

**Sports Advisory Board
Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism
One Constitution Plaza
Hartford, CT 06103
Wednesday, May 4, 2011
9:30 a.m.**

Meeting Minutes

Present: Jim Abromaitis, Capital City Economic Development Authority
Lynn Carlotto, Marketing & Event Consultant
Tom Chiappetta, Fairfield County Sports Commission
Robert Doherty, Special Olympics CT
Gene Doris, Fairfield University
Robert Duffy, Hartford Colonials
Michael Fresher, Bushnell/Rentschler Field
Oz Griebel, MetroHartford Alliance
Curt Jensen, Greater Hartford CVB
Jim Keener for Patricia Meiser, University of Hartford
Marie O'Brien, Connecticut Development Authority
Joe Oros, Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development
Chuck Steedman, AEG Management CT, LLC

Absent: Skip Barber, Lime Rock Park
Dana Ciaifi, Pilot Pen Tennis
Scott Ciecko, State Department of Higher Education
Wayne Dean, Yale University
Ron Drapeau, Connecticut State Golf Association
Jill Ferraiolo, Connecticut State University System
Patrick Fisher, Connecticut Sports Management Group, Inc.
Robert Goughan, Bridgeport Blue Fish
Nathan Grube, Travelers Championship
Kim Hart, Office of Policy and Management
Jeffrey Hathaway, University of Connecticut
Bill Humphreys, BikeGuy
Michael Mazzulli, Mohegan Tribe Athletic Department
Jack McDonald, Quinnipiac University
Larry McHugh, Middlesex Chamber of Commerce
Ann Miron, Sacred Heart University
William Mudano, Connecticut Sports Management Group, Inc.
Michael Murtha, Athletic Department Mohegan Sun
Larry Perosino, Connecticut Boxing Commission
Michael Renwick, Trinity College
Michael Savage, CT Interscholastic Athletic Conference
Paul Schlickmann, Central Connecticut State University
Renea Topp, Lime Rock Park
Andrew Weber, CT Tigers
Jennifer Widness, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
Sara Willcox, Pilot Pen Tennis
John Willi, New Britain Rock Cats

Guests/Staff: Kip Bergstrom, Executive Director, Commission on Culture & Tourism

I. Call to Order

Chairman Abromaitis called the meeting to order, and introduced Kip Bergstrom, Executive Director of the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism.

Kip Bergstrom addressed the members of the SAB. He noted, as of July 1, 2011, the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism will be merged with the Department of Economic & Community Development, at which time he will become a Deputy Commissioner of DECD overseeing CCT's current divisions along with place-making and innovations.

Roundtable introductions were concluded.

II. Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Robert Doherty, second by Kurt Jensen, the Sports Advisory Board approved the minutes of January 26, 2011 with the following changes; add Curt Jensen and Nathan Grube to the Business Plan Committee. All were in favor.

III. Update on Legislative Action (Raised Bill 841)

Chairman Abromaitis explained Bill 841 was not what the Board had hoped for or endorsed, and asked Joe Oros to give a brief history regarding this Bill.

Joe Oros noted the Commerce Committee Co-Chairs Senator LeBeau and Representative Berger submitted the Bill this year. Initially, the Bill was to create an entity but was changed in Committee and voted out, and was turned into a study – very likely as a placeholder in order to get a sense of where people wanted to go with it. Presently, it is scheduled on the Senate calendar waiting for action. Based on the discussions here today, the Co-Chairs will be waiting on feedback to get a better understanding on which direction they should take going forward regarding this Bill. Depending on the outcome on the conversations with the Co-Chairs, this Bill could stay on the calendar with no action being taken.

After a lengthy roundtable discussion the main question remains, does the Board need to have legislative language for the creation of a Sports Commission, and what will the impact be on the Sports Advisory Board.

IV. Presentation by “Business Plan” Committee

The subcommittee presented a model for a base business plan.

The committee began the process by developing a mission statement for the organization, and further discussions were held on what the structure might be, and the sources and uses of funds.

A question was raised regarding the retention of professional sports teams/events. After discussion the focus should be the attraction of new and the retention of what we have, and the economic benefit to the state.

The model calls for funding from memberships/sponsorships and other sources.

What is being discussed here is about creating a private non-profit company – Connecticut Sports Marketing Authority (CSMA) which would be responsible for fostering and getting all interested parties around the table.

It was suggested to include verbiage in the Overview of Services section – page 2, “...in its role as an aggregator and resource, the CSMA will be principally responsible for identifying the financial needs associated with certain events and determining the source(s) of funding required. This is not to say that the CSMA will be the sole source of funding or offered non-financial assistance. Rather it will identify the requirements and then coordinate the sources to meet such requirements.

What is the role of CSMA versus the marketing staff of the major venues, and how does that sort out? When you discuss soliciting major events it requires more than just a venue. For example: Visa's two Championships which required a local organizing committee that was much broader than just the venue – because there were events that went from the convention center to the Old State House to the XL Center. While the XL Center had the marquee competition – there were events that were going on that were city-wide that were much broader than the scope of just the venue staff.

A discussion ensued questioning if there is an existing entity that could evolved into or be a part of this new concept. Membership would need to go beyond sports to groups or businesses that would benefit as a result of the efforts of this CSMA. There would be no need for formal legislation to do that. The state would likely commit to support and partner with the entity once created.

V. Next Steps

1. Budget committee to finalize the structure for the new entity and have another draft available for review at the next meeting
2. Outreach to the other participants of the Board and request their attendance at the next Board meeting
3. Decision on membership fee
4. Will need legal representation

VI. Organization/Venue Update

Chuck Steedman's organization explored the opportunity of hosting the U.S. Gymnastics Championships this October in the event Tokyo was unable to host. The International Federation had cast a number of doubts over Tokyo's ability to host. In partnership with U.S. Gymnastics Association we looked at the possibility, and the U.S. Gymnastics Association decided it was impossible to try and host the event on three (3) months notice when normally there is a 3-4 year planning cycle. This could be an event our state could host in the future.

Kurt Jensen just returned from the National Association of Sports Commissions and will be reaching out to the group and the group at large to measure the level of interest for opportunities to sponsor at the event to off-set the costs to schedule a site inspection event in Connecticut.

The 3rd Annual UConn Fairfield County Day is scheduled for June 2, 2011 – a Golf Tournament and UConn Hall of Fame Wing Inductees. This is a fundraiser for the Stanford Campus, UConn Alumni Chapter and the Sports Commission.

Beau Doherty noted there are numerous middle schools track and field and high school volley ball events scheduled, along with three regional games scheduled. Summer games are scheduled for June 11th, and members of the Board will be invited to volunteer to a timer. All volunteers will be trained by a U.S. Track & Field Official. Event will be held at Yale.

The University of Hartford will be hosting Special Olympics on campus this Saturday and will be submitting a bid for the American Men's & Women's Basketball in early March.

The Hartford Colonials has scheduled open tryouts on the 21st in Atlanta, and in Connecticut on Saturday, June 4, 2011 at the Rosek-Skubel Stadium, Middletown. Registration is 8:00 a.m., tryouts 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Cheerleading tryouts are also scheduled this Saturday at the Hartford Armory – 8:00 a.m. registration.

VII. New & Old Business

Gene Doris was contacted by CPTV who is interested in making a presentation to the group at the next meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

IX. Next Scheduled Meeting

The next meeting for the SAB is scheduled for June 22, 2011 at 9:30 a.m., Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, One Constitution Plaza – main conference room.