

**NEWPORT COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**Tuesday, May 12, 2009**

**12:00 PM**

**Held at**

**O'Brien's Pub**

**501 Thames Street**

**Newport, RI**

**MEETING MINUTES:**

**The meeting was called to order at 12:09 pm by Chairman Len Panaggio.**

**BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE:**

**Len Panaggio, Stephen Coyne, Laurie Stroll, William Clarke, Greg Fater, Brian Arnold, Mark Stenning, Pieter Roos, Donna Kohler, Charron Reed, Ed Silveira, Karen Oakley, Katie Wilkinson, Rocky Kempenaar**

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE:**

**Susan Samson**

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED WERE:**

**None**

**STAFF PRESENT WERE:**

**Kathryn Farrington, Tim Walsh, Ellen Crawley, Deb Gatta**

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE WERE:**

**Jonathan Stevens – City of Newport**

**Greg Fater, owner of O'Brien's Pub, hosted the board meeting and gave a brief history of the establishment.**

**I. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:**

**The previous meeting minutes for April 14, 2009 were reviewed. Katie Wilkinson reported a small error in the minutes. The change was noted and changed for the record. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Greg Fater and seconded by Mark Stenning. The motion passed unanimously.**

**II. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

**The financial report for April, 2009 was read by Mark Stenning. City Bed Tax for February, 2009 was down 5.05% and Regional Bed Tax was down 1.38 % for a combined YTD bed tax of -4.02%.**

**Mark reviewed the revenues and receivables for the month of April, 2009. A motion to accept the treasurer's report for the month of April was made by Len Panaggio and seconded by Rocky Kempenaar. The motion passed unanimously.**

**III. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

**Evan Smith, President/CEO reported on the following:**

- He, and a few staff members and board members of the NCCVB, will be attending the Unity Luncheon for industry members at the Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence Wednesday, May 13th.
- The Rhode Island Convention Center will hold their board of director's meeting at the International Tennis Hall of Fame on 5/20/09. NCCVB board members are invited to attend.
- Evan distributed a letter for a donation request from Tall Ships of RI to support the building of the Newport based training ship, Oliver Hazard Perry. Discussion followed.

A motion was made to table the request for 6 months by Karen Oakley until we know more about our bed tax collection. The motion was seconded by Ed Silveira. The motion passed unanimously.

- A bill (H6169) has been introduced to the State House regarding Coastal Brewing Company, Middletown, RI to authorize retail sales of beverages to consumers for the off premise consumption. Discussion followed. The board of director's voted for a letter of support of this bill: 13 yes, none against and 1 abstain.

#### **IV. STAFF REPORTS:**

##### **A. SALES REPORT:**

Tim Walsh, Vice President of Sales, reported on the following:

- Corporate industry still faces many challenges. Meetings are on hold but, sales calls are being well received.
- The DNE (Discover New England) Summit, 4/27-29/09 was well attended. The CVB had appointments with a dozen European Tour Operators. Newport will host this event in 2010.

- For the first time, the NCCVB Wedding Planner FAM was held April 30-May 1, 2009 and was a huge success.
- Laurie Stroll spoke about the perception issue (too costly) of groups coming to Newport. Due to economy, groups stating they will book next year.

## **B. MARKETING REPORT:**

Kathryn Farrington, Vice President of Marketing, reported on the following:

- The numbers are up at 172,000 unique visits to the GoNewport.com website.
- Over the last few weeks many travel writers have visited Newport.
- The next Marketing Meeting will be at The Yachting Center, May 20, 2009.
- Kathryn reported for Cathy Morrison, Vice President of Operations, that ticket sales for the month of April were up almost 8% over last year.

## **V. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Greg Fater, representing the Governance Committee reported on the following:

- The legislation has been introduced regarding the request from East Bay Tourism Council (Bristol, Warren & Barrington) joining Newport County and it is still being reviewed by the legislators.
- Discussion followed as to the next step in this matter.
- A document will be drawn up by Greg stating the merger will be

**subject to the approval by the East Bay Communities, Bristol, Warren & Barrington who have requested this change.**

**VI. NEW BUSINESS:**

**Jonathan Stevens, Director of Economic Development for the City of Newport reported on the challenges and accomplishments since he was appointed to this new department, a year and a half ago.**

**VII. ADJOURNMENT:**

**A motion to adjourn was made by Evan Smith and seconded by Mark Stenning. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:25 pm.**

**The next NCCVB board meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 9, 2009  
At the Glen Manor House  
3 Frank Coelho Drive, Portsmouth, RI**