

**Advisory Commission on Travel and Tourism
Meeting Minutes**

September 15, 2010
10 Park Plaza, Boston
10:30AM -12:00PM

Attendees:

Paul Sacco, Massachusetts Lodging Association
David Webber, Massachusetts Department of Agriculture
Scott Madden, Connelly Partners
Nancy Gardella, Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce
Wendy Northcross, Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce
Donna McCabe, Central Massachusetts Convention & Visitors Bureau
Julie MConchie, North of Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau
Representative John Keenan, Salem
Ann Hamilton, Franklin County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Tom Kershaw, Massachusetts Visitor Industry Council
Lynne Montague, Commonwealth Tourism, Arts, & Cultural Council
Steve Jacques, Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Paul Cripps, Plymouth County Development Corporation
Kathleen Nemer, Southeastern Massachusetts Convention & Visitors Bureau
Elizabeth Carey, Southeastern Massachusetts Convention & Visitors Bureau
Marcia Galvin, Massachusetts Campground Organization
Tracy Bakalar, Nantucket Chamber of Commerce
Peter L. Tomyl, Mohawk Trail Association
Mary Kay Wydra, Greater Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau
Lauri C. Klefos, Berkshire Visitors Bureau
Mark Waterbury, Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
Betsy Wall, Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism
Diane Roberts, Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism
Phyllis M. Cahaly, CMD, Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism
Steve Walsh, Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism
Vicki Cimino, Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism
Jonathan Hyde, Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism
Tony D'Agostino, Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism
Tim Grafft, Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism
Dagny Ashley, Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism

Agenda:

Tom Kershaw, Chairman

Call to Order--welcome, how was summer business--comments?

- Wendy Northcross: the Cape had a great summer; great weather. Tourist is looking for more of an experience; lots of activity; dining out was strong.
- Mary Kay Wydra: great summer in Springfield; big events with the Hall of Fame Enshrinement and the air show [which caused a back-up on MassPike].
- Marcia Galvin: campgrounds saw an increase in both reservations and # of site nights; due to good weather, more tents; spike in first-time campers.

Betsy Wall:

- Acknowledged and thanked Lynne Montague who always attends ACT&T meetings and is a big help.
- Acknowledged Representative Keenan for attending ACT&T meetings and for his legislative leadership in helping the tourism industry get more done, efficiently, with less money.

Representative Keenan:

- Happy to attend ACT&T meetings; cleaning up some legislation issues now and looking forward to working with MOTT to implement the new Massachusetts Marketing Partnership reorganization.
- Positive summer; getting into our busy season and plugged the Salem Haunted Happenings, October 1 – 31.
- Hoping to address the VICs during the reorganization, no apparent stream of revenue, will discuss within the next month or so.

David Webber:

- Discussed the new MDAR map filled with updated information; able to supply maps to those who want them. Discussed MDAR fall activities such as pick-your-own fruits and vegetables. Discussed the farmers markets of which there are now 230 which is 30 more since 2009.
- Continuing to work with MOTT on culinary tourism efforts and FAM tours.
- Mentioned fall festivals going on now; Nov/Dec will be Home for the Holidays events, March is maple sugaring, Spring are floral displays; mentioned the BIG E which starts on 9/17.

Tony D'Agostino:

- Presented five slides which highlighted a strong MA 2010 summer revenue and gave a snapshot look at where we are now in comparison to 2008 of which the first seven months were strong; 2008 serves as a good measurement against 2010. The data, sourced by Smith Travel Research, indicates that:
 - Through July 2010 Massachusetts is outperforming the U.S. average and the northeast states in most categories, is at the 2008 levels for hotel occupancy, and the ADR is getting closer.
 - Through August 2010 Boston area is favorable v. New York and Philadelphia areas and that RevPar exceeds the 2008 level.
 - Only MA and New York are states where the ADR growth is non-negative.

Betsy Wall:

- Presented a slideshow and overview of the Economic Development reorganization legislation which includes:
 1. Legislation for three new RTCs, [MetroWest Tourism & Visitors Bureau, Johnny Appleseed Trail Association, Inc., and Hampshire County Tourism & Visitors Bureau]. Of these, only Hampshire County is a legally-defined area; MetroWest and Johnny Appleseed both have a number of different ways to be defined; met with the legislature and asked them to please define areas for MetroWest and Johnny

Appleased as it is MOTT's job to help implement marketing efforts, not define areas. Many RTCs & cities are affected by these regions.
Re: FY11 RTC grants: suggested to legislature that each of the three new RTCs receive approximately \$20,000 'seed money' to market their region, once defined.

2. A commission has been created to study alternative, dependable sources for funding tourist visitor centers in order to improve tourism throughout the commonwealth. Commission's recommendation is due by December 31, 2010.
 3. The Massachusetts Marketing Partnership which will serve as an umbrella organization and oversee, with advisors, MOTT, the Massachusetts Office of International Trade, and the Commonwealth Marketing Office of "It's All Here". ACT&T will continue in its advisory role; legislation mandates that the Massachusetts Film Office and the Massachusetts Sports Partnership will now come into the MOTT office under the direction of MOTT's executive director. The Massachusetts Sports and Entertainment Commission [MSEC], a separate entity from the sports and film offices, will keep their 501(c)(3) status; personnel will be brought into MOTT's office for better collaboration.
- Discussed MOTT's new fall foliage campaign which includes MOTT's new fall microsite with fall foliage driving routes, a foliage chart, and events by week. First-ever fall foliage paid campaign.

Scott Madden:

- Fall foliage and overall objectives are to extend more presence for Massachusetts through the year; fall will be supported with a \$100K online ad campaign and will help MA compete with both Maine and New Hampshire. MA has great tourist attractions that are being featured along driving routes.
- Preview now of FY11 preliminary plans for the RTCs so they may view/adjust their plans accordingly. MOTT will be looking at NY as primary market, CT as secondary, and then in-state. Spending less in-state and primarily focusing ad dollars in [new] TV ads and online campaigns; in-market mid/late April through June.
- Objectives: maintain leisure trip volume, increase web traffic, institute a new database org within the month which will be easier to use for industry; will include a new booking vehicle; will be developing a new mobile app [in time to preview at March Governor's Conference; focusing on a merge between brand and promo and to focus on value with on-going and at least three value programs per year.
- Search out marketing partnerships and/or develop stronger relationships with organizations such as: AAA, Amtrak, ZipCar, and appropriate airlines.

Adjourned: 11:50 am

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Recorded and submitted 9.15.10 by: Phyllis M. Cahaly, CMD, MOTT