



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau
DBA Discover Newport
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, January 23, 2024
Preservation Society of Newport County
424 Bellevue Ave.
Newport, RI
12PM**

The meeting was called to order at 12:06pm by T.R. McGrath, Board Chair

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE: Pamela Baldwin, Peter Connerton, Gillian Friedman Fox, Matt Gray, Ann Hof, Charlie Holder, Rocky Kempenaar, Marla Romash, TR McGrath, Andrew Moore, John Nunes, Marla Romash, Missy Varao

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Karen Binder, Meredith Brower, Keith Chouinard, Keri Cronin, Patrick Fitzgerald, Sean O'Connor

BOARD MEMBER ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED: N/A

MEMBER(S) OF THE PUBLIC: N/A

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

I. WELCOME:

Chair T.R. McGrath introduced Terry Dickson, Chief of Staff with the Preservation Society of Newport County. He briefed the board on many changes during his 29-year tenure and gave a history of the building which was acquired in 1991 from the Pell Family. Terry offered the board a tour of the building at the end of the meeting.

II. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes for November 28, 2023, were reviewed by the board. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Peter Connerton and seconded by Charlie Holder.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The treasurer's report for December was presented by Pamela Baldwin: For October bed taxes, the City of Newport was down -10% as compared to budget, Newport County (excluding City of Newport) was down -3% as compared to budget, and Bristol County was down -7% as compared to budget. Total private revenue for the month of December was up +12% as compared to budget, with total revenue down -7% as compared to budget. Total expenses were under budget by -7%. Year-to-date bed taxes were down -7% as compared to budget, with total revenue also down -6% to budget. Discussion followed. A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by Matt Gray and seconded by Missy Varao. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. STAFF/REGIONAL UPDATES:

- Tim Walsh, V.P. of Sales an overview of the year: The Sales team will be coordinating or participating in 30 trade shows from various markets from July through December of 2024. The team will be planning 3 of our own events in main feeder markets, escort over 24 meeting planners' on-site inspections and hold a 2.5-day *Destination Overview* with approximately 15 planners. Advertising in the major meeting industry publications and e-newsletters, direct e-mail blasts, webinar sponsorships hitting all major U.S., International and motor coach markets.
- Kathryn Farrington, V.P. of Marketing brought the board up to date on the following: The Sales Department will be exhibiting at 2 leisure shows this weekend: The Travel & Adventure Show at the Jacob Javits Center in NYC with South County Tourism and Commerce RI and at The Holiday World Dublin Travel Show with Discover New England (VT, ME, CT & Newport, RI). The Visitor Center will be opening Feb 16-25 for Winter Festival and Burger Bender. Casandra Earle, our Communications Director, will be attending IMM, a travel media marketplace this week in NYC. She is setting up media familiarization tours with NJF and Zimmerman agencies for the Spring. The Newport Hotel Collection has authorized a sales and catering training session for all 18 properties. To date, there are 40 participants.
- The following board members gave brief updates: Ann Hof – Barrington, Gillian Friedman Fox - Newport, Warren, Matt Gray – Portsmouth, Peter Connerton – Middletown, Charlie Holder – Newport, Rocky Kempenaar – Middletown, John Nunes - Marla Romash – Jamestown. Discussion followed.

V. GOVERNANCE REPORT: Evan Smith informed the board that the seat vacated by David Smiley on the Newport Tourism Marketing District board will need a replacement. The 7-member board is appointed by the Discover Newport board to represent the 18 properties in the collection. Discussion followed. Anne Krugman, Director of Group Sales at the Newport Harbor Island Resort will fill the vacant seat on the board.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Gillian Friedman-Fox and seconded by Missy Varao. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm.

**The next Board Meeting will be on:
March 19, 2024
TBD**