

PRESENT

Bob Bennett
Frank Riccio
Dick Maltman
Mike Roeder
David Hutchings
Jessica Bacher
Alexa Gifford
John Brahm
Dan Fuller
Russ Kenyon
Lisa Fitzgerald
John Hicks

EXCUSED

Carl Carlson
Mike Kauffman
David Linger

STAFF

Valerie Knoblauch
David Lee
AJ Shear
Carol Hicks
Michelle Dawson

EX-OFFICIO

Alison Grems - Canandaigua Chamber
Mitch Donovan – Victor Chamber

GUESTS

Steve Martin-Finger Lakes Gaming
and Race Track
Brendan McGlynn

WELCOME – Mike Roeder, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. Mike introduced our two new staff members, Michelle Dawson and Carol Hicks. He invited each of them to give a brief introduction. The board subsequently introduced themselves and our guests in the room.

Valerie shared that we had received two requests for letters of support for casinos. She invited Steve Martin to address the board on this issue and how it impacted the Finger Lakes Gaming and Racetrack. Steve Martin discussed the regions and who is eligible. He advised that there are 4 licenses for new casinos in New York State. There is a siting committee which is led by Mark Gearan, President of Hobart and William Smith, once he has received the approval of the legislature. The NYS Gaming Commission will determine the sites for the new casinos. The timeline is for spring and the process is underway. He advised on the economics of the two proposals for Ontario County and that the Finger Lakes Gaming and Racetrack was so very important to Farmington. After Steve's presentation, the Board asked a variety of questions and discussed whether or not our agency should take a position and respond to the requests. At the conclusion of the discussion, the board directed Valerie to draft a letter of support for Tioga County, to be reviewed at the next meeting. Mike Roeder thanked Steve for his very thorough presentation.

Correspondence Notebook – Valerie advised the Board members that this book was sparse because of our transition of people. Inside were the following: a Dixon Schwabl social media metrics report, Canal Grant biking brochure prototype containing three new trails for Geneva, and a card from former Supervisor of South Bristol, Dan Marshall.

Chamber Reports- John Hicks spoke on behalf of Dee Isaacs about the Geneva Chamber. He advised that there is a lot of reorganization going on, and they are cooperating with the City. All of the agencies are temporarily located at 1 Franklin Square. Dee Isaacs will be the face of the Chamber, although John will be the support of Geneva. Since the Chamber will be responsible for visitor services at the new events center, and has its offices at Franklin Square, they have a double advantage to service tourists and the shoppers.

Mitch Donovan reported on behalf of the Victor Chamber of Commerce. They have a Food and Brew Fest coming up on May 9th at Ravenwood Golf Club in Victor and a Women in Excellence event as well. Mitch also indicated that he would be reactivating the tourism committee with two meetings this year.

Valerie shared that Alison was unable to attend. Russ Kenyon noted that the Canandaigua Chamber's annual dinner will be January 31st.

Educational session - Valerie discussed the new organizational chart and the direction that we have taken to fill in the gaps in our organization. For example, there was the creation of a new job Sales and Marketing Assistant and a retitling of AJ's duties to ensure a solid focus on marketing as well as communications. She presented the Board with the new organizational chart for the Board of Supervisors, and shared who was now on the Planning and Research Committee. Valerie also advised that the occupancy tax will be renewed this year by the finance committee.

25 Gorham Street update – Valerie overviewed the recent improvements to the building. She advised the office has been totally restructured and all offices have moved. We now have lighting on our brochure rack to emphasize the brochures. We have a high-top table in the welcome area to spread maps out for visitors. We have been receiving a great deal more visitors to our building and we want to give them the appropriate welcome and resources for their trip. More work needs to be done on the ceilings and Valerie asked for recommendations of drywall vendors.

