

A Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, NY
Board of Directors Meeting – Wednesday, December 8, 2021 – 8:30 a.m.
Via Zoom per Governor’s Order on Public Meetings
Canandaigua, NY 14424

Board Member Attendance:	Present	Excused	Absent
David Hutchings, Sonnenberg Gardens - Chair of the Board	X	X	
Lenore Friend, Finger Lakes Community College – Vice Chair of the Board	X		
Charles Parkhurst, Lyons National Bank - Board Secretary	X		
Steven Laros, Fairfield Inn & Suites Geneva - Board Treasurer		X	
Bob Bennett, Homewood Suites by Hilton Victor - Immediate Past Chair of the Board	X		
Mike Kauffman, Eastview	X		
Mike Roeder, Ravenwood Golf	X		
Sheryl Mordini, 1795 Acorn Inn Bed and Breakfast	X		
Steve Fuller, Bristol Mountain	X		
Frank Riccio, Cobblestone Creek Country Club	X		
Russ Kenyon, Kenyon & Kenyon			X
Mark Gilbride, Lazy Acre Alpacas	X		
Dan Marshall, Ontario County Board of Supervisors, Town of South Bristol		X	
Lori Proper, The Lake House at Canandaigua	X		
Lisa FitzGerald, Finger Lakes Winery Tours, Feathers and Tails Farm	X		
Sherry Brahm-French, Arbor Hill Grapery & Winery	X		
Mike Darling, Crafty Ales and Lagers	X		

Staff: Valerie Knoblauch, Julie Maslyn, Tracey Burkey, Zach Langmead

Guests: Jackie Lee and Caitlin Langmead – Mengel Metzger Barr; Linda Wiener –Accountant.

Presentation of the 2020 Audit: and Presentation of 2021 990 – Jackie Lee gave an overview of the 2020 Audit, the process, and the results. She noted the ups and downs year over year with staff loss and additions, the opportunities with employee retention tax credits, and dealing with some of last year’s Matching Funds that didn’t come. Jackie reviewed Form 990, reminding everyone that this is the federal tax return required for a 501 c3 and is posted as a public document on the FLVC website. She and Caitlin cited that there were no deficiencies and that they appreciated the cooperation of management. Valerie thanked Mengel Metzger Barr, in particular, noting that this audit was taking place at the same time as the NYS Audit.

Frank Riccio moved to accept the 2020 Audit and the 2021 990; Charles Parkhurst seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

Consent Agenda – In David Hutchings excused absence Lenore Friend presented the minutes of the October 6, 2021 meeting, *Steve Fuller moved to accept the minutes and Mike Kauffman seconded the motion. All those present voted in favor of the motion.*

Frank Riccio moved to accept the Financial Reports; Budget vs. Actual – September and October, Year to date; Balance Sheet as of 11/30/21; P and L through 11/30/21. Steve Fuller seconded the motion. All those present voted in favor of the motion.

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Committees of the Board

Executive

Update on NYS Auditors - Valerie reported on the NYS Audit, telling everyone that there were only 2 comments in their preliminary verbal report to us; one was a follow up to a couple of incidents when we paid sales tax, and the other is to leave a better trail concerning procurement. Overall, they were complimentary and their suggestions were worthy of adjustments, which we will explore. The MMB Audit went very well.

Status of Job Openings. Hires - Valerie updated on everyone on FLVC’s newest hire Zach Langmead formerly of Spectrum News. The next focus is on the Director of Marketing and Community Engagement, Amanda from HR One is filtering through the resumes, eventually bringing in candidates for an interview, Lenore and Tracey will be part of that team.

Finance and Audit -

Frank noted that the upcoming work of the committee will be the Capital Projects Budget – Plan 2023 – 2028.

