

## **Wethersfield Tourism Commission Minutes - November 18, 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, Paul Courchaine, Carol Adil, George Botini and Staff Liaison, Kathleen Bagley, Director, Recreation and Parks Department. Charles Forsdick arrived at 6:25 p.m.

1. Public Comments.

No public comments.

2. Approval of [Minutes of October 28, 2003](#).

Chairperson Kuckro had a change to the minutes. Under Item 5 A - The correction should read, that Chairperson Kuckro asked Charles Forsdick to serve as Acting Chairperson not Charles Ford. Therefore, the minutes should be amended to read, "that Charles Forsdick would serve as Acting Chairperson." Paul Courchaine moved to approve the minutes with this correction. The motion was seconded by Carol Adil and voted unanimously.

Chairperson Kuckro distributed a handout of information for members. She explained that the first item in the handout was a letter of resignation from Wes Christensen resigning from the Tourism Commission. Handout number two was a copy of the Town Ordinance establishing the Tourism Commission along with a draft letter to the Town Clerk suggesting changes to the ordinance. Chairperson Kuckro suggested she would like to look at changing the Ordinance so that instead of having two alternates these alternates would be regular members. The Commission would then be a nine member Commission instead of a seven member Commission with two alternates. She suggested these two alternates should be considered in the category of a resident of the Town of Wethersfield. Commission members discussed these suggestions and felt it was appropriate for the next Commission meeting to continue the discussion. In the meantime, Chairperson Kuckro will speak with the Town Clerk about filling the current vacancies. She also asked Ms. Bagley to make sure that they send a copy of the minutes of the Tourism Commission to the Chairperson of the Historic District Commission and the Chairperson on the Committee for Culture and the Arts.

3. Report about the Heritage River Tourism District.

Chairperson Kuckro explained to Commission members that the new tourism district for Wethersfield is the Connecticut Heritage River District. This district extends from the northern part of the state following the Connecticut River all the way down to the Sound in Old Saybrook. She explained that this is a good district because of the potential for marketing with the shoreline and the airport. She explained that their operating budget will be \$950,000 and that the district expanded from 21 towns to 46 towns. She reported that Paul Mayer is the director of the district and she will provide additional information about the goals of the district at a later meeting. She reported that a representative from the district will be attending the Bus Group Tour Leaders' meeting in February and suggested they prepare a package tour to be handed out by the district representative to the group leaders at that meeting. She asked if George Botini was interested in serving on the committee and acting as chairperson. He agreed to be the chairperson of this sub-committee to develop a tour package for the Tourism Commission. Additional members of the Tour Package Sub-Committee will be Anne Kuckro, Carol Adil and Charles Forsdick. Chairperson Kuckro also reported that Doug Shipman is the new director of the Historical Society and that he attended the Heritage Partnership meeting in November. Chairperson Kuckro reported that he suggested that the Tourism Commission concentrate on marketing the town and let the museums concentrate on developing the programs.

4. A. Winter Calendar Update.

Chairperson Kuckro reported that the calendars are being printed and will be delivered this week to the Historical Society. Commission members reviewed the distribution list for these calendars and will see that

the calendars get out to the appropriate groups.

B. Kick-Off for Winter Season.

Chairperson Kuckro reported that the Shopkeepers Association is doing a kick-off event on December 5 and she booked the Manchester Barbershop Chorus for \$175 to perform that Saturday afternoon as part of this winter event. She also explained that the library will have an individual reading stories prior to the Barbershop Chorus and immediately after the chorus performance.

C. C. Rochambeau Event.

Chairperson Kuckro reported that she has spoken with the Greater Hartford Arts Council to partner with the town in the planning of this event in the coming years. She spoke with Town Manager, Bonnie Therrien, about using \$3,500 from the "Great Streets" account to hire the Greater Hartford Arts Council to help plan the Rochambeau events and to develop a signage plan for the Town. She also requested \$1,850 from this account for the Rochambeau events for 2004. The "Great Streets/Sidewalks Sale Appropriation" account has \$5,607. Chairperson Kuckro had a discussion with the Town Manager about having this money appropriated to the Tourism Commission. The Town Manager made a proposal to EDIC to allow the Tourism Commission to use this money for the above items. With the help of EDIC member, Betty Rosania, EDIC voted to allow the Tourism Commission to use this money for the upcoming Rochambeau events. Paul Courchaine was also at this meeting and he spoke in favor of this proposal.

5. A. New Business 2003-2004 Budget.

Chairperson Kuckro reported that with the support of the EDIC they will be using both the Great Streets budget and the regular Tourism budget for their operations for the upcoming year. She distributed a copy of the breakdown of the Great Streets account to Commission members.

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

Members discussed a variety of ideas for the March kick off. Chairperson Kuckro reported that the Partnership was looking at some different ideas, but decided that more planning would be needed for these suggestions.

C. Paul Courchaine reported that he looked into the New England Weekenders Calendar for 2005 and got the appropriate information in order to list events in their calendar. He explained that the deadline for the 2005 calendar will be in March, 2004.

D. Paul Couchaine discussed with Commission members the variety of driving tours available in the New England area at historic sites. He suggested looking at developing a site for the Town of Wethersfield. Paul Couchaine discussed the Web Site statistics and gave members an overview on the amount of hits and visits. Since April, the Web Site has been visited 4,500 with 23,000 hits. Chairperson Kuckro asked if he could get information on the Tourism Web Site as to who we are linked to and who is linked to our site.

6. Adjournment.

Paul Courchaine moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by George Botini and voted unanimously.