



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
DBA Discover Newport  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday March 16, 2021  
Zoom Virtual  
12pm**

The meeting was called to order at 12:04pm by T.R. McGrath, Board Chair

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE: Geremie Callaghan, T.R. McGrath, Charlie Holder, Brad Read, Tom McNiff, Pamela Baldwin, Rocky Kempenaar, Bob Rulli, Andrew Moore, Elizabeth Buckley, Sean O'Connor, Jennifer Chapin, Missy Varao, Dennis Turano Karen Binder Nancy Parker Wilson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Keith Chouinard, Christine Klase

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED WERE:

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Evan Smith, Kathryn Farrington, Tim Walsh, Alyson Adkins

STAFF EXCUSED: N/a

Member of the Public: WPRI

**I. PUBLIC COMMENT: N/a**

**II. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:**

The previous meeting minutes for February were reviewed by the board. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Sean O'Connor and seconded by Pamela Baldwin. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

The treasurer's report for February was presented by Geremie Callaghan:

- For December bed taxes, the City of Newport was down -22% as compared to budget, Newport County (excluding City of Newport) was down -18% as compared to budget, and Bristol County was down -45% as compared to budget. Total private revenue for the month of February was up 527% as compared to budget, with total revenue up +12% as compared to budget. Total expenses were down -5% as compared to budget.

A motion to approve the treasurers report was made by Charlie Holder and seconded by Rocky Kempenaar. The motion passed unanimously.

**IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Evan updated the Board on the following:

- There is a National Debate on 'when will it be safe to travel', with the CDC saying not yet and the travel industry saying it is safe. In RI, the industry and the State are working together for safe travel. On 3/19, we see a major step forward in the loosening of restrictions, with outdoor events moving to 200 people. We expect to see a rise in consumer confidence by the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter (calendar) tied to the vaccine.
- The American Rescue Plan was signed into law, there are industry specific grants, like the Restaurant Revitalization Fund. Funding is also being provided on the State and local level to aid the travel and tourism industry.
- Discover Newport is working collaboratively with Restore Greater Newport and other organizations on opening the economy.
- The State Legislative is back in session. We continue to keep our eye out on bills that will affect our industry, and there will be several this year. It is still too early to know if any will have legs, but there are ~ 14 bills.
- The marketing department is organizing the pop-up Visitor Information Center located at 21 Long Wharf Mall. It will be open from May-October and weekends Nov-Dec. We have posted for the Information Specialist positions on our website, and interviews will begin in April.
- We posted for an Administrative Assistant on our website and will begin interviews next week.

**V. REGIONAL UPDATES:**

- Bristol is the site of Rhode Islands first National Scenic Byways program. Also, in Bristol, they will be expanding the East Bay Bike path to the Mount Hope Bridge. In Warren, they will be holding the Food Truck Festival this summer, painting 7 additional electric boxes, along with a summer electric box painting program.
- Newport-The Newport Pride Parade is scheduled for the last weekend in June. The Food truck Festival has been moved from May to October. The City is opposed to large events through June/beginning of July.
- Middleton-The town operates its Covid vaccine at the Benny's old building. The town has formed a subcommittee to look at short-term rentals and has tabled discussion for the time being. The Town has begun the budget season for FY 2022 and is hoping to see some help for small businesses. March is Wellness Month.
- Jamestown-The Town is rethinking the July 3<sup>rd</sup> fireworks. A decision will be made on 4/1.
- Little Compton-Received a grant for infrastructure improvements at South Beach for the parking lot. The Town will also be borrowing \$2M for improvements for the Town Center.
- Portsmouth-The town operates its Covid vaccine at one of the buildings owned by Raytheon and is looking for volunteers. Greenvale Vineyards is open on the weekends.
- Barrington-Will be holding its first community event since Covid hit, a 100-year birthday celebration for a WWII vet.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT:** A motion to adjourn was made by Sean O'Connor and seconded by Geremie Callahan. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:47pm

**The next Board Meeting will be held:**

**Zoom**

**Tuesday, April 27, 2021**

**12pm**