



## **MINUTES**

**Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau  
Sports Advisory Board Meeting  
Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at 9am  
One Constitution Plaza, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Hartford CT 06103**

**Presiding: Pat Meiser, Chair**

## **PRESENT**

Evan Feinglass, University of Connecticut; Allen Gibson, Fairfield University, Chris Lawrence, Global Spectrum; Craig Mergins, Riverfront Recapture; Bob Murdock, Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau; Scott Phelps, Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau; David Polk, First Tee of Connecticut; John Rollins, Eastern College Athletic Conference

## **CALL-IN**

Michael Ansarra, Central Connecticut State University; Theresa Condit, Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park, Wayne Dean, Yale University, Patrick Fisher, Connecticut Sports Management Group

## **NOT PRESENT**

Greg Amodio, Quinnipiac University; Skip Barber, Lime Rock Park; Thomas Beckett, Yale University; David Benedict, University of Connecticut; Dana Cialfi, Connecticut Open; Scott Ciecko, Connecticut Department of Higher Education; Kim Crowley-Hart, Capital Regional Development Authority; Beau Doherty, Special Olympics of CT; Gene Doris, Fairfield University; Charlie Dowd, Harbor Yard Sports & Entertainment; Bill Dowling, New Britain Bees; Bob Felice, Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce; Timothy Fitzpatrick, U.S. Coast Guard Academy; Randy Fiveash, Connecticut Office of Tourism; Anton Goff, University of Hartford; Oz Griebel, Metro Hartford Alliance; Nathan Grube, Travelers Championship; Sean Hayes, Powder Ridge Mountain Park; Bill Humphreys, Bike Guy LLC; Brad Hurlbut, Sacred Heart University; C.J. Knudsen, Connecticut Tigers / Dodd Stadium; Michael Kobylanski, Southern Connecticut State University; Michael Mazzulli, Mohegan Sun; Larry McHugh, Middlesex Chamber of Commerce; Mike Moraghan, Connecticut State Golf Association; William Mudano, Connecticut Sports Management Group / Nutmeg State Games; Patricia Mulcahy,

Connecticut State University System; Alayne Murphy, Webster Bank Arena; Michael Murtha, Mohegan Sun; Karissa Neihoff, Connecticut interscholastic Athletic Conference; Karen O'Connell, Foxwoods Resort Casino; Maura Provencher, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges; Michael Renwick, Trinity College; Tim Restall, Hartford Yard Goats; Beth Shluger, Hartford Marathon Foundation; Chris Sienko, Connecticut Sun; Jamie Toole, Bridgeport Bluefish; Renea Topp, Lime Rock Park; Josh Vanada, Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park; Sara Willcox, Connecticut Open

**Introduction and Call to Order:**

Ms. Meiser called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

**Review and Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of the April 21, 2016 meeting were reviewed and accepted by a unanimous vote.

**CTCSB Update:**

Mr. Phelps stated that, even with all of the budget cuts, the sales numbers are up as compared to past year. This includes an increase of 27% in the number of leads over the previous year and an increase in lead room nights of 71% over the previous year. Much of the increase is attributed to the CTCSB collaborating with colleges on the NCAA bids for the 2018-2022 timeframe this Fall.

Mr. Phelps encouraged all SAB Members to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual CTSCB Hospitality Industry Night that will be held on Thursday, October 6 at the First Tee of Connecticut in Cromwell. At this year's event, the Thomas J. Shortell Award will be presented to Howie Dickenman, who recently retired from Central Connecticut State University as the Men's Basketball Head Coach.

The Thomas J. Shortell Award is given to a Connecticut resident who has had a long-term successful sports career. Howie Dickenman has spent 40 years as one of our state's greatest basketball coaches. He began his coaching career at New Britain High School, later worked at the University of Connecticut for many years, and spent the past two decades at the Central Connecticut State University where he retired as Head Coach at the end of last season. We are extremely pleased to honor Coach Dickenman during our 2016 Hospitality Industry Night.

