

Welcome!

- Eastern Regional Tourism Marketing Grant 2023
  - Connecticut's Countryside was awarded the Eastern Regional Tourism Marketing Grant in February. Connecticut's Countryside was awarded the full amount that was requested, \$8,000 dollars from the state. These funds will be matched from the different towns, each town will provide \$2,000 dollars. This money will fund a series of short videos that will be posted on social media and on the regional website. This project will be carried out in the spring and should be completed sometime in the summer.
- Regional Brochure Update
  - Eric provided members of the steering committee the current draft of the regional brochure. The brochure language has been finalized, all that needs to be done is update a photo on one of the panels. Members of the steering committee were impressed by the brochure and the information provided. There was questions though on where these brochures be located. Staff responded that these brochures will be posted to the regional website, the town websites, and other online locations (CTvisit). Physical copies will be available at gas stations, town halls, and at other locations throughout the region. There has also been discussions on having brochures at large events such as the Big-E, these events would help spread the information on Connecticut's Countryside and catch people out of state.
- Summit Follow Up
  - The video of the summit has been sent out to those that were invited to the summit. This video has also been posted on YouTube as well as the different town websites for those that are interested in watching it. The town websites were also updated with Summit recap information, including the presentation that was used.
  - Goal is for summits to occur annually to keep people interested and provide yearly updates to members of the communities.
- Regional Committees update

- Josh provided an update on the regional agriculture committee and the progress that is being made. Emails were sent out to those that were interested in serving in February. This email asked for people's availability to serve as well as if they still were interested in serving on the committee. Josh received quick responses back from those interested, first meeting is going to be held on a Wednesday in May in the Evenings.
- The regional arts and culture committee is the next committee that will be focused on. Emails will be sent out next week to various members of the town governments and those that attended the summit. Goal is to have the committee set up by May and have it occur quarterly.
- A meeting will be held in late March between the various park and rec directors of the towns. Goal is to get park and rec more involved with Connecticut's Countryside, as well as coordinate more regional events between the different towns. This meeting will be the starting point for a regional outdoor recreation committee. This committee would be responsible for helping implement the outdoor theme of the plan.
- Earth Day 2023 update
  - As of right now the town of Tolland will be unable to host an Earth Day event, so the Earth Day events will be focused on the Mansfield, Bolton, and Coventry.
  - Bolton: Bolton will be holding a bike run to Fish Family Farm for ice cream. This run will start near Steeles Crossing Road and will run for a mile or so to the farm and back. The conservation commission will be hosting Fairy Box building at Freja park in Bolton. Fairy boxes are little house for Fairies that little kids can build.
  - Coventry: Coventry will be holding a guided hike through Creaser Park, as well as a tree planting ceremony at Patriot's Park. The town tree warden will also be providing a tree talk at Patriot's Park.
  - Mansfield: Mansfield will be hosting Parking Lot Picassos at Mansfield Community Center. This will be a chalk drawing event that families can participate in, idea is to cover the parking spots in

pictures. At the same time there will be fun events inside the community center.

- Nichols College – web development update
  - Tim gave an update on the progress that is being made on the regional website. The students are currently building the language of the website and will need staff members to come to class in the coming weeks to let students know exactly what Connecticut's Countryside would like on their website.
  - Tim also provided a thank you response from a local business owner who attended one of the workshops that Connecticut's Countryside. In this email, the tools shown at this workshop helped save her business and was extremely appreciative of the information that was provided.
- Update - 4 town intern - Josh Hull
  - Josh had nothing else to update on, majority of his work has been tied up with the regional committees, the regional brochure, and Earth Day events.
- 4 Town Talk

Next Meeting date, time, agenda items

- April 19<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. via Zoom

Adjournment