There was a cross over between the Governance Committee and the Finance Audit committee with regard to procurement policy and procedures. After a brief update and based on the information sent in the board packet, *Lenore made the motion to amend procurement policy #111 by adding the line: See Procedures #505 Procedures and Documentation to Support Procurement Process, Selection and Oversight and directing the President to develop Procedures #505 and submit it to the committee for review and approval. Sheryl Mordini seconded the motion. All those present voted in favor of the motion. **See Attachment A.***

Lenore covered the proposed Flexible PTO policy, which had also been sent to the board. As an overview the proposal is to change effective **January 1, 2022** FLVC to a Flexible PTO policy (on a one year trial basis). *This policy allows staff to take PTO on an as-needed basis. Leave will subject to approval, but during this trial period neither tracked nor capped on an individual basis. The trial period will last until September 30, 2021, after which this will be considered as a formalized policy within our employee handbook.*

*Sheryl Mordini moved to accept the Flexible Paid Time Off policy # 908a; Sherry Brahm-French seconded the motion. All those present voted in favor of the motion. **See Attachment B.***

Governance

2021 Board Self Evaluation process was completed. (Survey Monkey, results in December) – Charles reported the results of the Board Self Evaluation. **See Attachment C**

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Nominating

Valerie reported that we had a new Board Member Orientation with Sherry Brahm-French and Lisa FitzGerald at the Lake House and Lori Proper helped welcome these two. We also welcome Mike Darling, who was not able to be there that day.

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Strategic Initiatives Task Force Reports

Strategic Initiative 1 – Build new and enhance existing Visitor Experiences - Sheryl Mordini reported that they talked about building new and enhancing existing visitor experiences, Thoughtful Growth and Sustainability, and finally talking extensively about transportation. This task force talked about the next Visitor Experience Fund - 2022 and the possibility of dedicating those funds towards the topic of transportation.

Strategic Initiative 2 – Mobility and Access within and to the county - Frank Riccio reported that this task force met and discussed – Accessibility: we already have AudioEye on our website, looking around at other opportunities to improve accessibility. Transportation: taking inventory of what we have available, looking at works in other destinations similar to ours. Water resources – water quality, and attractions centered around water, and the impact on tourism.

Strategic Initiative 3 – Travel Industry Issues – Policy - No report this month

Strategic Initiative 4 – Foster and Develop Workforce - No report this month

Strategic Initiative 5 - Connectivity and Community Engagement - No report this month

Visitor Experience Fund 2022 - *Sheryl Mordini proposed a resolution to dedicate the Visitor Experience Fund for 2022 to transportation, this motion was seconded by Frank Riccio. All those present voted in favor of the motion.*

Marketing Report – Valerie spoke to everyone about some “digital tools” that have the potential to help us communicate with visitors and help them plan their experiences in Ontario County. There is an upcoming meeting with a company called Bandwango that connects people to places. All board members are invited to sit in and learn these. The approximate cost to include this in the marketing plan is around \$15,000 plus staff time.

FLVC will be returning to our educational developments in the upcoming calendar year. We hope to partner with organizations to extend financial and staff resources by achieving mutual goals.

President’s Report – Valerie reminded everyone that there were CDBG - \$1 million CARES funding informational meetings going on. There will be 5 total with Ostrander’s Consulting, there

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will also be opportunities to make one on one appointments with Ostrander’s to help you understand the program and fill out the paperwork.

Into the new year we will plan a not-for-profit informational session to see if we can help this type of business find the grant funding that is out there for them. Additionally, we will be connecting with the County to hear more about the American Rescue plan and how we can leverage that in our industry or for ourselves. Potential good uses include a Tourism Masterplan which would address questions like: what do you want our destination to look like for quality experiences for visitors and for residents. Valerie has seen the Masterplan of Tompkins County, and she has heard that Visit Buffalo is producing one. Valerie feels that it is important that Ontario County has a plan and wants to propose asking the County to apply funds from the American Rescue Plan (which identifies tourism businesses as especially hard hit).

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Sheryl Mordini made a motion supporting FLVC seeking stimulus funds for the purpose of creating a Tourism Master Plan, Sherry Brahm-French seconded the motion. All those present voted in favor of the motion.

Good News/Announcements/Round the Table - Lenore reported that FLCC recently had a dinner for Guidance Counselors to entice them into looking at careers and courses in the Hospitality Industry for high school students.

Adjourn – *Sheryl Mordini made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Frank Riccio seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:12 a.m.*

Next Meeting: Wednesday March 2, 2021 11:30 am

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Attachment A

111. Procurement Policy

FLVC wishes to ensure that sound business judgment is used in all procurement transactions, and that supplies, equipment and services are obtained efficiently and economically and in compliance with applicable laws.

Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation, d.b.a. Finger Lakes Visitors Connection (FLVC) will follow accounting policies and procedures that comply with generally accepted accounting principles. Any procurement of goods and services shall be made by the procurement office/authorized agent, in the best interest of the agency, upon considering the totality of the circumstances surrounding the procurement, which may include, but not be limited to: price, quality, availability, timeliness, reputation and prior dealings.

Procurement shall be made by one of the following methods: (a) small purchase procedures; (b) sealed bids (formal advertising); (c) competitive proposals; (d) approval of the Audit Committee of the Board of Directors

- a. Small purchase procedures are relatively simple and informal procurement methods that are sound and appropriate for the procurement of services, supplies, or other property, costing in aggregate not more than \$10,000. If small purchase procedures are used for procurement under a grant, price or rate quotations shall be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources. Other small purchases are under the approval of the President or her designee.
- b. In sealed bids (formal advertising), sealed bids are publicly solicited and a firm-fixed-price contract (lump sum or unit price) is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all of the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, is the lowest in price.
- c. Procurement by competitive proposals is normally conducted with more than one source submitting an offer, and either a fixed-price or cost-reimbursable type contract is awarded, as appropriate. Competitive proposals are generally used when conditions require the consideration of a provider’s expertise, experience, reputation and/or schedule. FLVC shall follow the guidance of the Ontario County Purchasing Department for competitive proposal and procurement process.
- d. Any other method of procurement must have prior approval of the Board of Directors Audit Committee.
- e. Any or all bids may be rejected if there are sound documented business reasons in the best interest of the program.

See Procurement Procedures #505 for process and required documentation.

Date: September 9, 2009
December 8, 2021

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Attachment B

908A Flexible Paid Time Off (FLEX-PTO)

Finger Lakes Visitors Connection hires exceptional, professional adults to perform a wide variety of important functions that contribute to the success of our company. It is our intent to provide our exceptional employees the freedom they require to balance the responsibilities of their work and their home lives, thereby maximizing their value to or organization.

Policy Statement - In December of 2021, FLVC Board of Directors approved a Trial Flexible PTO Policy. With the adoption of this policy the organization foregoes the implementation of a leave accrual or bank system of any sort. Eligible employees are free to take leave when they require it. At FLVC’s discretion, leave may be tracked for business purposes.

The terms of the trial are noted here. Without further action, this policy will replace policy 908 at the next annual meeting. Under the flexible PTO policy, “paid time off” (PTO) to eligible full-time employees can be used for any reason of the employee’s choosing, including vacation, illness, medical and dental appointments, religious observances, and/or personal reasons. PTO may be used for both scheduled and unscheduled absences, provided the Organization’s notification policy is followed and authorization is obtained for the time off and documentation is retained for used time.

Termination of policy. At any point during the 12 - month trial period, the executive team reserves the right to cancel or modify the policy. This includes, but is not limited to, reverting to the prior accrued leave model, or to a new PTO model as deemed suitable and appropriate, or modifying the conditions and requirements of this policy. It is imperative that individual employee responsibility for documentation be attended to for the success of the continuation of the policy.

Definition of Flexible PTO - Flexible PTO provides staff with a single uncapped paid leave allowance to be used when and as needed. This policy is designed to provide flexibility for team members. This policy is distinctive from any current or potential hybrid or remote work policy.

- a. Flexible PTO will not substitute for any Federally or State regulated leave programs.
- b. Flexible PTO is general used in ½ day or full day increments.
- c. Absences of more than 2 hours, which are not intended to be “made up” in the same “day” are included in this policy.

This PTO policy is inclusive of the New York paid sick leave law, which allows employees to use their accrued PTO for “sick and safe” reasons allowed under that law, as described below:

- Sick Leave: For mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition, or preventative care of the employee or the employee’s family member, regardless of whether it has been diagnosed or requires medical care at the time of the request; and
- Safe Leave: For certain needs related to the employee or the employee’s family member being the victim of domestic violence, a family offense, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking. Examples include, obtaining services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other services program; participating in safety planning; temporarily or permanently relocating; meeting with an attorney or participating in legal proceedings; filing a report with law enforcement or meeting with a district attorney’s office; enrolling children in a new school; or taking other actions to increase the safety of the employee or employee’s family member.

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This policy is not applicable to extensions of family leave, maternity/paternity leave or other paid leave programs.

