

**Sports Advisory Board
Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism
One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor
Hartford, Connecticut
Main Conference Room
February 5, 2009
9:30 a.m.**

Meeting Minutes

- Present:** Jim Abromaitis, Capitol City Economic Development Authority
Val Belmonte, Quinnipiac University
Lynn Carlotto, Arena at Harbor Yard
Dana Ciaifi, Pilot Pen Tennis
Wayne Dean for Thomas Beckett, Yale University
Robert Doherty, Special Olympics CT
Gene Doris, Fairfield University
Ricky Ferrell for John Willi, New Britain Rock Cats
Nathan Grube, Travelers Championship
Jeffrey Hathaway, University of Connecticut
Marie Jannace, Lime Rock Park
Curt Jensen, Greater Hartford CVB
C.J. Jones, Central Connecticut State University
Michael Mehigen, Office of Policy and Management
Patricia Meiser, University of Hartford
William Mudano, Connecticut Sports Management Group, Inc.
Marie O'Brien, Connecticut Development Authority – via conference call
Joe Parillo for Ron Drapeau, Connecticut State Golf Association
Michael Savage, CT Interscholastic Athletic Conference
Jeff Vose, MetroHartford Alliance
- Excused:** Scott Ciecko, State Department of Higher Education
Charlie Dowd, Dodd Stadium – Connecticut Defenders
Jill Ferraiolo, Connecticut State University System
Rick Hazelton, Trinity College
Don MacKenzie, Boats Incorporated
Larry McHugh, Middlesex Chamber of Commerce
Ann Miron, Sacred Heart University
Michael Murtha, Athletic Department Mohegan Sun
Joe Oros, Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development
Gloria Ragosta, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
Michael Roth, Wesleyan University
Chuck Steedman, Northland AEG
- Guests/Staff** Leigh Johnson (Recording Secretary) Commission on Culture & Tourism, Ginny Kozlowski
& Guest – New Haven CVB, Karen Senich, Commission on Culture & Tourism

I. **Call to Order**

Chairman Abromaitis called the Sports Advisory Board meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

II. **Approval of Minutes**

On a motion made by Val Belmonte, second by Gene Doris the minutes of September 18, 2008 were approved as circulated. All were in favor. (Y-19, N-0)

III. **Chairman's Report – Jim Abromaitis Reporting**

The Chairman thanked the members of the three subcommittees for their time and effort for researching and evaluating the information they have collected. From the three report findings, the information presented will be helpful when developing a report to the legislature, which will include any and all recommendations on how to attract additional sporting events to the state, and potential revenues generated from sporting events.

Governor's Budget

As most of the members are aware, the Governor released her budget to the legislature yesterday. There is an estimated \$1 billion dollar shortfall for this fiscal year and an \$8 billion dollar shortfall in the next two (2) fiscal years.

The Board is mandated to submit a report prior to the commencement of each legislative session. Karen Senich submitted the SAB's report to the Commerce Committee in November 2008. The Chairman suggested that the information and any recommendations made by the three (3) subcommittees, be appended to the recent submitted report to the Commerce Committee and legislature.

IV. **Sports Advisory Board Report to the Legislature – Karen Senich Reporting**

Executive Director Senich's report was submitted to the Co-Chairs of the Commerce Committee, which reported the creation of exploratory committees that were in the process of gathering information for the Board.

V. **Economic Impact Model – Curt Jensen Reporting**

Curt Jensen thanked the members who volunteered to serve on the sub-committee. The group examined the National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC) model verses other methodologies used in determining economic impact. The Committee began the process by defining "economic impact". The subcommittee's consensus for the definition of economic impact – is a measurement of how an area is affected by the presence of an event.

The next step was to decide which formula would give the most accurate measurement of economic impact for an event. Three models were reviewed: Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) formula, NASC, and a comprehensive on-site surveying. Out of the three models, the best indicator is a comprehensive on-site surveying; followed by the National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC), and Destination Marketing Association International. The subcommittee thought the NASC would be the best tool to use for the following reasons: best utilized as a qualifying entity to determine the estimated impact rather than; a definitive end result. Utilizing this tool [post-event] after the collection and input of hard data makes it a more effective tool. The data generated could then be compared to the pre-event model output to see what the event actually produced.

The subcommittee recommended that the Board becomes a member of the National Association of Sports Commission thereby, having access to this model. As events become available to the state, the information and data on the event should be entered into the model to see if the return-on-investment

(ROI) would be a profitable one. A discussion ensued.

