

Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, New York
Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, March 21, 2012 8:00 a.m.
Bristol Mountain Winter Resort, Canandaigua

PRESENT

Dan Fuller	Suzanne Farley
Frank Riccio	Carl Carlson
Dick Maltman	Jessica Bacher
Lois Kozlowski	Mike Kauffman
David Linger	Bob Bennett
Russ Kenyon	Lisa Fitzgerald
Mary Luckern	

EXCUSED

John Brahm
Alexa Gifford
Mike Roeder
David Hutchings

STAFF

Valerie Knoblauch
Sue Schmidt
AJ Shear
Rebecca Donovan
David Lee

EX-OFFICIO

Alison Grems, Canandaigua Chamber
Spike Herzig, Geneva Chamber
Bob Matson, FLCC

WELCOME – Vice Chair Mike Kauffman called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and thanked Dan Fuller and Frank Riccio for hosting the meeting. Dan reported on the unusual winter season, and that Bristol Mountain was able to fulfill their 100 day guarantee. Dan noted that 11 of the top 12 competitive skiers in the state this year were from Section 5 and trained at Bristol Mountain.

EDUCATIONAL FOCUS – Valerie Knoblauch called the board's attention to the recent activities listed on the meeting agenda that fulfill one of our strategic goals:

Strategic Goal – Destination Management and Economic Development. Brand Finger Lakes Visitors Connection as the quality of life experts for Ontario County and the Finger Lakes Region.

Action Items – Strengthen our relationships with FLCC, HWS, Cornell Cooperative Extension and collaborate on projects of mutual interest; business to business format.

Tactics – Participation in Ontario County Agricultural Appreciation Banquet
Hosting new Food Educator, Hope Galens
Shared responsibility for url: www.fingerlakesag.com
Meetings with Geneva Chamber and HWS
Valerie participation in FLCC Community Speakers Series planning and marketing
Sue to participate in agri-tourism (Jim Ochterski) and Geneva Chamber

OFFICIAL BUSINESS – Russ Kenyon moved to **approve the Minutes of the January 31, 2012 Board of Directors Meeting**. Dick Maltman seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

Valerie Knoblauch presented the financial reports, noting that we are under budget in e-Brand, which will change with our new employee starting March 26, 2012. Valerie pointed out that the government income line looks high due to the difference between our fiscal year and the county's fiscal year. Lois Kozlowski moved to **accept the January, February and year-to-date financial reports**. Mary Luckern seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS – continued

Valerie reminded the board that the Public Authorities Accountability Act requires us to review and renew our Mission Statement and Performance Measures annually. Valerie distributed a copy of the report on our goals for 2011-2012 which was posted on our website. Valerie expressed that there is value in consistent performance measures, as long as they are broad enough, and invited comments from the board. Discussion ensued. Valerie will gather more research. The renewal will be on the May 2, 2012 board meeting agenda.

Valerie asked the board to renew the Procurement Policy, as required by the Public Authorities Accountability Act. Russ Kenyon moved to **renew the Procurement Policy**. Carl Carlson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Valerie reported that the Executive Committee had a discussion on the need for a social media policy. Valerie asked for a committee to review and update policies, including all Section IV Employee Conduct policies, all Section VI Employment Relationships and Business Ethics policies, and the Second Signature Required for Checks in Excess of \$2500 policy. Mike Kauffman and Mary Luckern agreed to work on this committee.

OLD BUSINESS – Valerie noted that the position statement on Casino Gaming as part of the tourism product mix of Ontario County, written in 1997, had been removed from the policy manual in 2010. Due to currently proposed state legislation to amend the state constitution to allow casino gaming, it was suggested that we take a proactive approach. Mike Kauffman recused himself from the ensuing discussion due to a potential conflict of interest with his parent company, Wilmorite. Valerie will develop language for the position statement, after speaking with Supervisor Ted Fafinski and Finger Lakes Casino & Racetrack. It was also suggested that further support may come from the Chambers of Commerce, the Ontario County IDA, and the Board of Supervisors. Valerie asked for a committee to review the statement, in the event that the statement needs to be moved forward before the next board meeting on May 2nd. Mary Luckern and Dick Maltman agreed to review the statement.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – In Mike Roeder's absence, Valerie reported that Carl Carlson and David Hutchings have completed the board training required by the Public Authorities Accountability Act, and that David Linger will complete his training as soon as practical.

CHAMBER REPORTS – Alison Grems announced that Barbara Walters will be retiring as of May 31st, and that Alison is accepting resumes for a staff person to work with Barb beginning May 1st. The Chamber's new map and visitor guide will be available in May. Alison and Sue Schmidt will be meeting with representatives of CMAC next week as part of the contract completion.

Spike Herzig reported that he and Sue Schmidt have participated in meetings with CCN International and Hobart and William Smith Colleges, and have more meetings scheduled. The Finger Lakes Boating Museum (FLBM) is waiting for approval from the NYS Dormitory Authority. The Chamber, who'll share the FLBM space, anticipates they will have 6 months to move to a temporary location. The Chamber is holding two educational sessions: a packaging seminar on March 22nd (Sue Schmidt is a lead presenter in this) and an agricultural tourism workshop on March 27th. Mary Luckern commended the agricultural workshop concept.

