

A Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, NY
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, February 6, 2019 – 8:00 a.m.
Homewood Suites, 575 Fishers Station Drive, Victor, NY

Present

Bob Bennett
John Brahm
Carl Carlson
Lenore Friend
Mark Gilbride
Meg Joseph
Mike Kauffman
Russ Kenyon
Steve Laros
Dan Marshall
Sheryl Mordini
Frank Riccio
Mike Roeder

Excused

Suzanne Farley
David Hutchings

Staff

Valerie Knoblauch
Carol Hicks
Melissa Knoblauch

Welcome – Chairperson Mike Kauffman called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m.

He mentioned the wonderful news of the birth of Valerie's grandson, Noah, and asked the board members to share their own personal good news noting that it would be fun to share. Bob Bennett reported that his grandson attained rank of Eagle Scout. Mike Roeder is heading to the Toronto Golf Show this weekend. Meg Joseph has a new dog named Dobi, adopted from a rescue group. Sheryl Mordini has her 87-year-old mother living with her now, and praised the experience they had with the Ontario County Office of the Aging. Dan Marshall noted that he is the Chairman of Health and Human Services of Ontario County, and the Office of the Aging reports to that committee. He will report back to the Office of the Aging, complimenting them on their service.

Mark Gilbride's daughter is a traveling nurse and has had 3-month stints in different locations. He is proud to report that she has settled down in Portland, Oregon. Mike Kauffman's son recently moved to London for a 3-year position at the Imperial College of London. John and Katie Brahm returned recently from 2 weeks in St. Croix and they thankfully missed all of the snow and extreme cold. Russ Kenyon's daughter is auditioning for a professional ballet company in New York City. She is heading to Boston tomorrow to compete in the Youth American Grand Prix dance contest. His son has diving sectionals this Friday and he is the defending Class D champion. Valerie gave an update on Jim Kozlowski, who has been dealing with some health issues. Lois Kozlowski contacted Valerie last week, to let her know that his health is improving. They appreciate all of the prayers and well wishes. Valerie informed the board that Mike Manikowski's daughter is in London and he is expecting his first grandson.

Bob Bennett gave an update on the Chinese aerial acrobat ski team that was training at Bristol Mountain and stayed at the Homewood Suites. The team went on to Lake Placid for a tournament and talked-up our area. He believes there is potential for more teams in the future.

Bob Bennett spoke briefly on the Homewood Suites. He noted that all of the rooms are suites, with a bedroom, living room with sleeper-sofa, full kitchen and bathroom. There are 2 – two bedroom suites. They offer a full breakfast every morning and they have an evening social Monday thru Thursday evening. He noted the hotel is geared toward extended stays. He invited board members to stop by for a tour of the hotel and he would host them at the evening social.

Official Business

Mike Kauffman requested a motion on the minutes. *Dan Marshall made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2019 Board of Directors meeting. The motion was seconded by Frank Riccio.* All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

Mike reported that the financials will be put on hold for this meeting. Valerie has not been able to finalize them with the accountant.

At the last meeting, the board approved the Simpleview contract. Valerie addressed the question from the last meeting regarding the cost of email marketing. She noted that the recommendation for a new email marketing platform was sent to the board for their information. It will not be included in the new contract.

Visitor Experience Fund

Valerie provided the board with three documents pertaining to the Visitor Experience Fund. She began with organizational review. She reminded the board that they approved \$25,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019. She asked the board to recommend funding amounts to be awarded. As a starting point, Valerie recommended a minimum of \$2,500 and a maximum of \$5,000. Discussion ensued. It was agreed by the board to have the minimum of \$2,500 and a maximum of \$5,000 as a “suggested range”, which gives flexibility to award a different amount to an applicant that meets all of the requirements of the fund.

The next item brought up was the requirement of matching funds. Discussion ensued. The discussion then turned to the option of in-kind services as an alternative to a monetary commitment. The board agreed that to qualify for a grant, there would need to be a 25% match, in-kind or cash.