A recommendation was made to provide a sampling of the NASC quantifying data on a couple of community and national events if available – information to be provided by Curt Jensen.

VI. **Collegiate Events – Gene Doris Reporting**

Colleges and universities are very uniquely positioned to initiate bringing events to the state. At any given point in time, colleges and universities have hosted in-season or post-season tournaments from either the conference level or NCAA events. Division I institutions encompass five conferences: Big East, America East, Metro Atlantic (MAAC), Northeast conferences, and Ivy League. Each institution has the ability to host individually, collectively, or in conjunction with their conference.

Same applies for Division II and III level institutions and have similar but more limited situations. Bidding opportunities for the II & III Divisions are very much site/community oriented. Division II & III emphasis is not as much based on the financial guarantee, but quality of the venue for the event, community involvement, etc. But, it can have an economic impact nonetheless.

Fairfield County Market Study that was conducted showed a tremendous impact in terms of dollars that an event generates. Events bring in dollars that enrich local businesses, help fund city services, and reduce local tax burdens. The study did indicate in terms of dollars, every event that is not brought in, you lose it three (3) to one (1) of what you could have received.

Additional future opportunities – men's and women's basketball, men's and women's ice hockey, baseball, softball (though facilities are questionable), and men's and women's lacrosse.

Challenges to other opportunities – Northeast is not conducive for many championships because NCAA is seeking better weather climate states; conference championships rotate through member institutions or go to the highest bidder; and there are some sports, such as volleyball not highly embraced in this market.

Resource requirements – institutional and/or conference support either individually or collectively; need an individual/position in appropriate state office who can work with bidders as a coordinator of resources.

Risks and rewards – significant risk is operating at a loss. NCAA and most conferences require a stated guarantee as part of the bid process; and universities cannot subsidize a potential loss by themselves. Rewards – are visibility for the community in which the event is held, sponsoring the entity, income to local business, income to the host venue, and potential of return visitors.

A recommendation from the Collegiate subcommittee is that we [universities/colleges/SAB] work together when bidding on events so that one institution in the state does not cancel out another and to establish an entity within an appropriate state office to manage/coordinator of resources and work with bidders/bidding process, and a commitment from the state on their support of the efforts of the institutions applying for the bid.

VII. **Non-Collegiate Sports – Bill Mudano Reporting**

The non-collegiate sports subcommittee met on several occasions and contacted other states to gather information. Sporting events fall into one of two categories: NCAA or collegiate sporting events, and non-collegiate sporting events.

After a great deal of research and discussions, one question kept arising – can we have a Sports Advisory Board that has any viability, effectiveness and credibility with out a budget. The subcommittee did agree -- the answer was no.

General recommendations – subcommittee would like to recommend the hiring of a full-time staff; establish office space, and establish the following subcommittees which could include members of the Board – marketing/public relations, funding component, membership component, communications, operations and government relations.

An office or authority with the SAB as it’s Board could be the entity were people to go and get answers “i.e. one stop shopping”. We face a visitor of non-collegiate events with the question of retention and recruitment. The Board must be mindful however; while recruiting for new events we must be very careful not to lose the existing sports entities here in the state.

Recruitment recommendations – serve as a clearing house, resource of available venues; funding, assistant with bid packages, travel, lodging for bid proposal visit, assist with host site/venue negotiations, and assist with securing private/corporate sponsorships.

Geographically, Connecticut is well positioned within about a 3 hours drive there are about 300,000 million potential visitors. Connecticut should be the leader for New England as Connecticut has excellent facilities and venues, adequate infrastructure and talent. This market has hundreds of millions of dollars that Connecticut has the opportunity to bring to the state, and there is a need to have a central authority or agency to get this accomplished.

Roundtable Discussion

Discussion ensued. Chairman Abromaitis noted that the three (3) subcommittees were on the same theme and there needs to be a way to make a strong case demonstrating sports/sporting events are a viable economic driver, and should be for the state. We have the willingness and commitment from all parties to see this through to fruition. Board should continue with progress made so far – to be ready to move forward.

The next step is to draft a report based on the sub-committee’s recommendations and to amend the previously submitted report to the legislature in November 08. The legislative draft report will be discussed at the next meeting.

VIII. **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made and moved. All in favor.

IX. **Next Scheduled Meeting**

The next meeting of the Sports Advisory Board is scheduled for Tuesday, April 14th at 9:30 a.m.

For the next meeting

1. Create a draft a report listing the highpoints for the legislature
2. Karen Senich, Larry McHugh and Jim Abromaitis to meet and strategize for new ideas.