

Speaker's Tourism Panel
Meeting Minutes
January 2nd, 2019
Wadsworth Mansion, Middletown, CT

Meeting called to order at 2:35PM by Chairman Don DaVivo.

Present: Don DaVivo (Chair), Lori Potter, David Skelly, Ed Dresel, Christine Castonguay, Deborah Moore, Gregg Dancho, Rebekah Beaulieu, Pieter Roos, Ed Dombroskas, Stephen Tagliatella, Johanna Bond, Scott Phelps, Paul Mayer, Jeff Muthersbaugh, Helen Higgins, Tina Tison

Don DaVivo asked that everyone introduce themselves.

Steve Tagliatella presented Connecticut Tourism Coalition report, "Harnessing the Power of Tourism: A Proven Budget Solution".

Christine Castonguay from DECD commented that digital funding included advertising such as Pandora, Hulu, and other digital media.

Steve Tagliatella and Tina Tison presented on Governor-elect's Arts, Culture and Tourism Policy Committee recommendation draft report.

Discussion was had on the state of Welcome Centers and how to effectively use them.

Ed Dombroskas presented the 1992 Task Force report on Tourism providing history of the report and saying the report can provide the panel with guidance on how to structure the panel's own recommendations.

Steve Tagliatella discussed the lodging tax, noting that it is the highest lodging tax in the country. He noted the history behind the lodging tax in the state.

Discussion was had on rest areas and how to commercialize all the Welcome Centers. The rest areas on I-95 were given as examples.

John Borget gave his ideas for how to structure the regional meetings. This included limiting the topics of the regional meetings to the following: 1) Sources of funding for tourism 2) Tourism organizational structure and 3) Allocation of funding for tourism.

Discussion was had on invites, how to get to stakeholders and what they would include.

Meeting adjourned at 4:35PM.