



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
DBA Discover Newport  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, September 17, 2024  
The Clubhouse Suites  
8 W. Marlborough St.  
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, Stephan Brigidi, Meredith Brower, Keith Chouinard, Peter Connerton, Keri Cronin, Patrick Fitzgerald, Gillian Friedman Fox, Matt Gray, Ann Hof, TR McGrath, Andrew Moore, John Nunes, Sean O'Connor, Marla Romash, Missy Varao

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Charlie Holder, Rocky Kempenaar

BOARD MEMBER ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED: N/A

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: N/A

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

WELCOME: Theresa Locascio, Owner and Manager of The Clubhouse property, spoke about the property and amenities offered for rental of the apartments and rental of the first floor for functions. She offered a tour at the conclusion of the meeting.

- I. **PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:** The June 18<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes were reviewed by the board. A motion to accept the minutes with edits was made by Keri Cronin and seconded by Stephan Brigidi. The motion passed unanimously.
- II. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**  
The treasurer's report for August was presented by Pamela Baldwin: For June bed taxes, the City of Newport was up +14% as compared to budget, Newport County (excluding City of Newport) was up +6% as compared to budget, and Bristol County was up +18% as compared to budget. Total private revenue for the month of August was down -10% as compared to budget, with total revenue up +11% as compared to budget. Total expenses were under budget by -6%. Year-to-date bed taxes were up +8% as compared to budget, with total revenue also up +7% to budget. Total expenses were under budget by -4%. Discussion followed. A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by and seconded by Gillian

Friedman Fox and seconded by Sean O'Connor. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. SALES & MARKETING UPDATES:**

Kathryn Farrington, V.P. of Marketing mentioned the following:

- The success of the James Beard Award event in New York City where we hosted influencers and media July 17-18. The media dinner welcomed 26 media attendees including 18 journalists and 6 influencers thus generating coverage leads, supported media relationships and secured social media coverage highlighting four of our destination's James Beard semifinalists: Chef Wm. Rietzel & Kevin O'Donnell - Giusto's, Chef Peter Carvelli - Foglia, Chef Andy Texiera - Newport Vineyards', Chef Basil Yu - Yagi Noodles'.
- The very popular Newport Restaurant Week will be November 1-10 with participating restaurants offering prix fixe menus throughout our nine coastal communities.
- The DATTCO bus service to and from Newport - Boston will continue through 11/11/24. We will evaluate the data at the end of the run.
- The Visitors Center and satellite information booth at Perrotti Park are gearing up for over 61 cruise ships expected in port this season.
- Kathryn mentioned the launch of "A Day in a series" for Little Compton and more municipalities series to come in the following months.

Tim Walsh, V.P. of Sales brought the board up to date on the following:

- Sales staff have been attending client events in their regions.
- Newport Harbor Island Resort and Discover Newport hosted SMART Meetings Oct 27-29, 2024. Attendees from across the U.S. had one-on-one appointments and several networking events. The finale was a Gala reception and dinner was hosted by DN at Rosecliff Mansion
- Discover New England tourism offices "international" visitor's annual marketplace and summit will be held at The Newport Harbor Island Resort, April 7-9, 2025.
- Airport data shows a huge number of international visitors now that Covid restrictions for European travelers have been lifted.

**IV. BOARD MEMBER COMMUNITY UPDATES:** The following board members gave brief updates:

Stephan Brigidi – Bristol, Keri Cronin – Warren, Gillian Friedman Fox – Newport, Peter Connerton – Middletown, Ann Hof – Barrington, Marla Romash - Jamestown, Andrew Moore - Little Compton, Patrick Fitzgerald – Newport, Matt Gray - Portsmouth, Sean O'Connor – Newport, John Nunes – Middletown, Meredith Brower – Tiverton. Discussion followed.

**V. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** Bristol board representative Stephan Brigidi requested the board consider adopting the practice of reading a land acknowledgement statement to start all board meetings. Gillian Freidman Fox suggested the idea be brought up again at a future meeting as this agenda is very full.

**VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The board went into executive session at 1pm. Executive session ended at 1:39pm and returned to the main meeting.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT:** A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by and seconded by. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

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

**November 19, 2004  
Sardella's Restaurant  
30 Memorial Boulevard  
Newport, RI 02840  
3pm**