

**WETHERSFIELD TOURISM COMMISSION**  
**Meeting: Tuesday March 31, 2009 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 Vice Chair Chris Traczyk.

**Roll Call/Attendance** (5 required for quorum):

<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Excused</b>
Charlie Forsdick, Chair			✓
Chris Traczyk, Vice Chair	✓		
Shireen Aforismo	✓		
Jenna Delay	✓		
Charles Ford	✓		
Carol Hall	✓		
Dorcas McHugh	✓		
Geraldine Munroe	✓		
Elaine St. Onge	✓		
Katie Sullivan	✓		

Also present: Peter Gillespie, Town Planner

**Public Comments:** None

**Approval of Minutes:** February 24, 2009 meeting – Vice Chair Chris Traczyk noted that no revisions were suggested for the draft minutes.

**Motion:** Elaine St. Onge motioned to approve the minutes as drafted.

**Second:** Katie Sullivan seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 9 - 0 - 0

Minutes approved as drafted.

**Announcements/ Introductions:** None.

## Reports:

- **Budget – 08-09 status, 09-10 proposed:** Chris Traczyk said that she attended the budget meeting last night to discuss the Town Manager’s latest budget. She said that the only funds included for Tourism are \$500 for the Greater Hartford Convention and Visitor’s Bureau annual membership fee, and \$8,000 for advertising.

Several members commented that they would prefer to see part of the advertising funding spent on other needs. Chris Traczyk said that she believes \$8,500 is the maximum the Tourism Commission can expect for its total budget. For that funding level, the consensus was that the most important expenses are: website hosting and maintenance; travel brochure printing and distribution; and ads in the AAA Journeys magazine.

Chris Traczyk said that there is \$2,000 in the current fiscal year budget that she believes is not frozen. The consensus was to use this money to print a small number of brochures to fill the immediate need for the upcoming travel season.

If the brochure printing is done with this year’s funds, the consensus was that next year’s funds should be used on brochure distribution, website hosting and maintenance and fewer ads in Journeys magazine. If the brochures cannot be printed now, the consensus was that the funds that would have been spent on brochure distribution would be shifted to more ads in Journeys magazine.

Chris Traczyk asked if either the Wethersfield Historical Society or the Webb Deane Stevens Museum have funds available to contribute to any of these expenses. Elaine St. Onge and Katie Sullivan both said no.

- **Central CT Culture & Tourism Commission** – Geraldine Munroe said that there was no significant activity to report.
- **Economic Development and Improvement Commission** – Dorcus McHugh said that a façade improvement loan was approved for the building Mila Fabric is in, plus an adjoining building. She said that the EDIC will be having a workshop soon on the Town economic development strategic plan.
- **GHC&VB, Potential Events** - Carol Hall said that there were no new events announced that appear to have nexus with Wethersfield tourism. Dorcus McHugh said that the recent Big East Women’s Basketball tournament was a big success, and virtually all of the transportation and parking issues from previous tournaments had been solved.
- **Grants** –
  - Progress Reports – Marketing, Preserve America, Wayfinding Signage.
  - New Applications .

Chris Traczyk said that there was no significant activity to report on the Preserve America grant or new applications.

- **375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee** – Chris Traczyk said that Ken Sokolowski attended the last meeting and expressed concern about the lack of publicity and activities planned. She said that she reiterated the Tourism Commission’s offer to publicize events on the Tourism webpage. Jenna Delay said that she has not received any event information to post on the website.

Chris Traczyk said that the classic car show idea does not appear to be feasible. She said that they have found that the classic car organization would be expecting the Town to pay for police coverage, traffic control, permit fees, and publicity. These are expenses for which the Town has no money. She said that all the classic car organization would do is handle registration for the participants and help distribute advertising.

- **Web Site Update** - Jenna Delay said that web hits are beginning to go up as they do this time of year, but they are not as high as previous years. She said she is getting good feedback on the newsletter she is putting out to the shopkeepers, schools and PTOs, and that the newsletter is helping with web traffic.

### **Old Business:**

- **Farmers Market** – Jenna Delay said that there is a special permit for the market that will go before the Planning and Zoning Commission on April 7<sup>th</sup>. She said that they have 5 – 6 vendors, and need a few more. She said the market will be at Keeney Cultural Center on Thursdays from about 3:00 – 6:00 or 4:00 – 7:00 PM, depending on the vendors. Ms. Delay said that the vendors sell items like special cheese and artisan bread, so they will not compete with existing farmers.

The vendors will be paying a fee of \$20 each, to pay for expenses such as the rest rooms at the Center. Ms. Delay said that some high school students are designing a logo for the market, and sponsors are needed for a banner. She said that she would be approaching the Chamber of Commerce as a resource for vendors and sponsors. Hart Seed Company has already volunteered to help with publicity.

Ms. Delay said that volunteers will be needed to do things like help with traffic and parking. Elaine St. Onge said she would check whether are conflicts with any group events at the Keeney Center on Thursdays. Ms. Delay requested that the Tourism webpage be used to help publicize the market.

**Motion:** Elaine St. Onge motioned to allow the Tourism webpage to be used to help promote the market.

**Second:** Katie Sullivan seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 9 - 0 – 0

The item was approved.

- **Stakeholder Meeting** - Chris Traczyk said that no stakeholder meeting has been held since the last Commission meeting.
- **Tourism DVD** – Chris Traczyk said that there was no significant activity to report.
- **Bus Tour Operator’s Outreach** – Charlie Ford said that he is ready to send out information, but that some of the information is outdated and needs to be corrected. Chris Traczyk said that the Commission has no funds available to make revisions, so he should send out the information he has.

**New Business:**

- **Memorial Day Parade** – Chris Traczyk asked if any of the members were interested in walking in the parade with the Commission banner. Jenna Delay said that Memorial Day is right before the first farmer’s market, so she will check to see if she can get high school students to dress in the onion costume and carry the banner to publicize the market.
- **Tourism Brochure Distribution** – Dorcus McHugh asked if the Commission should vote to authorize Chris Traczyk and Peter Gillespie to make arrangements for brochure distribution, if any brochures get printed. Chris Traczyk agreed.

**Motion:** Dorcus McHugh motioned to have Chris Traczyk work with Peter Gillespie to confirm if funds are available for brochure distribution, and if so, work together to negotiate a contract for distribution services.

**Second:** Katie Sullivan seconded the motion.

**Vote:** 9 - 0 – 0

The item was approved.

**Follow Up Items:** None.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Next Meeting Date:** April 28, 2009 at 5:30 PM, Town Manager's Conference Room.

**Call to Adjourn:** Elaine St. Onge motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m., Katie Sullivan seconded the motion, and the vote showed all members in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin T. Sullivan  
Commission Recording Secretary