

Each year, the holiday season is a bright spot for the Cape Ann tourism community, and that was especially true in 2021. This was just one of the topics discussed by the Greater Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce Tourism Council in its December meeting.

After seeing holiday celebrations significantly impacted in 2020, this season saw a return of many annual traditions – with health and safety still a primary focus. And as the Tourism Council members discussed, these events and activities helped to spotlight the special attraction Cape Ann holds for visitors as well as those who call this region their home.

But the discussions this month reached far beyond the holidays. We discussed winter tourism efforts, including [Gloucester's So Salty](#) – a two-day program on January 22-23 organized by Cape Ann Museum in partnership with Maritime Gloucester, Discover Gloucester and several other local cultural organizations and businesses – and a renewed focus on winter birding, with a boat trip scheduled for March 12, an associated speaker series, and the launch of a [new Chamber webpage](#).

We welcomed a newcomer to our December meeting who represented Ipswich, the newest addition to the Chamber. Kerrie Bates, Ipswich's director of recreation and culture, provided an overview of tourism-related activities in that community throughout the year, leading to a discussion of opportunities for collaboration in the months and years ahead.

We spent a major portion of our December meeting discussing the summer season, and the staffing challenges faced by the tourism businesses throughout greater Cape Ann. Conversations covered a meeting with Sen. Bruce Tarr and efforts focused on ensuring housing and transportation for summer workers. This is a topic that will continue to be addressed by the Tourism Council in upcoming meetings.

Anyone interested in these and other issues impacting the Cape Ann tourism community are invited to join us for our monthly meetings, held on the third Friday of each month. You can participate in these morning meetings in-person at the Greater Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce office or virtually via Zoom. Our next meeting will be on Friday, January 21, at 8:30 AM, and we'll begin the new year by discussing the

opportunities we see for the region's tourism community in 2022 and the challenges we'll address together.

Please reach out if you have any questions about our meetings or the Tourism Council activities.

Thank you and Happy New Year!

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