

Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, New York
Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, May 4, 2011 8:00 a.m.
Ravenwood Golf Club, Victor

PRESENT

Dick Maltman
Lois Kozlowski
Mary Luckern
Mike Roeder
Jessica Bacher
Frank Riccio
Bob Bennett

EXCUSED

Russ Kenyon
Suzanne Farley
Alexa Gifford
John Brahm
Dan Fuller
Chris Iversen
Mike Kauffman
Lisa Fitzgerald

EX-OFFICIO

Alison Grems, Canandaigua Chamber

STAFF

Valerie Knoblauch
Sue Schmidt
Meg Colombo
Rebecca Donovan

WELCOME – Mike Roeder called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m., and welcomed everyone to Ravenwood Golf Club. Mike invited everyone to walk around the facility after the meeting, and thanked Bob Bennett for chairing the March 30th meeting in his absence.

CORRESPONDENCE NOTEBOOK – Rebecca Donovan passed the Correspondence Notebook, noting the information on Another World Bed & Breakfast newly opened in Naples, and correspondence from Senator Patrick Gallivan.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Valerie Knoblauch noted that the Tourism Legacy Awards and Marketing Update were moved to June 14 to allow more time to notify the industry and generate PR. The event will be held at Ravenwood, with a Marketing Update from 10 a.m. till noon, and luncheon and awards at 12:30 p.m. Valerie read the list of award winners and asked board members to help present the awards. After a brief discussion it was determined to leave the Literature Exchange on June 8 at Sonnenberg Gardens.

Valerie gave the board a political update, noting that she, Dan Fuller and Alexa Gifford had recently attended New York State meetings. Valerie invited area TPAs and other leaders to attend a roundtable discussion on May 12, where those in attendance could share what they knew about happenings at state level. The development of regional economic development councils is being headed by Lt. Governor Robert Duffy. Valerie noted that the current Economic Development regions do not match up with the tourism regions. Ontario County loses some strength of assets, compared to Erie Canal, Genesee Valley and Rochester in the current Economic Region, and Valerie emphasized the need for tourism people appointed to these councils. There was discussion around this topic and Valerie asked whether the board wanted to take any action. **Contingent upon full approval of the board, Lois Kozlowski made a motion to move forward with business items for the meeting. Mary Luckern seconded and the motion passed unanimously by those present. Valerie Knoblauch to write a letter of endorsement to be signed by Board Chair Mike Roeder in support of the appointment of Ed Hall, Dan Fuller, Valerie Knoblauch or Cynthia Oswald to the Finger Lakes Region Economic Development Council.** Mary Luckern seconded and the motion was passed unanimously by those present. **Subsequently, this motion did not receive the full support of the board.**

Valerie reported that FLVC's check for \$56,510 in 2011 NYS Matching Funds has arrived.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – continued

Valerie attended a meeting in her position as regional tourism director. This meeting was held on May 13, 2011 with the agenda being the consideration of the Cornell study on the regions of New York State. The results, according to Valerie were very interesting and available to any board member that wishes to see them. These results are consumer centric and will be used to determine how the consumers approach the tourism product decision making component of their business.

CHAMBER UPDATES – Alison Grems reported that the City Council is selecting a group to work on an City of Canandaigua Economic Development plan; Alison noted that all potential members spoke about the importance of tourism. The Chamber's new Visitor Guide and Map will arrive this week. Alison has had good meetings with Sue Schmidt, including a meeting with Jack Moran who will be bringing his organization's annual meeting to Canandaigua in August; a second lead has resulted in a 12-woman CEO retreat coming to Canandaigua in the fall. Alison reported that the Canandaigua Chamber has become a member of Greater Rochester Enterprise.

Valerie informed the board about changes in the Ontario County Economic Development staff. Mary Gates has taken another position with the county, and Maureen Duggan has taken a position as head of Economic Development for U.S. Representative Louise Slaughter.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM – Rebecca Donovan reported on her attendance at the April 29, 2011 water trail meeting. In attendance were several area supervisors, mayors, and Finger Lakes Land Trust representatives. The group would like to create a water trail on Canandaigua Lake connecting the various eco-tourism assets along the lake. There will be future meetings and we'll be involved in the process as it ties in to our strategic mission.

PRESIDENTS UPDATE

Valerie reported on the pending Interpretive Center project at Ganondagan. Valerie has agreed to work with Ganondagan on their New York State grant process, and to assist them in matters with Ontario County.

Maria Rudzinski, Ontario County Planning & Research, was interested in having "tourism" present to the Ontario County Planning Board. Maria indicated that "tourism's" opinion is valued for economic impacts, as well as for aesthetics and sustainability of tourism projects. Valerie will take the Product Development list to the next Planning Board meeting, providing an educational seminar on tourism development issues and considerations for Ontario County. A brief discussion and brainstorming ensued as a result of the presentation of the current product list. These ideas will be incorporated into future discussions in order to update the list. Additionally, Valerie plans to solicit product needs and opened the discussion to suggestions from those present. Valerie noted that NYS has recently passed a farm distillery law, and there is a law pending for farm breweries.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS – Bob Bennett asked that the March 30, 2011 minutes be amended to list his title as 2nd Vice Chairperson. Valerie recommended that the March 30, 2011 minutes be amended as follows, based on feedback from Chris Iverson who expressed concern about the interpretation of the word "strong": David Lee reviewed the February metrics reporting that, according to the STR report, occupancy levels were up 4.5% over the prior year and that RevPar had also increased by \$10.20.