Definition of Family Member - For purposes of this policy, family member includes an employee’s child (biological, adopted, or foster child, legal ward, or child of an employee standing in loco parentis), spouse, domestic partner, parent (biological, foster, step, adoptive, legal guardian, or person who stood in loco parentis when the employee was a minor child), sibling, grandchild, or grandparent; and the child or parent of an employee’s spouse or domestic partner.

Eligibility - Full-time employees with 90 days of continuous service are eligible under this policy. Part-time and temporary employees are not eligible for PTO but do accrue paid sick leave under the New York paid sick leave law (see Paid Sick Leave policy).

Allowance - This paragraph covers general allowances and guidelines related to number of days requested, lead time and impacts on other team members and project deadlines, as well as responsibility for documentation.

- a. General - There is no suggested minimum or average PTO. Deference to employee longevity with the company may be used if conflicting requests are entered.
- b. “Quick errands” that take more than a normal lunch hour require notification. During the errand time; it is expected that mobile phone contact is possible or noted in the out-of-office notice that you are offline and unreachable. If possible, errands should not be performed during times which are commonly used for team events or schedules.
- c. Eligible employees must record and document contemporaneously their use of PTO per payroll period.
- d. PTO requiring more than two hours should be noted in the outlook calendar and notified the President or her designee of unavailability.
- e. Generally Flexible PTO is recorded and used in ½ day and full day increments.
- f. All PTO requests longer than three days require that adequate cover is confirmed, and that teammates are specifically identified to help support any critical issues.
- g. All PTO request that are cumulatively greater than 5 days in a single month need to specifically identify and confirm cover within that month, and that work requirements are unaffected.
- h. No single PTO request should extend beyond a single 2 week block. Requests which exceed this time require approval by the President
- i. There is no impact upon employee entitlement to Holiday leave.
- j. This list is not exhaustive and during the trial period additional guidelines may need developing.

Benefit Year - The benefit year for paid time off is the fiscal year of October 1st to September 30th.

New Employees - A newly hired employee is eligible for flexible PTO 90 days after the beginning employment. There is an expected deference to existing team members’ longevity. Use of PTO will be analyzed by the same standards as all employees - record keeping, performance and deadline requirements.

PTO Pay - A non-exempt employee is compensated at the employee's current base rate of pay for each hour of PTO taken. An exempt employee receives the employee's regular salary for the PTO period.

Scheduling - PTO requests of a full day or more must be submitted in writing to the President. There are exceptions for sick days. Every effort is made to authorize PTO in accordance with employee requests, taking the date the request is received, operating requirements, and length of employment into account. The Organization may limit the number of employees taking PTO at any given time. The Organization also reserves the right to designate when some or all of an employee's PTO is taken.

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Notification Procedures - It is understood that sudden illness and certain situations covered by the New York paid sick leave law may not allow for ample notice to an employee’s supervisor of the need for absence. However, an employee is asked to provide as much notice as possible when requesting use of PTO as paid sick leave and will not be required to provide confidential details of the reason for the absence.

Staying Home When Ill - It is critical that employees do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing symptoms associated with a currently prevalent virus or disease. Examples may include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Employees who report to work ill may be sent home if they exhibit these or other symptoms that could pose a health hazard to others.

Certification of Absence - An employee who misses three or more consecutive workdays due to sick or safe reasons as defined by the New York paid sick leave law, may be required to provide certification from the employee’s health care provider or applicable agency. The certification must include approval for the employee to return-to-work with or without work restrictions. Certification may also be required for certain shorter absences if abuse is suspected. Documentation will not be required where prohibited by law or regulation.

Accumulation - There is no accumulation or accrual of PTO hours.

Holiday During Scheduled Paid Time Off - If an Organization observed holiday falls on an employee’s normally scheduled workday and the employee is on an authorized PTO leave, the day is counted as a paid holiday and not a PTO day. No allowance is made for sickness or other paid absence occurring during a scheduled PTO.

Leave of Absence - PTO may not be used in conjunction with any paid leave of absence. Please note that no single PTO request can extend beyond a single 2-week block. This length of absence may be considered a leave of absence. This policy does not apply to eligible employees requesting military leave or sabbaticals. For more information on these types of leave, please see the corresponding policies located in your handbook.

Separation from Employment - An employee who resigns, retires, or is laid off is not eligible to receive compensation for planned, yet unused PTO at the time of notification of separation from the Organization.