**Sports Marketing Report:**

**TEAMS Conference:** Mr. Murdock reported on his upcoming appointments for the TEAMS Conference which he will attend in two weeks in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Mr. Murdock is scheduled to meet with sports event planners including:

Adrenaline Sports Management (Santa Hustle), Asian Basketball Championships of

North America, Beach Rugby America, CrossFit Games, ESPN X-Games, EVP Volleyball Tour, Fishers of Men, Hurricane Action Sports, Jam On It Basketball, Killer 'B' Promotions, National Gay Basketball League, NXT Sports, LLC, One Hockey, Orienteering USA, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Pop Warner Cheer, Pro-Am Beach Soccer, Robogames, Robotics Education and Competition Foundation, Red Frog Events, Running USA, Savage Race, Showstoppers Dance, Spartan Race, Trilogy Lacrosse, USA Climbing, USA Curling, US Lacrosse, US Corporate Games, USA Crits Series, US Rowing, USA Field Hockey, USA Judo, USA Masters Games, USA Quidditch, USA Track & Field, USA Weightlifting, We Build You Play Sports.

**Major bids in process:** The Brooklawn Country Club in Fairfield has submitted a bid for the 2021 Solheim Cup. This is the most prestigious event in women's professional golf. The Committee is cautiously optimistic about the chances of securing this event that would result in about a \$50M economic impact for Connecticut. The 2021 Solheim Cup would utilize approximately 50-60,000 hotel room nights, bring 120,000 people to the Brooklawn Country Club and result in worldwide media coverage for the State. The Bid Committee recently had a press event which drew media from Connecticut, New York City and New Jersey. The media outlets were asked to let their readership know about the bid and made a call to action to reach out to the LPGA on behalf of Brooklawn's bid. The LPGA will make their decision in December.

**NCAA Championships:** The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) released the bid specs for the 2018-22 quadrennial. We will find out the results of the bids in early December. The CTCSSB will be partnering with colleges and universities in Connecticut to bid on events including

- 2018-22 NCAA DI Men's Basketball First / Second Rounds
- 2018-22 NCAA DI Men's Basketball Regional Championships
- 2018-22 NCAA DI Men's Ice Hockey Regional Championships
- 2019-20 NCAA DI Women's Volleyball Final Four
- 2018-22 NCAA DI Women's Ice Hockey Frozen Four
- 2019-22 NCAA DI Men's Golf Regional Championships

**Media:**

The CTCSSB continues to make best efforts to gain exposure for Connecticut and our venues. Mr. Murdock was recently interviewed for these publications:

- SportsEvents Magazine on what makes Connecticut an attractive place to host an event.
- SportsEvents Magazine on USA Gymnastics with a focus on June's P & G Championship and Secret Cup in Hartford.
- Destination Management Magazine on tennis with a focus on Chelsea Piers, Connecticut Tennis Center at Yale and Four Seasons Racquet Club in Wilton.

**Challenges:**

Mr. Murdock spoke about a few of the challenges that he faces in securing events for Connecticut.

- The CTCSB does not have any funds available to offer to potential events. Other CVBs have an event fund that they utilize to bring in new events and to help them get established. How do we raise funds to attract significant events to the State?
- How do we get Connecticut sports media (YES Network, ESPN, NBC Sports, WWE), sports marketing companies, etc involved with promoting Connecticut?

**Meeting Format:**

There was a discussion on how to bring more people to the SAB Meetings. The consensus was that there needs to be a potential for business opportunities to come out of the meeting. The meetings will include networking time. In the future, the CTCSB will again look to tag the SAB meetings on to sporting event and/or include a guest speaker.

**Next Meeting:**

The next SAB meeting will be in late November / early December. A notice will be sent out on this shortly.

**Adjournment:**

Ms. Meiser adjourned the meeting at 10:30pm.