

**Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, New York  
Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, November 17, 2010 8:00 a.m.  
Belhurst, Geneva**

**PRESENT**

Suzanne Farley	Frank Riccio
Dan Fuller	Mike Roeder
Alexa Gifford	Lisa Fitzgerald
Jessica Bacher	Mike Kauffman
Russ Kenyon	Chris Iversen
Dick Maltman	Mary Luckern
Bob Bennett	

**EXCUSED**

John Brahm  
John Maerhofer  
Lois Kozlowski

**EX-OFFICIO**

Alison Grems, Canandaigua Chamber  
Rob Gladden, Geneva Chamber  
Bob Matson, FLCC

**STAFF**

Valerie Knoblauch  
Rebecca Donovan  
Sue Schmidt  
David Lee

**GUEST**

Mary Ann Bell, Honorary  
Board

**WELCOME** – Chairman Mike Roeder called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and asked for introductions. Mary Luckern welcomed everyone to Geneva. Special recognition was given to Mary Ann Bell, former Board of Director Chair.

Valerie thanked Kevin Reeder and Belhurst for providing a wonderful complimentary breakfast buffet. A tour would be available later.

**CORRESPONDENCE NOTEBOOK** – Rebecca Donovan passed the correspondence notebook.

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM** – Valerie Knoblauch provided the board with an update on the website design project. Valerie indicated that although Atomic Design considers the website almost done, she is not satisfied with the progress, or with the consistently slow response to her communications. Valerie outlined other concerns with the site and the process and indicated that we had hired Mike Nelson, a web programmer to do a risk/benefit analysis of continuing or stopping with Atomic. Valerie had received his report two days earlier and wanted further input from some board members on this situation. She requested a committee to work with Mike Nelson to analyze the project. Russ Kenyon, Lisa Fitzgerald, and Bob Bennett volunteered.

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

Chris Iversen moved to approve the **Minutes of the October 6, 2010 Board of Directors meeting**. Alexa Gifford seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Valerie presented the financial reports for September, and for the year ending September 30, 2010. Bob Bennett made a motion to **approve the September financial reports and the Year End reports**. Frank Riccio seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Valerie informed the board that the auditors from Fredericksen & Sirianni were in the office for two days, and seemed pleased, paying particular attention to the many policies that were added or revised in 2009-2010. The auditors will present an audit review to the Audit Committee on December 13<sup>th</sup>, and a full report to the board at the next board meeting on December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Valerie noted that the agenda included an item for the Occupancy Tax Position Paper, but that was adopted at the September 8, 2010 board meeting.

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS** - continued

Mike Roeder reported that the Contracts Task Committee, along with Valerie met with Rob Gladden and two board members of the Geneva Chamber of Commerce at their request. They were interested in completing this year's contract and reframing next year's contract. They will provide a proposal to us. Valerie reported that both the Geneva Chamber and the Canandaigua Chamber have completed their contracts. The Canandaigua Chamber has indicated that they would like to follow the same model for their next contract. Valerie noted that a copy of the proposed Canandaigua Chamber contract was included in the board mailing. Frank Riccio moved to **approve the Canandaigua Chamber of Commerce contract for December 1, 2010 through November 30, 2011 in the amount of \$8,250 and on the three period reporting and payment system.** Dick Maltman seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Russ Kenyon abstained.

Valerie reported that FLVC has received a grant estimate for Matching Funds of approximately \$60,000 and will, in theory, receive Matching Funds for 2011. Chris Iversen moved to **authorize Valerie Knoblauch to apply for and accept I Love NY Matching Funds for 2011.** Mike Kauffman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** – Mike Roeder reported that the Executive Committee met on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. They discussed the audit, the Chamber contracts, and the porch project, which is now complete. The committee agreed to move up the board self-evaluation process to December. The committee discussed the policy on funding requests. Valerie reported that she has met with both Ontario County Administrator Geoff Astles, and with Mike Manikowski of Economic Development about the Finger Lakes Boating Museum's request for funding. Currently, our policies do not allow us to make such contributions and neither do the Office of Economic Development's.

This type of request ties also into the product development updating. The first step which will be a **product development tour planned for December 8<sup>th</sup>**. The tour will begin at Steamboat Landing Resort at 8:30 a.m. and traverse the eastern part of Ontario County, ending in Geneva with a meal at the Red Dove Tavern. For those board members who are unable to attend, there will be individual tours set up with staff members to visit other parts of the county. All mini-tours will be finished by the January board meeting and we can compile the results of what development opportunities there are for tourism.