Bob Bennett moved to **approve the Minutes of the March 30, 2011 Board of Directors meeting as amended**. Mary Luckern seconded and the motion was passed unanimously by those present. This vote is contingent upon 100% affirmative votes of those not present. **Update: This vote did not receive 100% affirmative votes and therefore, did not pass.**

Valerie presented the financial reports for March, April and year-to-date. Dick Maltman moved to **accept the March, April and year-to-date financial reports**. Mary Luckern seconded and the motion was passed unanimously by those present. This vote is contingent upon 100% affirmative votes of those not present. **Update: This vote did not receive 100% affirmative votes and therefore, did not pass.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS – The Nominating Committee, comprised of Dick Maltman, Jessica Bacher, and Lois Kozlowski met to review the position of John Maerhofer, whose circumstances had changed and the Clifton Pearl B&B would no longer be open. The Nominating Committee recommended the appointment of Carl Carlson, Cheerful Valley Campground, to fill John Maerhofer’s term expiring September 30, 2012. Dick Maltman moved to **accept the recommendation of the Nominating Committee**. Bob Bennett seconded and the motion was passed unanimously by those present. An affirmative vote is contingent upon 100% approval of those not present. **Update: This vote did not receive 100% approval of those present and therefore did not pass.** Valerie will contact John Maerhofer thanking him for his service.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT – Mike Roeder noted that the board had agreed to review the Board Metrics (adopted May 5, 2010) after one year of implementation, as specified in the Authority Mission Statement and Performance Measurements required under the Public Authorities Accountability Act. The Performance Measurements will be presented at the July 20th meeting. Mike asked Valerie whether the current metrics were helpful to the staff. Valerie will look at the web metrics area as this is the one area that seems to be constantly changing. Valerie encouraged the board to share what they track, or what they hear that others are tracking.

MARKETING AND SALES REPORT – Sue Schmidt gave the board a refresher on the **RFP Report on the Partner Site**. Mike Roeder suggested that Sue include comments on why a group chose another location. Valerie reminded everyone that given the utility of the internet, we certainly could not consider the production of a lost business report in “the old style” since some contacts are never made with us because the information automatically eliminates us. For those on the margin, however, insights are occasionally shared with us as to why they have ultimately not chosen our area. These range from inadequate facilities to deficits in public transportation, to competitive pricing. These are definitely trackable for future opportunities. Sue and Valerie reminded everyone of the web postings to keep up to date in this area.

Sue hosted a post-fam for the **Ontario Motor Coach Association**, following the ABA/OMCA joint meeting; she has already received one booking. Sue attended a NYSHTA meeting in Niagara Falls, along with Victor Nelson and Bill Schickel. Sue was recently appointed Vice President of Business Opportunities for the Board of Meeting Planners International. Sue and Valerie recently met with their counterparts in Rochester and Syracuse to discuss new markets and the validity for existing markets, such as the religious conference market. Greg Marshall, VisitRochester, expressed interest in a partnership to develop the golf niche market.

Several finished print publications were shared by staff members. Meg Colombo reported on the **Lifestyle Kit** project. Meg has been working closely with AJ Shear to produce the kit, which will be a useful promotional tool for us and the office of Ontario County Economic Development, as well as for the various communities within the county. The kits highlights the quality of life in Ontario County and can be customized by community. Valerie reported approving the proofs for the new **Mega Guide**. This print run will be for 10,000 guides. We will accept comments and corrections, and allow for additional buy-in, and the next print run will be for 50,000 guides. The Mega Guides are expected to arrive in time for the Literature Exchange on June 8th. Valerie noted the arrival of the 2011 version of the **Routes 5 and 20 z-card**, highlighting the Best Tastes along Routes 5 and 20. The z-cards were produced by the multi-county cooperative.

Valerie thanked the board for approving the **website design** contract with Dumbwaiter Design LLC. The project is moving along very smoothly and on schedule!

NEW BUSINESS – Valerie asked “How’s Business?” Discussion followed as board members shared their perceptions and news. Several reported sales and pre-bookings up over last year, and several noted an increase in Canadian visitors. Jessica Bacher reported on upgrades to the fitness center at the Hampton Inn, and renovations to the public space, meeting spaces, and 1st and 2nd floor guest rooms at the Ramada. Valerie reminded the board about the New York Wine & Culinary Center’s open house to showcase their renovations on May 6th, and Dick Maltman reminded the board about the Lions Club/MG Car Club car show at Farmington Town Park on June 5th. Sue Schmidt told the board about a request from a Rolls/Bentley car club for assistance in planning their trip; they chose our area because of an insert in the Toronto Mail – which was produced and placed by our multi-county cooperative targeting Canadian visitors – in September 2010!

ADJOURN – Mary Luckern moved to adjourn the meeting, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Next meeting: July 20, 2011 8:00 a.m.
 Inspire Moore Winery and Roots Café
 197 North Main Street, Naples

Goal B: Brand Development

Strategy 6: Grown and strengthen partnerships to maximize ROI on niche markets