

**WETHERSFIELD TOURISM COMMISSION**  
**Meeting: Tuesday, September 25, 2007 at 5:30 p.m.**  
**Town Manager's Conference Room**  
**MINUTES**

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Chair Charlie Forsdick.

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

Members absent: Carol Hall and Joan Hughes, EDIC Liaison.

**Public Comments:** None

**Approval of Minutes:** [August 28, 2007](#) - Charlie Forsdick asked if there were corrections needed for the draft minutes. Charlie Forsdick requested several corrections and clarifications. 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:** None.

**Old Business:**

- **Trolley for Fall Festival Weekend:** Charlie Forsdick reviewed the trolley schedule. It will run Saturday, October 6th from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and Sunday, October 7th from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The route will consist of the following start and stops: Keney Memorial Cultural Center, Cove Park (Saturday only), Cove Warehouse (Sunday only), Comstock Ferre & Company, Silas Robbins House, and the Old Academy.

Gerry Munroe has drafted a narrative for guides to use on the trolley. Volunteer guides are needed. The tentative guide schedule is: Elaine on Saturday, Anne on Sunday 2:00 - 4:00, and Katie on Sunday 11:00 - 12:30.

Chris Traczyk asked if a donations container could be put out in the trolley marked "Trolley provided by the Tourism Commission". Peter Gillespie said that it would be OK for the Commission to accept donations that way. The most difficult part may be the logisites of handling the money.

Charlie Forsdick said that the tentative sharing of the trolley cost is as follows: Historical Society - half of Saturday's cost; Webb Deane Stevens Museum - half of Sunday's cost; Keane Foundation - \$150; Charter Productions[Craft Fair]\$150; Shop Keepers Association \$100.

- **GHCVB Liaison - Rotation Schedule** - Charlie Forsdick said that volunteers are needed for the next two monthly meetings held by the GHCVB. Chris Traczyk volunteered for the October 10th meeting, and Katie Sullivan volunteered for the November 8th meeting.
- **Event Calendar Coordinator** - Charlie Forsdick said that ideally the library would undertake this task. Peter Gillespie said that the library is willing to do it, but not until after the renovation project is complete. Charlie Forsdick said that experience has shown that the coordinator needs to actively and regularly ask for information from organizations to update the calendar. Chris Traczyk said that few organizations have sufficient staff to serve as a contact, staff changes are frequent and no one has a master list of updated contacts for all of the organizations. Peter Gillespie said that information can be forwarded through him to the current webmaster Jenna Delay. Chris Traczyk said that she will work with Ms. Delay to update the list of organization contacts.

**Horse and Carriage Ride Grant** - Peter Gillespie reported that the Town had hoped to get 3 proposals from which to choose one vendor, but received no proposals. He said that the Finance Department is checking with Senator Fonfara's office about the timeline for spending the grant money. Paul Montinieri suggested that the grant be used to fund a trolley instead of a horse and carriage. Elaine St. Onge said that the grant came through the Department of Agriculture so it probably could not be used for a trolley. Paul Montinieri then suggested a hay ride as something that could be set-up quickly before the grant expired and also be consistent with the agricultural basis for the grant. Charlie Forsdick asked Mr. Gillespie to look into whether an amendment from the Town Council is needed to allow changes in the plan.

- **Vacancy - Berlin Turnpike Business Representative:** Peter Gillespie reported that the owner of the new Kyoto Japanese Steakhouse and Sushi Bar may be interested in becoming a Commission member.
- **Vacancy - Chamber of Commerce Representative:** Charlie Forsdick reported that the Chamber has not yet found a representative.

### **New Business:**

- Charlie Forsdick said that the Commission needs someone to check the GHCVB website regularly (about monthly) to see which conventions appear to be a good marketing match for Wethersfield. Paul Montinieri suggested that all members watch the site and alert Charlie Forsdick when they see a convention that looks good. Chris Traczyk said that would be a good way to do it for a while until the Commission designates someone. Charlie Forsdick said that he will ask Carol Hall if she can monitor the website regularly.
- **J. Michaels Tavern Opening** - Charlie Forsdick said that the Tavern is going to have a "soft" or partial opening on October 13th. He encouraged the members to attend the opening if possible to show their support. Paul Montinieri said that he had met the Tavern owners. He said that they are appreciative of the very positive reception the Town has given to them. He said the owners are also trying to be consistent with the historical aspect of the building, by painting it with colors that are consistent with when the house was built. Charlie Forsdick said that the owners have told him that they are interested in getting feedback about what people think of their new restaurant.

### **Reports:**

- **Central Connecticut Culture and Tourism Commission** - Anne Kuckro reported that this Commission has a new driving tours brochure out that includes Wethersfield as a destination. She said the brochure's content looks good so far, but she will review it in more detail for accuracy. Chris Traczyk suggested that the Commission's website was just updated, so the brochure can be checked against the web content.

Anne Kuckro also reported that the Central Connecticut Tourism District has an Airstream trailer available to show to generate interest in tourism. She reviewed a number dates with that the trailer is available, and it appeared that October 5th and 12th may be the best dates for Wethersfield. She said the trailer would likely be parked in the Keeney Memorial Center's parking lot.

- **Economic Development and Improvement Commission** - Peter Gillespie reported that there is a meeting later that week with Keiler Associates regarding promotion plans.
- **Preserve America Grant Status** - Chris Traczyk said that a draft report is ready but only the steering committee has copies. She also said that there is a public hearing tentatively set for December 4th or 5th, and the draft report will be available on the website 1 - 2 weeks before the hearing. Charlie Forsdick said that once the plan is made final, the Town Council will be considering which organization will oversee its implementation.
- **Tourism DVD** - Anne Kuckrow and Gerry Monroe will be working on the DVD with Paul Mayer. The content will likely highlight the change of seasons using examples such as the Scarecrows along Main Street in the fall and Comstock and Ferre Company in the spring.
- **Display Ad Schedule:** Charlie Forsdick distributed copies of a revised schedule to the members, and

reviewed the status of the following:

**Greater Hartford Hotel Guide:** Pita Communications is preparing an ad. He and Peter Gillespie will review the ad prior to the September 28th deadline.

**Greater Hartford Visitor's Guide:** Publishing and business advisors have stressed the need to consistently and repeatedly get Wethersfield's name out there. Previous discussion has been that the Stop, Look and Listen ad needs revision. Charlie Forsdick asked members to review the ad schedule at home and make suggested revisions to him via e-mail within one week. Time is needed for ad design work prior to deadlines.

Katie Sullivan said that the Webb Deane Stevens Museum gets a lot of business from the AAA Journeys magazine. Charlie Ford said that he has demographic information that shows AAA is a good match for Wethersfield. Charlie Forsdick said that the AAA magazine is expensive, so perhaps a small ad can be run to keep Wethersfield in it consistently.

- **Promo Packet** - The Promo Packet is ready except for some small updates (e.g. J. Michaels Tavern). After the Packet is printed, it will be reviewed by the Commission and sent to tour operators.

**Completed Items/Tasks:** None discussed.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Next Meeting Date:** October 30, 2007 at 5:30 PM, Town Hall Conference Room #1.

**Call to Adjourn:** Katie Sullivan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m., Anne Kuckro seconded the motion, and the vote showed all members in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin T. Sullivan  
Commission Recording Secretary