Mike Roeder reiterated his vision that FLVC be a leader in technology. Mike attended a meeting of Meeting Professionals International with Sue Schmidt that was held at Ravenwood Golf Club. Hugh Lee of Fusion Productions was the keynote speaker, and Mike saw an opportunity for our industry. As a result, Tourism **Tech Day is planned for December 2<sup>nd</sup>** from 8:30-11:30am at Steamboat Landing Resort. Hugh Lee will be the keynote speaker, and then each staff member will overview a piece of technology. AJ Shear will overview QR, Meg Colombo is currently attending a conference and will bring back a topic, and David Lee will overview text messaging.

Sue Schmidt showed the board the new reporting system for RFPs on the FLVC Partner Site. Sue began posting RFPs on October 1, and had three to show the board. The industry will be able to go on our Partner Site and view the meetings and groups requests that Sue has received. After the board review, Sue will release to sales managers at hotel properties in the county. Mike Roeder commended Sue for responding to the board's recommendations and for the work which is done to bring in the groups.

## **MARKETING REPORT**

**Niche Markets.** Valerie reported on the Girlfriends Getaways program, which generated 700 leads in response to our ad offering a Girlfriends Getaway Kit. Our industry partners responded with packages and offers good through April 30, 2011. Sue passed around a sample of the kit designed by Cindy Harris. The kit will include 36 packages, a value card listing the retail, restaurant, winery and spa offers, and an EASTVIEW Mall loyalty card. She noted that a separate mailing had been completed in advance to show the board the different marketing materials which had just been completed.

Valerie reported that we received 248 leads from the Toronto Ski and Snowboard Show, and passed around some of the actual leads so that board members could see what we are collecting. Bristol Mountain, as a paid partner in the show, will get all of the leads. 124 of the 248 leads indicated they would like information on accommodations. We will do an e-mail blast to those leads which will offer an opt-in for mailings and for accommodations; if the consumer opts in, we will provide those leads to the accommodations properties. This will all be done in compliance with our board mailing policy and the Can Spam regulations. Valerie noted that the Toronto Ski and Snowboard Show, which AJ Shear attended, attracts serious skiers who were looking for deals and doing business at the show.

**PR Wins.** Valerie noted the article included in the board mailing by Demetra Pappas for the New York Resident. Travel writer Demetra Pappas came to the Finger Lakes during Slice, Dice and Spice NY, was a judge in the Finals, and toured Ontario County. The article she produced is a great tool to convince the industry that giving a room, or a meal can be viewed as an advertising investment.

**Board Metrics.** David Lee gave an overview of the August board metrics, noting a concern about website hits being slightly lower on a year over year comparison. Other metrics reflected the movement of Slice Dice and Spice from October to September.

**AGENCY REPORTS** – Alison Grems reported that the City of Canandaigua has cut funding to the Chamber. The Chamber is hosting a trip to Dubai, which Valerie is attending. Dubai was chosen because of its high profile as a tourism destination. The Chamber is looking at a role in economic development for the city. Alison noted the completion of the Visitor Center mural by Christopher Wheat, the upcoming Athena awards dinner at Bristol Harbour, and that the Chamber is looking for nominations for the Tourism Business award.

Rob Gladden reported that the City of Geneva held an Envision Geneva summit in March 2010, and that many of the initiatives were tourism-related. Funding included in the City budget indicates an awareness of the value of tourism to Geneva. Rob noted that the money allocated by Senator Nozzolio in 2008 for a Visitor Center in Geneva has shrunk from \$5 million to \$3.5 million. The Finger Lakes Boating Museum will be a positive addition to the project, but the process is moving slowly. Rob reported that this year's Leadership Program included a partnership with FLCC, and thanked Lisa Fitzgerald for providing the trolley for tours of downtown Geneva.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT** – Valerie travelled to Albany, as President of the NYS TPA Council to meet with Senator Steve Engelbright, Chair of the Committee on Tourism, Arts & Sports Development. She was disappointed in the meeting as she had hoped for a bit more enthusiasm and support for tourism promotion.

Valerie drew the board's attention to the Strategic Plan Brief at each place. This was the promised "short version" for easy reference. This will be distributed in meetings with elected officials, the industry or special speaking assignments such as the Rotary Clubs.

**OLD BUSINESS** – David Lee launched a slideshow of the final days of the porch project which featured all staff members (except Valerie) wielding paintbrushes. Valerie was the official photographer. The porch is now very secure and safe, as are the new sidewalks – without hazardous cracks.

**ADJOURN** – Mary Ann Bell moved to adjourn the meeting. Mike Roeder seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m. Valerie invited anyone interested to tour rooms at Belhurst.

**Next meeting:**            December 16, 2010    1:30 p.m.                            Audit report and adoption  
   New York Wine & Culinary Center                            Followed by Holiday Gathering  
   800 South Main Street, Canandaigua

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