MARKETING REPORT – David Lee displayed the Marketing Dashboard for January and February 2012, noting an increase in occupancy in January and February. Bob Bennett and Jessica Bacher both reported an increase in corporate travel. Valerie noted that sports tournaments, the Snowcross races, and college visits contribute to winter travel. David noted that mobile views of our website continue to be up significantly, 178.86% over the same month last year. Valerie indicated that we are seeding content now for the scheduled launch of our mobile website on April 2nd.

Rebecca distributed packets to board members of the mailing that was sent to the industry in the past week. The packet included an industry overview from Valerie, recent PR wins and upcoming promotions from AJ, group travel information from Sue, a report on the distribution of our print materials from David, and upcoming FLVC events and industry news from Rebecca.

Valerie informed the board about a cooperative program with Cayuga County on TripAdvisor.

AJ reported:

- For a National Tourism Week event called “Helping Each Other,” we have asked the tourism industry to volunteer on May 7-9 to help clean up/fix up Ontario County tourism attractions and sites. So far, AJ has received a positive response for partnership in Downtown Canandaigua and at Sonnenberg. AJ asked the board for other suggestions and their participation. Additionally, he has outreaches to the Geneva and Victor chambers for project ideas.
- FLVC has contracted with Quinn & Co. for promotion of Nature’s Health Club. The promotion includes a trails concept with a special page on our website, and a TRYathlon on June 9th in partnership with Victor Parks and Recreation, Canandaigua Sailboarding, and Olympic bike trainer Leslee Tryczinski. AJ participated in media visits with Quinn & Co. in New York City, and placed a giveaway package with SHAPE magazine.

Valerie reported on a variety of marketing programs:

- The 14 Finger Lakes TPAs met at Hope Lake Lodge in Cortland with Edward Maitino and Eric Scheffel of I Love New York, John Frazier of Quinn & Co., and Linda Ayares and Melanie Klausner of M. Silver, the marketing agency hired by I Love New York. I Love New York and M. Silver visited every region of the state on an information gathering/brainstorming mission.
- The Routes 5 & 20 cooperative produced a successful commercial aired on YNN in the fall of 2011, and are planning another commercial for 2012.
- AJ attended a meeting with VisitRochester, planning a large-scale cooperative campaign on golf.
- The 2012-2013 tablet map is nearly sold out. A “Bucket List” brochure has been developed for distribution at high traffic locations, featuring our paid partners. It’s a smaller lure piece, and is an added benefit to our partners. Both publications are schedule for completion by mid-May. Russ Kenyon asked if the Bucket List will be posted on our website.

Sue Schmidt reported on her recent activities:

- Sue reminded the board that groups and meeting RFPs are updated regularly on the partners section of our website.
- Sue was happy to announce that her biggest group ever was just here – the Sisters of Notre Dame represented a \$145,000 direct piece of business. They found FLVC by googling “Finger Lakes CVB.”
- In the last two months Sue attended ABA Marketplace, the BankTravel Conference, and the Heartland Travel Showcase. Bob Bennett inquired about tracking the return on investment from these shows, and suggested that FLVC survey the hotels regarding group business.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Valerie informed the board that Sara Paduano will start Monday, March 26th in the position of Integrated Marketing Specialist.

Attendees applauded Sue Schmidt for her honor with the Professional Achievement Award at the Professional Women of the Finger Lakes award ceremony held on February 29, 2012.

Valerie has attended meetings in both Albany and New York City in the last few weeks. Valerie noted pending legislation regarding revenues from the I Love New York trademark. Revenues currently go into the general fund, with a portion to tourism. Dan Fuller noted that the \$2.5 million originally proposed in the 2012 state budget for ILNY has been increased by \$5 million for the Governor's Regional Economic Development initiatives. Valerie reported that we received our NYS Matching Funds check for \$43,422. Anecdotally, Valerie noted that, at its peak, our matching funds grant was \$120,000 around 1989.

All of our systems have been moved to the new server, in the new server room upstairs. We will be upgrading to Microsoft Office 2010 software at a cost of \$5,000-6,000.

Valerie will be putting out an RFP for bids on painting the upper level of the house trim, now that the roof upgrades are complete. Valerie asked the board for recommendations of painting contractors with lead abatement certification. Valerie is also close to completing the RFP for videography, and asked the board for recommendations for videography companies.

OLD BUSINESS - Honorary board member Grace Carlson approached Valerie about marketing opportunities around the Canandaigua Airport. Subsequently, Valerie has been in contact with Mike Manikowski, and AJ has met with Chris Schubert, operations manager at the airport, as well as Justin Shaw of Dixon Schwabl who is managing social media for the airport. Valerie noted there are over 220,000 private pilots in the US, and scheduled improvements to the airport are designed to encourage corporate travel. The next board meeting will be held at the airport on May 2nd. AJ Shear has chosen the airport marketing potential for his capstone project in the RIT Masters program. Valerie asked, and the board expressed no concerns about conflict of interest.

Valerie has signed the litigation papers for the Atomic Design settlement, and expects a check.

NEW BUSINESS – Valerie distributed self-evaluation forms and asked the board to complete them, as required annually by the Public Authorities Accountability Act. Forms will be made available electronically to absent board members, or to those who wish to complete the self-evaluation online.

ADJOURN – Dick Maltman moved to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Next meeting: May 2, 2012 8:00 a.m.
Canandaigua Airport
2450 Brickyard Road, Canandaigua