



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
DBA Discover Newport  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tues. September 27, 2022  
The Guild  
99 Water St.  
Warren, RI  
3:30pm**

The meeting was called to order at 3:36pm by T.R. McGrath, Board Chair

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE: Keith Chouinard, Christine Francis, Matt Gray, Ann Hof, Charlie Holder, Rocky Kempenaar, TR McGrath, Andrew Moore, John Nunes, Sean O'Connor, Bob Rulli,  
Board Members ARRIVED LATE -Missy Varao

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Pamela Baldwin, Karen Binder, Gillian Friedman Fox, Tom McNiff, Dennis Turano

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Evan Smith, Tim Walsh, Anna Duffy, Alyson Adkins, Kathryn Farrington, Alex Hurd

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Patrick Fitzgerald – Sardella's Restaurant

**I. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Chairman T.R. McGrath introduced Jeremy Duffy, owner of The Guild Warren. Jeremy reviewed for the board the history of this facility, his brewery in Pawtucket and the events/entertainment/retail offered at both venues.

**II. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:**

The previous meeting minutes for June 28th were reviewed by the board. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Andrew Moore and seconded by Matt Gray. The motion passed unanimously. (Missy Varao - not present for the vote. Bob Rulli abstained – was not at the June meeting).

**III. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

The treasurer's report for August was presented by Alyson Adkins:

For FY 2022, Alyson informed the Board that we finished 16<sup>^</sup> ahead of budget for bed taxes at ~ \$4.8 million vs a budget of \$4.2 million.

For June bed taxes, the City of Newport was down -13% as compared to budget, Newport County (excluding City of Newport) was down -21% as compared to budget, and Bristol County was down -6% as compared to budget. Total private revenue for the month of August was up +25% as compared to budget, with total revenue down -14% as compared to budget. Total expenses were underbudget by -1%. The audit is being performed by Sansiveri, Kimball & Co., LLP and is going well. Discussion followed. A motion to approve the treasurers report was made by Bob Rulli and seconded by Andrew Moore. The motion passed unanimously.

**IV. GOVERNANCE:**

- a) Bob Rulli asked if there were any nominations from the floor for election of officers. There were none. He then asked for a motion to approve the slate of officers presented. All in favor. The officers are: TR McGrath – Chair, Keith Chouinard – Vice Chair, Pamela Baldwin – Treasurer, Karen Binder – Secretary.
- b) There are 3 vacant seats on the TMD board. Appointments are made by Discover Newport Board of Directors. Evan Smith brought forward two candidates for consideration Cheryl Twist, Dir. of Sales at The Chanler Hotel and Michelle Taraverdian, Dir. of Sales at the Newport Marriott. Discussion followed. TR McGrath made a motion to approve the two appointments to the board. Keith Chouinard seconded the motion and endorsed both candidates. The motion passed unanimously.
- c) A restaurant representative to the board is needed as Geremie Callaghan has stepped down. TR McGrath nominated Patrick Fitzgerald, GM of Sardella’s Restaurant to fill the seat. Sean O’Connor seconded the nomination which passed unanimously.

**V. PRESIDENT’S REPORT:**

Evan updated the Board on the following:

- Evan thanked all the board members for making the trip to Warren for today’s meeting.
- Hotel occupancy rates are very high. We are in the top 1% in the country.
- Executive staff and Atty. Bob Goldberg are working on a draft of our bi-laws which need updating. The new draft will be reviewed by the governance committee before submission on the state level. Discussion followed.

**VI. STAFF/REGIONAL UPDATES:**

- Kathryn Farrington, VP of Marketing, updated the Board as follows:
  - The Visitors Center and the Info Shed (Perrotti Park) have both been extremely busy due to regular traffic and now cruise ship passengers looking for information.
  - The #67 Hop-on Hop-off trolley has been fantastic and very popular. Visitors are so grateful there is no charge until the end of October.
  - We are meeting with Kathy McKnight of *Christmas In Newport* getting ready for the holiday season.
  - Newport Restaurant week runs from November 4-13.
- Tim Walsh, VP of Sales, updated the Board as follows:
  - Cruise ships, corporate sales and motor coaches are all coming back.
  - Discover New England which markets the area to international travelers is holding a summit for media, tour operators in Boston in Spring of 2023. F.I.C.P (Financial Insurance Conference Planners) is having their annual meeting at the Omni Seaport Hotel on November 16<sup>th</sup>.
- The following board members gave brief updates about their respective townships: Christine Francis – Tiverton, Sean O’Connor, Charlie Holder, and Andrew Moore – Little Compton, Matt Gray – Portsmouth, Bob Rulli – Warren

- VII. ADJOURNMENT:** A motion to adjourn was made by Keith Chouinard and seconded by Rocky Kempenaar. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:22pm

**The next Board Meeting will be held:  
Tuesday, October 18, 2022  
Peak Events  
785 West Main Road  
Middletown, RI  
12pm**