

**AMERICA'S CUP WORLD SERIES HOST COMMITTEE**

**MEETING OF MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE**

**PUBLIC SESSION**

**FEBRUARY 13, 2012**

The America's Cup World Series Host Marketing and Public Relations Subcommittee met on Monday, February 13, 2012, in Public Session, beginning at 10:00 a.m., at the offices of Rhode Island Economic Development, 315 Iron Horse Way, Providence, RI, pursuant to notice of the meeting to all subcommittee members, and public notice of the meeting, a copy of which is attached hereto, as required by the By-Laws of the Corporation and applicable Rhode Island law.

The following subcommittee members were in attendance: Mr. Evan Smith (Chair), Ms. Geremie Callaghan, Mr. Quentin Chafee, Ms. Alison Eichler, Mr. Paul Fleming, Mr. Jay Gowell, Mr. Geoff Grout, Mr. Rick Nagele, Ms. Nancy Piffard, Mr. Ken Shane, and Mr. Tom Shevlin.

The following staff members were in attendance: Ms. Amelia Allard (RIEDC<sup>1</sup>), Ms. Melissa Chambers (RIEDC), Mr. Paul Harden (Dir., ACWS<sup>2</sup> RI Host Committee), Ms. Susan Maffei Plowden (ACEA<sup>3</sup>), and Mr. Brad Read (Chair, ACWS RI Host Committee).

Others attending and their affiliations:

Ms. Kim Cooper	Sail Newport
Mr. Chris Myers	Interstate Navigation
Ms. Kathryn Farrington	Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Ms. Tina Dolen	Aquidneck Island Planning Commission

**CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING REMARKS**

Mr. Evan Smith, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. There were no previous meeting minutes to approve. Mr. Smith thanked the subcommittee members for taking the time to volunteer for this effort. He then asked for introductions.

Mr. Paul Harden stated that all meetings of the America's Cup World Series Committee and Subcommittees are open, public meetings and that minutes will be taken, approved, and posted on the RIEDC website.

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<sup>1</sup> Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation.

<sup>2</sup> America's Cup World Series.

<sup>3</sup> America's Cup Event Authority.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Mr. Smith first addressed the subcommittee's role: to support the organizers, the state, and the ACEA in building a foundation to bring this event forward and to collaborate with Rhode Island businesses and media to ensure that they benefit from supporting and embracing this event.

There are multiple measures of success: strong competition, engaged crowds, impressed sponsors, satisfied businesses, and a proud city. Of the 14 race locations, Newport is uniquely ideal for the America's Cup World Series, and this first year must make that clear to all participants, contributors, and spectators. Mr. Brad Read agreed that ensuring the happiness of the tourists and the city will make it possible for this event to return to Newport in coming years.

Ms. Susan Maffei Plowden explained that the final race on Sunday, July 1, will be broadcast live on NBC and the America's Cup TV network does a one-hour show weekly; it is essential that we interest and engage local media partners while also providing story ideas and information to national and international media outlets.

Mr. Jay Gowell expressed his concern about the involvement of the Providence Journal due to a history of disinterest in the sailing and yachting community. He asked how this subcommittee will approach the Journal. Ms. Melissa Chambers responded that conversations between the RIEDC, the communications division of the ACEA, and the editorial and advertising departments at the Providence Journal – as well as other media outlets including WJAR, the Newport Daily News, NBC Boston, the Boston Globe, and the Providence Business News – and that these meetings have gone very well. The Providence Journal is very engaged. They plan to dedicate staff from several departments, begin pre-coverage as soon as possible, and get ticket, schedule, and race-related information out statewide. The ACEA is also working with national publications and media outlets.

Mr. Smith said that ACEA, through the communications division led by Ms. Stephanie Martin, creates a high-gloss publication and partners with local print media to publish large supplements. This is a great opportunity to educate spectators who may have misconceptions about celebrating, watching, and enjoying this event. It is spectator friendly. As this is the sole race on the East Coast, there is a big sailing/marine market as well as the general tourism market. It is important that we do well locally as well as regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Now that we have more structural material, we can move forward with outreach and marketing. There are still questions, however. What are the ACEA's guidelines regarding sponsorship, branding, and information? Who are our target groups? Will ACEA provide materials, boilerplate, or templates?

Mr. Harden explained that we are waiting for a response from ACEA. The Marine Affairs Subcommittee is working on materials to communicate specific on-the-water information. Speakers will be going to yacht clubs. Mr. Read emphasized the importance of getting printed material out. Ms. Maffei Plowden suggested that it is best to take the initiative in creating eblasts, etc. but that all materials do need to be run by ACEA. Banners in airport and throughout Newport, signage on public transportation and

roadways, printed fact sheets, save-the-dates, brochures, and a strong web presence were suggested and discussed.

Ms. Tina Dolen asked about family engagement. Mr. Read said that he is waiting for approval on a few different programs for kids.

Mr. Quentin Chaffee asked if there is a schedule of deadlines. The state's marketing plan is due March 23.

Ms. Chambers explained that ACEA has a PR storyline; they will drive related media coverage. RIEDC is working with ACEA consistently. RIEDC will travel to NY for a luncheon with 200 travel writers to present RI tourism; AC will be part of that.

Mr. Paul Fleming said that he took the initiative to talk to the Airport Corporation about the possibility of advertising on carousel belts; he will work with Mr. Harden on this. Ms. Maffei Plowden said that the airport has donated a glass cube in the gate area; this subcommittee needs to determine what it will contain.

The subcommittee discussed communicating ideas and information to Ms. Stephanie Martin at ACEA and determined that everything will go through Ms. Chambers, who will send daily or weekly digest emails to Ms. Martin. Ms. Chambers will have a conference call with Ms. Martin, Ms. Cooper, and Mr. Mark Brodeur, Director of Tourism, to discuss content and communication. Mr. Smith suggested that Ms. Chambers be the "first filter" for information.

Mr. Read asked that deadlines be communicated to the subcommittee in order to create a timeline.

Mr. Smith spoke about public outreach. Mr. Read explained the sustainability partnership with Sailors for the Sea and the Healthy Oceans Project, and emphasized the importance of focusing on education and recreation for kids. There will be an event on March 30 at the Jane Pickens Theater presented by Sail Newport. The Sustainability and Education subcommittees have great ideas.

He suggested April 15 as the deadline for DOT signs.

Mr. Read explained that the Host Committee has editorial latitude regarding what's happening in Rhode Island during the ACWS – but not about the ACWS itself. Ms. Cooper said that she will work with Mr. Tom Shevlin and Ms. Nancy Piffard of the Newport Exhibition Group to put together a plan and a list of needs. The Rhode Island Marine Trade Association will be an effective group for disseminating information.

#### CLOSING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Smith said that, ultimately, this group exists to help the America's Cup Event Authority in any way it can. He can be reached at [evans@gonewport.com](mailto:evans@gonewport.com).

Mr. Fleming motioned to adjourn at 11:30 am. This was seconded and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned.