



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau
DBA Discover Newport
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, November 28, 2023
Newport Car Museum
1947 West Main Road
Portsmouth, RI
12PM**

The meeting was called to order at 12:05pm by T.R. McGrath, Board Chair

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE: Pamela Baldwin, Karen Binder, Meredith Brower, Peter Connerton, Keri Cronin, Patrick Fitzgerald, Gillian Friedman Fox, Matt Gray, Ann Hof, Charlie Holder, TR McGrath, John Nunes, Sean O'Connor, Marla Romash Missy Varao

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Keith Chouinard, Rocky Kempenaar, Andrew Moore

BOARD MEMBER ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED: N/A

MEMBER(S) OF THE PUBLIC: Savana Dunning – Newport Daily News

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

I. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chair T.R. McGrath introduced our host Will Deffley, Visitor Services at The Newport Car Museum. He briefed the board on upcoming news at the museum as well as assorted options to hold conference or social-style catered events for 75-100 people. Will offered the board a tour at the end of the meeting.

II. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes for September 27th were reviewed by the board. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Matt Gray and seconded by Charlie Holder. The motion passed unanimously, with Karen Binder, Patrick Fitzgerald, Ann Hof, & Missy Varao abstaining.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The treasurer's report for October was presented by Pamela Baldwin: For August bed taxes, the City of Newport was down -1% as compared to budget, Newport County (excluding City of Newport) was down -7% as compared to budget, and Bristol County was up +1% as compared to budget. Total private revenue for the month of October was up +28% as compared to budget, with total revenue down -2% as compared to budget. Total expenses were underbudget by -4%. Year-to-date bed taxes were down -2% as compared to budget, with total revenue also down -2% to budget. Discussion followed. A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by Keith Chouinard and seconded by Gillian Friedman Fox. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. STAFF/REGIONAL UPDATES:

- Tim Walsh, V.P. of Sales brought the board up to date on the following: The Sales department is hitting all major U.S., International and motor coach markets. Tim reported that the meeting industry is experiencing a major rebound.
- Kathryn Farrington, V.P. of Marketing brought the board up to date on the following: The Illuminated Boat Parade on Nov.24th was a tremendous success. Discover Newport sponsored the parade, named in honor of former Newport Harbormaster, Tim Mills, who passed away. He was a longtime advocate of this community event since it began in 1997. A survey was sent out to the fifty-eight restaurants who participated in our recent Newport Restaurant Week (Nov.3-12) to ask opinions on the promotion success and suggestions. In January, we are participating in two leisure travel shows in Dublin, IRE, and the Jacob Javits Center in NYC. The Newport, RI and Kinsale, IRE sister city program will celebrate the 25th Anniversary in 2024. The Newport Jazz Festival celebrates its 70th year and the Folk Festival's 65th year is held yearly at Fort Adams each summer.
- The following board members gave brief updates: Karen Binder – Bristol, Ann Hof – Barrington, Sean O'Connor– Newport, Gillian Friedman Fox - Newport, Keri Cronin – Warren, Matt Gray – Portsmouth, Peter Connerton – Middletown, Meredith Brower – Tiverton, Charlie Holder – Newport, Marla Romash – Jamestown. Discussion followed.

V. PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Evan Smith informed the board that the Bristol town council has not yet appointed a new representative to our board. Karen Binder's term runs until an appointee is found to replace her.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Chair TR McGrath made a motion to go into Executive Session which commenced at 1:17 pm and ended at 1:29 pm

VII. ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Karen Binder and seconded by Peter Connerton. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:29 pm.

**The next Board Meeting will be on:
January 23, 2024
Preservation Society of
Newport County
Board Room
424 Bellevue Ave.
Newport, RI
12pm**