

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

Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes October 28, 2003

Chairperson Kuckro called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Manager's conference room. Members present were Chairperson Kuckro, Pat Warner, Paul Courchaine, Carol Adil, Charles Forsdick, Charles Ford, Betty Rosania, George Botini and staff liaison, Kathleen Bagley, Director, Recreation and Parks Department.

1. Public Comments.

No public comments.

2. Introduction of Betty Rosania liaison from EDIC and George Botini liaison from the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Botini is the manager of the Camelot Inn. Chairperson Kuckro welcomed the new members to the Tourism Commission and thanked them for their interest in working with the Commission.

3. Approval of Minutes.

Paul Courchaine had one change to the minutes. Under "New Business 3-E" - The discussion about the library submitting an application for the Buttolph-Williams House to be declared a "literary" landmark. The minutes should be amended to read that "Paul Courchaine was appointed liaison from the Tourism Commission to work with the library on this project." Paul Courchaine moved to approve the minutes with this correction. The motion was seconded by Carol Adil and voted unanimously.

4. Old Business.

A. Council Recognition of Students for Visitor's Information Manual.

Charles Ford reported that he has received the CD-ROM from the Central Connecticut State University students on the Visitor's Information Manual. He will work with Carol Bruce to update the Visitor's Information Manual on the CD-ROM. He reported that the November 17, 2003, Town Council meeting was a good date for the Central Connecticut State University students to be recognized by the Town Council for compiling the Visitor's Information Manual. He will work with Professor Richard Benfield to set this up. Chairperson Kuckro asked if the updated Visitor's Information Manual could be ready for January 1, 2004, and to use this as a target date to get all the changes and corrections made for the manual to be used in museums and other areas. Charles Forsdick suggested keeping a separate book of restaurant menus and not including them in the Visitor's Information Manual. Betty Rosania said she would like to review the book based on her experience on similar projects. Paul Courchaine suggested that the Web Site currently contains much of this information and that this is a good place to keep the restaurant menus. People surfing for information on Wethersfield will have all that information. George Botini reported that more and more people are using the Internet for their travel arrangements and concurred with Paul's idea to keep the information on the Web Site. Chairperson Kuckro asked Charles Ford to work with Carol Bruce and have Carol take the lead in updating the Visitor's Information Manual.

B. Winter Calendar Update.

Chairperson Kuckro reported that the winter calendar will be ready to be proofed this week and she will be working on that with Pat Warner.

C. Kick Off for Winter Season on December 6.

Chairperson Kuckro reported that the Wethersfield Shopkeepers will have a "Holiday on Main Street" on

December 6. Different events are being planned for that day.

D. Rochambeau Sign Up Date.

Chairperson Kuckro reported that the sign is currently in the design phase and that May 22, 2004, has been set aside as the unveiling of the sign. The sign for Rochambeau will be installed on the side of the Village Tavern facing First Church. Betty Rosania mentioned that the MDC has a map of Rochambeau's route. She is going to bring in a copy of it for the next meeting.

5. New Business.

A. Tourism Budget.

Chairperson Kuckro distributed the proposed budget breakdown of the Tourism money appropriated for 2003-04. The amount appropriated for this budget year is \$4,000. She reported that the budget breakdown is in order of priority for the projects the Tourism Commission is looking to complete this year. Commission members agreed that the budget was in the priority of their importance. Members concurred that the distribution of the Tourism brochure is the most important item to be funded for this year. They also concurred that the seasonal calendar would be their next priority. Discussion followed on possibly not spending as much money on the design of the calendar in the future and that there should be ways to help the design cost for the calendar. Chairperson Kuckro said that they will be looking to get quotes for the next round of design for the spring and summer calendar. Charles Forsdick will talk with the Tourism Commission's Web Site coordinator to discuss ways to develop the calendar in a particular format so that design costs will be less expensive in the future. Chairperson Kuckro asked Charles Ford if he would serve as "Acting Chairperson" as she had to leave the meeting at this time. Further discussion continued on the budget. Commission members discussed the \$600 allocated for attractions for the upcoming year. The attraction budget funds can be reallocated to other projects. Ms. Bagley reported that she had worked with Chairperson Kuckro on the budget and that the attraction money was set aside as a backup should other things come in at a higher cost than originally proposed. Commission members thought that this was an appropriate way to look at the budget and they will continue to review it as the year goes on. Charles Forsdick reported that currently there is no money set aside to develop tour packaging, which needs about one and one-half year's lead-time and suggested we look at this project in the future. Commission members will continue to look at the budget allocations at the next meeting.

B. Ideas for Kick Off for Spring Season in March, 2004.

Commission members had a discussion on the March kick-off. They commented that the weather at this time of year was not conducive to an outdoor event. Commission members would need to look at an indoor activity. Pat Warner reminded members that the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum is not open full time until May 1 and the Wethersfield Historical Society has a reduced schedule in the winter. Commission members discussed the possibility of a "quilting" show with "how to" demonstrations being held at the same time. They also discussed taking advantage of the programs already developed by the Festival in the past and utilizing some of those programs for a one day craft demonstration. Further discussion centered on whether the Tourism Commission actually wanted to run events. Charles Forsdick mentioned that the Partnership Committee may look to encourage organizations in town to produce the activities that have already been set up by the Festival Committee in the past. Commission members discussed looking at some of the old houses in town and putting craft demonstrations in there for a day. Further discussion on these ideas will be held at the next meeting.

C. Paul Courchaine reported that New England Calendar of Activities for Tourism has come to his attention. He is going to look into this calendar and find out how people can submit events to it.

6. Adjournment.

Carol Adil moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Motion was seconded by Pat Warner and voted

unanimously.