.
- **2008 Memorial Day Parade - May 24th:** Chris Traczyk suggested that that the trolley or horse and buggy rides "march" in the parade and operate for rides with the route adjusted to include a stop at the Hanmer School Fair.
- **CT Literature Distribution Services:** The Commission authorized Peter Gillespie to finalize this and execute the agreement.
- **Brochure Reprinting:** Peter Gillespie said that the 25,000 brochures would be needed. He said that the printing cost would be approximately \$4,175 - an amount that may not be in the budget. Chris Traczyk noted that the brochures are critical to the Town's ability to supply CT Literature Distribution Service.
- **Connecticut on Film Informational Meeting:** Carol Hall reported a number of tips she learned at the meeting for promoting the Town to film makers. Most importantly, she said site selections are most often made through internet research, so a picture library on the Town website could be beneficial. She also said that she knows someone with film industry background, and will see if they would help suggest what pictures would best show-off the Town to film makers. She also said that the state has adopted incentives such as waivers on sales or hotel taxes if the film makers stay greater than 30 days.
- **Scarecrows on Main Street Press Release:** Charlie Ford said that the Town should consider planning to do a press release for this event. Peter Gillespie said that there probably will not be enough money in the budget to allow Keilor Associates to work on it.
- **Town Website Improvements:** Jenna Delay said that she established a link between the web pages for Tourism and the Town Public School calendars. Charlie Ford suggested that a link also be made between

Tourism and the Shopkeepers Association web pages.

Completed Items/Tasks: No reports.

Correspondence: None.

Next Meeting Date: April 29, 2008 at 5:30 PM, Town Hall Conference Room #1.

Call to Adjourn: Elaine St. Onge motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m., Katie Sullivan seconded the motion, and the vote showed all members in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin T. Sullivan
Commission Recording Secretary