Non-Retaliation - It is unlawful for an employer or any other person to deny, interfere with, or fail to pay for PTO when used for reasons under the New York paid sick leave law. The Company prohibits retaliation or discrimination with respect to terms and conditions of employment because an employee inquires, requests, or uses PTO for such reasons.

Revocation - The company reserves the right to temporarily revoke flexible PTO. Further, if gross abuse of this leave is observed, disciplinary action may be taken, which may include termination of employment.

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Attachment C

	Board of Directors Self Evaluation 2020
average rating	Questions asked
4.38	I am prepared for board meetings, as best I can, whether they are virtual or in person
4.77	I recognize that my board position is one of; oversight, fiduciary responsibility, and policy guidance, and am cognizant to this role vs that of paid staff.
4.46	I am willing to grow within the board structure and assume a leadership position
4.77	I abide by the adopted policies of the Board of Directors
4.69	I actively participate in the decisions of the board and work towards consensus decision making.
4.38	I Provided an initial bio and update as changes occur
4.46	I Complete Board Self Evaluation questionnaires
4.69	I Complete(d) Conflict of Interest Statement and Code of Ethics - Ontario County.
4.69	I Complete(d) an Oath of Office (upon appointment/reappointment) - Ontario County.
4.69	I Completed the PARIS Training (upon appointment) - NYS
4.54	I fill(ed) out acknowledgement of Fiduciary Duties - PARIS
	The most rewarding part of my engagement on the FLVC Board is responses following
	staying connected with the community and assisting in the direction of tourism in our area
	promoting tourism in Ontario County
	viewing the community through a different lens
	to be current in all the workings of FLVC and be part of its operations.
	working with a diverse group of individuals who all want to see growth in tourism in Ontario County and who have dedicated their lives and professions to that growth.
	being able to help the county grow as a leader in tourism
	I think if you can keep some sense of normalcy and be safe, you are doing the best you can
	working with the wonderful staff and board members to help make Ontario county a strong tourism destination
	I enjoy helping the staff with growing tourism
	helping to shape a positive visitor experience; better knowledge of tourism and current topics; growth and learning opportunities
	working with others for the overall benefit of Ontario County

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	Just being on the board....in person was easier than zoom for me due to being at the front desk and not being able to participate as much and missing out on information but that is my fault and nothing to do with the board as I believe they did a great job with the zooms. The timing was just difficult for me to join. I appreciate not being kicked off the board this year due to the crazy life of the pandemic. Best Wishes to all!
	Other Comments: (In particular if you have suggestions for our operation assuming COVID-19 protocols continue). Responses following
	continue to allow people to meet in person when possible and virtually as needed
	visit confidently has been a great community service and there may be opportunities beyond COVID for very practical cooperative efforts like this, for example, a shared service for ADA compliant menus, etc.
	Excellent organization and a joy to be a part of in 2021-2022
	I believe COVID has been navigated with much success; Zoom meetings have worked well and we have been able to achieve our goals; the team has done a fantastic job
	I think I have done all of what has been required by me for the above questions, but if not, please let me know. I answered to the best of my knowledge. Thank you
4.38	The Board successfully implemented the Visitor Experience Fund; monitored, evaluated, and planned for the Future.
	comments to - the Board successfully implemented the Visitor Experience Fund: monitored, evaluated, and planned for the Future responses following
	continue to support the key communities
	I think COVID has stalled the future planning portion
	very thoughtful use of the strategic planning projects
4.46	The Board assisted in the development and communication of a financial plan which anticipates a reduction in revenue for 2021/2022.
	excellent use of the finance committee
4.46	The Board monitored and contributed to the process of completion of the action items of the strategic plan.
	reviews in most board meetings
4.38	The Board supported the research initiatives surrounding the meeting and conference market.
	some discussion but still learning as an organization
4.23	The Board participated and engaged with the educational opportunities provided in conjunction with the meeting schedule this year. Ensuring a "cross-community" and "cross discipline" presence. (As much as was able considering the effects of COVID-19).
	difficult times but the board activity was still very high given COVID-19
4.38	The Board followed the board norms, including confirming attendance in advance of the meetings.
	very good attendance as a group
4.38	The Board monitored and contributed to the process of completion of the action items of the strategic plan.
	yes, once again given COVID-19 issues, activity has been hindered