

Simsbury Tourism Committee Meeting  
Eno Memorial Hall  
Monday, October 21, 2019 7:00 pm Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Dominique Avery, Joseph Buda, Pat Carbone, Paulette Clark, Sheree Landerman, Elizabeth Petersen, Diane Phillips, Charmaine Seavy, Sally Summa. Also, in attendance: Lisa Gray, Chamber Executive Administrator and Lesly Juarez, Executive Administrator Assistant.

- I. Call to Order
  - a. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.
- II. Approval of Meeting Minutes for September 16, 2019
  - a. Pat Carbone moves the minutes for September 16, 2019 and Paulette Clark seconds the move. The minutes were approved by the members.
- III. Role of Tourism Committee in the Simsbury 350<sup>th</sup> Celebration
  - a. There was general discussion about how the committee should participate in the 350<sup>th</sup>.. Pat Carbone suggested that members be "ambassadors" at various events and Joseph Buda suggested perhaps we should get badges saying "Simsbury Tourism Committee Ambassador" Elizabeth Petersen suggested a bar cycle might be fun and Pat Carbone suggested we might arrange a tour of the town.
  - b. Joe requested that Sheree Landerman ask the opinion of the 350<sup>th</sup> Celebration Committee on what the role of the Tourism Committee should be for that event. The 350<sup>th</sup> Celebration meetings are open to the public.
- IV. Old Business Updates
  - a. 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration: Town Committee and Winter Events
    - i. Joe again reviewed the three main events for the 350<sup>th</sup> Celebration. The Opening Ceremony is scheduled for May 17, River Day is scheduled for June 27<sup>th</sup>, and September Fest is Scheduled for September 13<sup>th</sup>. The Opening Ceremony will be at the First Church and there will be speakers and several activities. At the Hop Brook Landing a tree planting is planned River Day may have story tellers sharing information on how historic fishing occurred and how Native Americans used the river. It will be at two locations: Flower Bridge and Curtis Park. Sheree suggested an exhibit showing the Farmington River through the eyes of fishermen, artists, etc. for River Day with a possible drone video. Various people suggested places where Sheree get drone footage. The Septemberfest Committee is looking for a committee chair. Tom Tyburksi is the representative from the town.on that event. After some discussion, members suggested that we should recommend that as the more popular event, the Spooktacular Chili Challenge be the last event instead of Septemberfest perhaps having it the morning of the Chili Challenge.
    - ii. Joe updated the Sleigh Painting Exhibits that the SHS will be putting on for the 350<sup>th</sup> this winter. SHS is having 12 sleighs restored and painted by various artists. The sleighs will be on exhibit indoors throughout town during the winter and we hope it will become an annual event. Joe also said the Art Walk is coming together as well as the Trail of Thanks. Lisa

Gray reported on the return of the Statue Sculptures. They will be on exhibit from May 15-Sept 15. 35 have already been ordered, Nov. 8 is the deadline for payment. Committee raised the issue of trying to track the economic impact. Lisa said it is very difficult to do - number of brochures is still the best way.

- b. Update on New Brochures and Hand Drawn Map
  - i. Joe stated we don't still don't funding to print new brochures despite the fact that we made a presentation to the BOS last year asking for funding.
  - ii. Sheree suggested a student from a local college take on the task of designing a new brochure. Dominique said we don't need new brochures we just need old ones reprinted.
  - iii. Dominique found out that the town has set aside \$500 in petty cash for use by the Committee. She was reimbursed for Visitors Center Open Flag.
  - iv. Elizabeth suggested we look into an Occupancy Tax to be added to hotel rooms to raise funds for Tourism brochures. Joe asked Sheree to check with the Central Region Tourism District if any of the towns have an Occupancy Tax.
- c. Recognition: Visitors Center Signage
  - i. The Visitors Center sign has been put up at the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce office.
- d. Governmental
  - i. Bike Updates
    - 1. Joe believes the Free Bike program is closing down since they were unable to find someone to run the program.
  - ii. Town Liaison: Central Region Tourism District
    - 1. Joe announced that Sheree was officially appointed by the BOS.
  - iii. EDC Relationship
    - 1. Charmaine reported on the EDC roundtable with local businesspeople at Westminster School
  - iv. No new BOS updates on Membership or Hospitality Task Force
- V. New Business
  - a. 2020 Focus Area
- VI. Quick Updates
  - a. Town Groups & Events
    - i. Joe suggested we put together a list of event dates for 2020 to share with foreign visitors.
  - b. Communications
    - i. Dominique mentioned the recent tourism articles on Simsbury being displayed at Town Hall locations.
    - ii. Pat shared that the article on Simsbury in The Hartford Courant- Travel Issue for October 2019 is outstanding.
    - iii. Sheree has been asked to write a 600-word biography of Simsbury. She can submit 5 photographs or a video. The committee was asked to email Sheree anything they feel should be included on the biography. Dominique mentioned that the town had a photography contest for the town website and perhaps we can obtain photographs from Jeff Dornberg

- who oversaw the contest for the new EDC website. Sheree was asked to stop by the Simsbury Chamber to get pictures of the town of Simsbury.
- iv. Pat will be having lunch with Lisa Gray and Taylor Kinzler, host of NBC CT Live. Taylor would like Pat to share stories of Simsbury with her for the show.
  - v. There was discussion about traffic issues at the annual Fly In which Liz felt reflected very badly on Tourism. It was suggested that she write a letter to the BOS and bring it to the committee next month for submission to the BOS. Dominique mentioned traffic issues at the Duck race too.

VII. Adjournment

- a. Joe moved the motion to adjourn at 8:44 pm.

Next meeting: Monday, November 18, 2019 7:00 pm at Simsbury Historical Society, Ellsworth Center, 800 Hopmeadow Street

Submitted by Lesly Juarez