



**Eastern Regional Tourism District (ERTD)
Executive Committee**

Regular Meeting

January 9, 2025 - 9:00AM

Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89348754065?pwd=cDV1M2J5S2ZNZ2hkNWJKa3RSbXpTZz09>

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Meeting ID: 893 4875 4065

Passcode: 836268

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Chris Regan, Jill St. Clair, Stephen Gencarella, Bruce Flax, Lori Corriveau, Fran Kefalas, Todd Babbitt

Guests: Andrea Manning, Tony Sheridan, Jill Larsen, David Quinn, Jillian Lozier, David Jensen

1. Call to Order
 - a. The meeting came to order at 9:01am.
2. Approval of Minutes - 12/05/2024
 - a. Stephen Gencarella made the first motion, seconded by Todd Babbitt. The motion was carried unanimously.
3. Board Chair Report
 - a. Chris Regan delivered a board chair report that centered around efforts to organize a major tourism event to unify regional stakeholders and engage directly with legislators.
4. Treasurer Report
 - a. P&L
 - b. Balance Sheet
 - i. Jill St. Clair made a motion to approve the P&L and Balance Sheet as presented, seconded by Stephen Gencarella. All in favor the motion passed.
5. Committee Chair Updates
 - a. Finance - No further update

- b. Marketing - No update as the committee did not meet in December.
 - c. Bylaws - No update.
 - d. Nominating - Todd Babbitt reminded the committee about where ERTD stands with vacancies and expired terms. efforts in the past month included outreach to North Stonington, and Sterling, with upcoming efforts to reach out to other towns with vacancies.
 - e. Legislative Advocacy - No Report
 - f. Grants - Fran Kefalas updated the committee on the success of the recent efforts of the grants committee, including her presentations at the recent "Cofee with Rachel" event and the Live Q&A. Timeline for the finalization of grant recipients is mid-March.
6. Quinn & Hary Update
- a. David Quinn introduced Jillian Lozier, who presented the Quinn & Hary update
 - i. A review and recap of 2024 campaigns was presented. Key highlights include 25.6 million overall impressions,
 - ii. November and December performance was reviewed. With ERTD in its 'low spend' period, 828k impressions on Meta is in line with expected performance. Top social posts featured seasonal offerings.
 - iii. The calendar of events for January and February was shared, with calls for events and content.
 - iv. A review of the materials created for the Regional Marketing Partnership matching Grant Program were reviewed, including a flyer and press release. The story was picked up by the Day and the Chronicle, enhancing promotional efforts.
 - b. Discussion took place on the need to support restaurants in the region through down time due to Dry January. Upcoming promotion of restaurants to include social content around 'cozy spots', including restaurants with fireplaces, and other indoor attractions.
7. Connecticut Office of Tourism Update
- a. Jill Larsen delivered the Office of Tourism Update
 - i. Announcement of the upcoming "ConCon 25.1" event on January 28, 2025, focusing on networking and collaboration among regional tourism stakeholders. These quarterly events are designed to foster industry connections and feature panel discussions, with the first focusing on the importance of tourism in upcoming budget discussions.
 - ii. Ongoing efforts to collect and refine visitor data through platforms like Arrivalist, while acknowledging limitations in capturing younger demographics and international travelers.

- iii. Successful implementation of the "Coffee with Rachel" series, which has expanded statewide due to its popularity, providing valuable in-person networking opportunities.
- iv. Introduction of new tools on the CT Visit platform to improve event visibility and ease of use for partners.
- v. Discussion is held around the state's limitations on use of AI.

8. Administrator Report

- a. Andrea Manning presented an administrator report, indicating that things are largely business as usual:
 - i. ERTD is fully paid up on all bills, and prepaid through January on the Media Spend.
 - ii. The rollout of Regional Marketing Partnership Matching Grant Program application period has gone smoothly, with many inquiries, questions and distribution of submission requirements. The live Q&A session had 23 guests in attendance.
 - iii. Upcoming efforts will center around the grant program, shepherding that through the evaluation process, and convening the legislative committee to produce materials for tourism advocacy during this legislative session.
 - iv. A mid-month newsletter is planned for the week of 1/13/25.
 - v. The chamber continues to move forward with its Tourism conference, scheduled for Friday 2/21/25, and will feature sessions on marketing your tourism business, legislative advocacy, and include a networking session.
 - vi. A discussion about the nature of ERTD's involvement took place.

9. Other Business - No other business.

10. Adjournment

- a. Fran Kefalas made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Stephen Gencarella. All in favor, the meeting adjourned at 9:51am.