The discussion then turned to qualifying organizations that could apply for the grants, based on their not-for-profit status. Russ shared the differences between a 501c3 organization and a 501c6 organization. There are other not-for-profit classifications too. Additionally, municipalities were mentioned as potential grant applicants. It was agreed that the language for grant applicants should state “not-for-profit corporation” or a “municipal corporation”.

Valerie recommended that the board move forward with the program in 2020 and budget \$25,000. After that, assuming that the regular FLVC budget does not diminish, we would consider a formula of 2.5% of the total budget towards future initiatives. This would ensure that each board would not encumber a future board nor make or imply any future commitments.

At the last meeting, the board had narrowed down to Finger Lakes Area Community Endowment (FLACE) and Rochester Area Community Foundation (RACF) as potential facilitators for these grants. Valerie has not met with RACF, but has been on their website, which is quite extensive. She has had a conversation with Rita of FLACE. Both organizations can handle the grants and the rules that we are recommending. For FLACE, we would have to set up an Evaluation Committee, promote getting applications, establish the rules for applying, get 3-5 people to evaluate the proposals and advise the applicants on their status. Valerie wanted to go with FLACE because they are local, but her recommendation is to go with RACF because they are more experienced grantmakers. *Carl Carlson made a motion to engage in a relationship with the Rochester Area Community Foundation to establish a Visitor Experience Fund for fiscal year ending 2019. The motion was seconded by Dan Marshall.* Russ Kenyon abstained. All others present voted in favor and the motion passed.

Nominating Committee - Valerie reported that Lori Proper's nomination has gone through the P&EQ Committee and has moved on to the Board of Supervisors for approval. There is still one vacancy in Geneva and that is being worked on with the committee.

Governance Committee – The committee will review the Investment and Deposit Policy and Advisement from the Authorities Budget Office. While researching, Valerie referenced an advisory note received from New York State, on making your Investment and Deposit Policy better and she will be sharing this with the committee.

Strategic Planning Committee – Valerie reported that Steve Powell is on target to present his results at the Board of Directors meeting in March. She has asked Steve to add “pipeline projects” to the report. These are new projects that have come up since he began his research, i.e. the Seneca Turk Resort in Geneva.

Partnerships – Melissa Knoblauch presented the new Partnership Program information and sign-up form. She had sent out a survey to the industry, asking for their recommendations and suggestions for what they would like to see in a Partnership Program. She asked the board members to review the documents, encouraging feedback, questions and/or recommendations. Melissa explained that the Partnership Program is a way for the industry to take advantage of FLVC's marketing specialties and relationships with our vendors, thus enhancing our joint marketing endeavors.

Mike Kauffman asked if there were any major differences. Melissa explained that there were a couple of line items, including the one of listing management that should be flexible, but would allow us to charge for “high maintenance” folks that were outside the partnership program.

Bob Bennett asked what the FLVC Photo Booth was. Melissa explained that the photo booth is an I Pad, mounted on a stand, for people to take fun selfies. The photo booth can be customized and branded for the event or occasion, with special backgrounds, picture frames, filters, etc.

Old Business – No old business was brought before the board.

New Business – No new business was brought before the board.

Mike Kauffman asked the Executive Committee to go into Executive Session following the meeting.

Valerie provided the board with details regarding the next board meeting on February 26, to be followed by an Ontario County Planning Board workshop on tourism. The Ontario County Planning department has required educational workshops for their members; and tourism was asked to present at one of their workshops. They want to learn about tourism's needs and issues when it comes to zoning and planning. Dan Marshall explained that each municipality has their own planning board which can handle many zoning and planning issues. There are certain issues that do need to go to a higher level and requires review by the county planning board. There is a member from every municipality on the county planning board.

Adjourn – Mike Kaufmann requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. *Russ Kenyon made a motion that was seconded by Meg Joseph to adjourn the meeting.* All present voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

Next meeting – Tuesday, February 26 at 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 pm. Immediately followed by the joint workshop on Zoning, Planning and Tourism.
Ontario County Safety Training Center, Training Room 4, Canandaigua.

Minutes submitted by Carol Hicks.