Finally, she shared the potential next project for the building should be enhancing our insulation situation.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS-

Valerie presented the financial reports, noting that we are under budget year-to-date by approximately \$3,000. Dan Fuller moved to **accept the December 2013 and Year to Date financial reports**. John Brahm seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Russ Kenyon moved to **approve the minutes of the December 4, 2013 Board of Directors meeting as amended to include a copy of Lois Kozlowski's letter to the board formalizing her resignation**. Dick Maltman seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Jessica Bacher reported on behalf of the nominating committee. Jessica noted that the committee was working to fill the unexpired term of Lois Kozlowski and reviewing a few candidates from the Honeoye area; they would report at the next meeting. Jessica made the recommendation to appoint Lois Kozlowski to the Honorary Board. Valerie indicated that the policy requires a six month separation from the regular board. **Russ made a motion to waive this requirement. Dan Fuller seconded. The motion passed unanimously to waive the requirement. Dan Fuller made a motion to appoint Lois to the Honorary Board effective immediately. John Brahm seconded this motion and it passed unanimously.**

John Brahm wanted to ensure that Lois Kozlowski had been duly recognized for her service to our board. Valerie indicated that a resolution of commendation had been drafted (it is attached to these minutes) and that resolution was scheduled to move forward to the Board of Supervisors. **John Brahm made a motion to officially commend and thank Lois Kozlowski. Russ seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.** The board made additional "fun" recommendations for thanking Lois for her work with us. We will be having a get together in March or April for her.

Valerie asked for a motion to dispose of certain electronics that were now outdated and she would like to remove from inventory. There are 3 computers. **Alexa Gifford made the motion to approve Valerie's disposal of these computers. Dan Fuller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.** Russ asked about security of the hard drives. **David Lee acknowledged that he will remove the hard drives. Russ made a motion to have the hard drives destroyed by wiping and drilling. Bob Bennett seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Policy Review – On the board agenda is to review our reserve fund and related policies. Valerie had gathered more information since the last meeting. She thanked David Hutchings for referring her to the Community Foundation as a potential resource to facilitate these policies. Valerie had also met with Philanthropy Partners out of Penn Yan. She asked that a meeting of the executive committee/audit committee be established before our February 19th Board meeting. Michelle will notify the board of the date in case any additional board members wish to attend.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT- Valerie spoke about Finger Lakes Visitors Connection goals for this year. She reminded the board that the strategic plan is included in their notebook and online. She referred the group to pages 26 and 27 which provide a solid overview of the goals. Specific ones she overviewed were: the mobile unit/happiness zone, emphasis on increasing off-season occupancy, and a new Board of Directors communications platform with no notebooks. She advised that she had spoken to Lisa Phillips at the Board of Supervisors who told her that they are implementing a new communications platform for the supervisors. She discussed what options we had for the “cloud” (i.e., Sky Drive, Microsoft 365) and is hoping that April 1st will be our first paperless meeting. David Lee is working closely with Sean Barry of the County as to how they accomplished this from a technical standpoint. Valerie summarized the goals by refocussing everyone on our vision, voids and visitors.

MARKETING REPORTS AND UPDATES- AJ Shear reported on what an outstanding job Cindy Harris is doing. He shared that we have received a biking grant through Harvey Botzman and the NYS Canal Authority. In media relations, AJ announced that we have a couple of familiarization tours coming up – most importantly, Lisa Evans, an influential travel writer who will be focusing on a cross-country ski article. She is participating in the Moonlight Event at Bristol Mountain. Andrew Knoblauch, of Dixon Schwabl, is guiding our social media efforts. Finally, AJ mentioned that we are still gathering data on the mobile unit/happiness zone. David Lee and Carl Carlson had approached Ballantyne RV to discuss a potential partnership. A lot of details need to be addressed to see if this is practical and meets our goals. Updates will be given at future board meetings. Finally, AJ mentioned that this is the trade show season. We are participating in nearly 20 shows through NYSTVA and CONY. New York State is offering a cooperative program where we can display our brochures in Times Square. It is part of their effort to move NYC travelers upstate. There is a kiosk and we have shipped our winter guide to participate.

OLD BUSINESS- None.

NEW BUSINESS – None.

ADJOURN – Mike Roeder encouraged the board members to tour the building and see the improvements that had been made. **Dick Maltman made the motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by John Brahm. All voted in favor of adjournment.**

Minutes submitted by Michelle Dawson

Next Meeting:
February 19, 2014
Ramada Inn
Geneva, NY 14456