



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau
DBA Discover Newport
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, May 21, 2024
Mt. Hope Farm
250 Metacom Ave.
Bristol, RI
12PM**

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

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE: Pamela Baldwin, Stephan Brigidi, Meredith Brower, Keith Chouinard, Peter Connerton, Keri Cronin, Patrick Fitzgerald, Gillian Friedman Fox, Matt Gray, TR McGrath, Andrew Moore, John Nunes, Marla Romash

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Ann Hof, Charlie Holder, Rocky Kempenaar, Sean O'Connor, Missy Varao
BOARD MEMBER ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED: N/A

WELCOME: Katie Blais, Community Events and Program Manager at Mt. Hope Farm thanked the board members for coming to Bristol today. She gave a brief history of the property the property which hosts weddings/receptions walking trails, concerts, farm animals, weekly farmers market every Saturday and the Gov. Wm. Bradford House-Inn built in 1745, listed on the National Register of Historic Places

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

I. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes for March 19, 2024, were reviewed by the board. A motion to accept the minutes with edits was made by Andrew Moore and seconded by Gillian Friedman Fox. The motion passed unanimously.

II. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The treasurer's report for April was presented by Alyson Adkins: For February bed taxes, the City of Newport was down -10% as compared to budget, Newport County (excluding City of Newport) was flat as compared to budget, and Bristol County was up +21% as compared to budget. Total private revenue for the month of April was up +11% as compared to budget, with total revenue up +2% as compared to budget. Total expenses were under budget by -15%. Year-to-date bed taxes were down -7% as compared to budget, with total revenue also down -6% to budget. Total expenses were under budget by 4%. Discussion followed. A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by Stephan Brigidi and seconded by Keri Cronin. The motion passed unanimously.

Alyson then reviewed the budget process and philosophy on how the budget is prepared for the fiscal year 2025. The budget will be sent to the Board by Friday, May 24th, any questions should be sent to Pamlea Baldwin. The budget will be voted on at the June board meeting.

III. PRESIDENTS REPORT:

Evan Smith thanked the board for their attendance today. Travel measurements may vary due to weather, gas prices, election year and various other factors, however the summer travel season is looking optimistic. RIPTA 67 hop-on hop-off route is being sponsored by Discover Newport running through the end of October. DATTCO bus is starting a pilot program which Discover Newport is sponsoring from South Station in Boston to the Transportation Center in Newport. The route will run Fri., Sat., Sun., and Mon. and is \$30 one-way. Our Board Retreat will be on Tuesday, June 18th at the Newport Harbor Island Resort. At the conclusion of our June board meeting and lunch we will begin our board development session with our consultant Bill Geist from DMOProz. He has an informative and interactive agenda laid out for us from 1:00 till 4:00pm. We will conclude the day with a networking hour. The U.S. Senior Open is at the Newport Country Club 6/27-6/30.

IV. SALES & MARKETING UPDATES:

- Tim Walsh, V.P of Sales brought the board up to date on the following:
There is a client event in Boston on June 20th, to date there are 45 RSVP's. Last week there were eighteen meeting planners here for a FAM tour with site inspections.
- Kathryn Farrington, V.P. of Marketing brought the board up to date on the following:
The Visitors Center will be open daily from 10-5 beginning on May 24th. We are hosting a James Beard Foundation dinner in July for Media in NYC. Four of the James Beard semi-finalists are from Newport Vineyards, Foglia in Bristol and Guisto's and Yagi Noodle in Newport. The new 2024 Destination Guides are in for distribution.

V. BOARD MEMBER COMMUNITY UPDATES: The following board members gave brief updates: Stephan Brigidi – Bristol, Keri Cronin – Warren, Gillian Friedman Fox – Newport, Matt Gray – Portsmouth, Peter Connerton – Middletown, Patrick Fitzgerald – Newport, Andrew Moore – Little Compton, John Nunes – Middletown, Marla Romash – Jamestown, Meredith Brower – Tiverton. Discussion followed.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION: The board went into executive session at 1:37, executive session ended at 1:59 and returned to the main meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Peter Connerton and seconded by Stephan Brigidi. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.

**The next Board Meeting will be on:
June 18, 2024
Newport Harbor Island
Resort
1 Goat Island
12PM**