**Meeting Minutes - Destination Groton Committee (DGC) Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** April 9, 2025

**Attendees:**

* **Committee Members:** Greg Sheldon, Jeff Gordon, Joni Parker-Roach, Brian Bolton, Heather Puksta
* **Sub-Committee member:** Karen Tucker-Barisano

**Meeting Summary:** The meeting focused on planning and finalizing strategies for promoting Groton’s new Audio Walking Tour as part of the town’s America 250th celebrations. This included refining marketing approaches, resolving budget allocations, aligning with commemorative events, addressing grant applications, and coordinating efforts across community organizations. A significant portion of the discussion centered on finalizing a grant application due April 11, 2025, including budget narratives, event planning, and defining marketing deliverables. The committee also discussed ongoing work tied to a $75,000 One Stop Grant, consultant involvement, and managing potential conflicts of interest.

**Key topics included:**

* A motion was made by Joni and seconded by Jeff to appoint Greg as the authorized signer of all Invoices submitted to the Town Accounting Office. The committee voted 5-0 in favor.
* Promotion and design of the audio walking tour
* Poster and flyer production and distribution
* Press release and photo coordination
* Budget and grant request finalization
* Coordination with the Commemorations & Celebrations Committee Don Black called
* Marketing strategy and platform choices
* Use of analytics and impact measurement tools
* Specific events like Memorial Day Parade, Fireworks, and Burial Ground Dedication

**Key Takeaways**

* **Marketing Strategy Prioritized**
The committee agreed that marketing the audio tour is a higher priority than supporting local events when allocating grant funds. Facebook and social media were seen as more effective than newspaper ads.
* **Audio Walking Tour Promotion Plans Finalized**
The group will create standardized 11x17 posters and 8.5x11 flyers with QR codes. Distribution points include the Visitor Center, Prescott School, History Center, library, schools, and local clubs.
* **Budget Discussion and Adjustments**
The total grant budget considered was $35,000, with allocations for:
	+ $6,000 for Alaina Pinto (social influencer)
	+ $10,000 for Yankee Magazine and similar placements
	+ $5,000 for commemorations and celebrations
	+ $4,000 for a historical lecture series
	+ $10,000 for programming/public engagement
* **Grant Narrative and Positioning**
The grant application narrative will focus on Groton's historical relevance and marketing strategies to promote tourism. It emphasizes Groton’s unique Revolutionary War contributions and recent growth in visitor traffic.
* **Metrics and Analytics**
Success will be measured using web analytics, social media performance, and potentially tools like Placer.ai for visitor tracking. Surveys to restaurants and organizations will supplement data collection.
* **Additional Grant Application Needs**
The group reviewed letters of support and required town financials, stressing the need to meet the tight submission deadline.

**Action Items**

* **Joni** to print 20 copies of 11x17 posters on card stock.
* **Greg** to follow up with the Town Manager regarding Studio InSitu invoice
* **Greg** to send the quarterly report details to the group and upload it to the shared Google Drive.
* **Joni & Brian** to finalize copy and design for walking tour promotional posters and flyers.
* **Joni** to contact local groups (Garden Club, schools, library) to distribute materials.
* **Committee** to create a detailed breakdown of the $35,000 grant request.
* **Committee** to allocate marketing funds:
	+ $6,000 for influencer video content
	+ $10,000 for regional publication placements (e.g., Yankee Magazine)
	+ $3,000 for commemorations & celebrations marketing
	+ $2,000 for programming support
	+ $4,000 for a public lecture series
* **Committee** to reach out to town manager for approval of proposed budgets.
* **Meeting to be scheduled**  with both consulting groups to align on grant priorities.
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