

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

WETHERSFIELD TOURISM COMMISSION
Meeting: Tuesday, April 30, 2008 at 5:30 p.m.
Town Manager's Conference Room
MINUTES

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Charlie Forsdick.

Roll Call/Attendance: Members in attendance: Charlie Forsdick, Chair, Charles Ford, Carol Hall, Elaine St. Onge, Katie Sullivan and Chris Traczyk. Also in attendance: Paul Montinieri, Town Council Liaison; Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager; and Peter Gillespie, Town Planner/Economic Development Manager.

Members absent: Joan Hughes, Geraldine Munroe.

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes: [March 25, 2008](#) - Charlie Forsdick asked if there were corrections needed for the draft minutes, and two clarifications were requested. Elaine St. Onge made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as amended, Katie Sullivan seconded the motion and the vote showed all members in favor.

Announcements/ Introductions:

- Charlie Forsdick announced that Joan Hughes had submitted a letter of resignation as a member of the Commission. He said that the Commission appreciated all of her efforts. Chris Traczyk also said that the Commission would miss her expertise.

Reports:

- **Central CT Culture & Tourism Commission** - Geraldine Munroe: No report
- **Economic Development and Improvement Commission** - Peter Gillespie said that the State Film Commission Initiative was discussed at the last EDIC meeting. Bonnie Therrien said that the Town may set-up a meeting with the State, and asked if the Tourism Commission should participate. The consensus of group discussion was that film making is an excellent opportunity for the Town, and the Commission supports this opportunity. However, the towns that have been successful in doing so, have put considerable time and effort in through their economic development staff. For example, 12 films were recently done in Bridgeport, and the City's economic development office scouted sites and provided other services to assist the filming operations. The members felt that the Tourism Commission does not have the resources to provide significant support, and that such efforts should be carried out through the EDIC, Town professional staff, or perhaps a new committee.

Mr. Gillespie also mentioned several other efforts and events discussed at the last EDIC meeting:

- Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting is May 14th at the Wethersfield Country Club
- State of the Town Breakfast will be held May 21st at 8:00 AM at the Wethersfield Country Club;
- EDIC is updating the 2001 economic development plan; and
- EDIC is co-sponsoring with the Town Redevelopment Agency a public forum on town economic development issues on June 11th, 7:00 PM, at the Silas Deane Middle School.

GHC&VB, Potential Events - Carol Hall said that there is one new convention on the calendar to report - American Public Transportation Association. The consensus of group discussion was that this convention did not appear to be relevant enough to Wethersfield to pursue.

• **Grant Funding**

- **Preserve America** - Status - Chris Traczyk said that there is a public hearing scheduled for May 20th.
 - **Billboard Grant** - Peter Gillespie said that he and Chris Traczyk have been working on details such as the best image to use and scouting locations. The billboards should be up in June and July.
 - **Marketing Grant** - Peter Gillespie reported that the Town had received a cooperative marketing grant for strategic marketing planning. The grant award is \$5,000 from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and the Arts. The recipient will be the Historical Society, and the Town is required provide a \$2,500 match.
- **Budget Status: 2007 - 08 and 2008 - 09:** Peter Gillespie said that the Commission has about \$6,000 left in its 2007 - 08 budget. Charlie Forsdick said that the Historic Wethersfield brochure needs updating and printing, and he hoped that could be done with this year's funds.

Charlie Forsdick said that the 2008 - 09 budget proposal falls about \$8,000 short of being able to continue the advertising being done in magazines now. He said that he plans to attend the budget workshop to request restoration of sufficient funds to continue this advertising.

Chris Traczyk motioned to use the remaining 2007 - 08 budget for two things: to edit and print the Historic Wethersfield brochure, and to offer to pay the \$2,500 matching portion of the cooperative marketing grant which would need to be funded in the 2008 - 09 budget year. Katie Sullivan seconded the motion and the vote showed all in favor.

- **Visitor Survey Results - Quarterly:** Peter Gillespie reported that some of the survey wording is confusing, and gave some examples. He offered to edit the survey and distribute it for comment via e-mail.
- **375th Anniversary Committee** - Chris Traczyk distributed copies of a list of ideas and the person assigned to follow-up. She noted that few people had been assigned, and suggested that the Commission consider offering to help.
- **Tourism DVD** - Peter Gillespie said that Geraldine Munroe has been in touch with Paul Mayer, the person doing the video. He said an alternative approach would be to use a consultant called CGI. This consultant's business plan is to produce promotional videos for towns, at no cost to them. The town only has to introduce CGI to the businesses in town, in the hopes that the businesses will hire CGI after they see the video that was done for the town. CGI would produce a script based on what the Town tells them it wants to highlight in the video. Mr. Gillespie said that the EDIC has tasked him with getting more information about CGI.
- **Greeter Book update** - Katie Sullivan said that she will be finished with a draft of the book soon and asked if there are other types of businesses or services she should include. The consensus of group discussion was to add drug stores, but not ATMs and banks unless there is space in the book.

Old Business:

- **Display Ad Schedule** - Charlie Forsdick said that the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism is offering discounts for special event ads in newspapers. He plans to go to their CTVisit website for ideas on wording.
- **Promo Packet** - Distribution: Peter Gillespie said that distribution has been delayed waiting for brochures from the Silas Robbins House and the Broad Street Green. Chris Traczyk suggested waiting one more week, then send the packet without them if necessary.
- **Event Calendar** - Update: Jenna Delay said that 3 PTOs are going to allow the Commission to submit

calendar entries for their newsletters.

- **Horse & Carriage Ride Grant** - Update: Peter Gillespie said that the carriage is scheduled to run on the Saturday and Sunday of Mother's Day weekend, and also the day of the Memorial Day Parade.
- **Website advertising:** Chris Traczyk said that the contact for the Central Connecticut Culture and Tourism Commission has not returned her calls.
- **Photo Contest:** Peter Gillespie said that release forms are turning out to be significant hurdle. Contestants would have to submit release forms for anyone in the pictures they submit, and it may discourage them from entering the contest. He will continue to work with the Town attorney on what is needed.
- **Memorial Day Parade:** Charlie Forsdick said it would be good if the Commission had members march in the parade, and asked who would be willing and available. Charlie Forsdick, Kate Sullivan, Carol Hall and Chris Traczyk said they could attend. Chris Traczyk said she could get t-shirts for them to wear, and Katie Sullivan said she could make the iron-on for the t-shirts. Peter Gillespie said is also trying to get the trolley and the trolley bus for the parade.
- **Literature Distribution:** No report.
- **Brochure Reprinting:** Pending the results of the budget discussion above.

New Business:

- **Intercommunity Mental Health Association 5K Run** - The Association has asked to hold this event again in Wethersfield. Chris Traczyk said that the event is a worthy cause and there is no cost to the Town, so she motioned that the Commission support the event again. Katie Sullivan seconded, and the vote showed all in favor.

Completed Items/Tasks: None.

Correspondence: None.

Next Meeting Date: May 27, 2008 at 5:30 PM, Town Hall Conference Room #1.

Call to Adjourn: Chris Traczyk motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m., Elaine St. Onge seconded the motion, and the vote showed all members in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin T. Sullivan
Commission Recording Secretary