

**A Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, NY
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday, March 2nd – 3:00 p.m.
Geneva on the Lake, Geneva NY 14456**

Board Member Attendance:	Present	Excused	Absent
David Hutchings, Sonnenberg Gardens - Chair of the Board	P		
Lenore Friend, Finger Lakes Community College – Vice Chair of the Board	P		
Charles Parkhurst, Lyons National Bank - Board Secretary	P		
Lisa FitzGerald, Finger Lakes Winery Tours; Feathers and Tails Farm - Treasurer	P		
Bob Bennett, Retired Homewood Suites by Hilton Victor Immediate Past Chair of the Board		E	
Mike Kauffman, Eastview	P		
Mike Roeder, Ravenwood Golf	P		
Sheryl Mordini, 1795 Acorn Inn Bed and Breakfast		E	
Steve Fuller, Bristol Mountain	P		
Russ Kenyon, Boylan Code		E	
Mark Gilbride, Lazy Acre Alpacas	P		
Chris Vastola, Ontario County Board of Supervisors, Town of Canadice	P		
Lori Proper, The Lake House at Canandaigua	P		
Sherry Brahm-French, Arbor Hill Grapery & Winery	P		
Mike Darling, Crafty Ales and Lagers		E	
Darren Holden, Hotel Canandaigua	P		
Todd Plouffe, Indus Hospitality Group	P		

Staff: Valerie Knoblauch, Julie Maslyn, Steve Laros, Jessica VanDeMar

Call to Order, Attendance. David Hutchings, chair, called the meeting to order at 3:06, he acknowledged our location, the beautiful Geneva on the Lake in Geneva, NY.

Welcome and Introductions. David welcomed Supervisor Christopher Vastola, our newly appointed board member. Supervisor Vastola represents Canadice and is appointed by the Chair of the Board of Supervisors. Chris is the President of Bodine Tours and a ski instructor at Bristol Mountain. David also welcomed Todd Plouffe to his first meeting. Todd is the Vice President of Lodging for Indus Hospitality Group. Indus properties include The Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Geneva and Victor, The Microtel Inn & Suites in Geneva, Victor, and Farmington, restaurants including Kindred Fare in Geneva, several Dunkin Donuts and Kentucky Fried Chicken franchises.

Housekeeping Announcements. After around the table introductions of those attending, there was a reminder for board members to have their signed Acknowledgement of Fiduciary Responsibilities and Conflict of Interest paperwork back to Julie.

Consent Agenda. David presented the following items which had been emailed to the board in advance of the meeting. Minutes of the December 8, 2022, P and L November 2022; P and L December 2022; P and L January 2023; P and L Prev. Year Comparison through 1/31/23; P and L Budget vs. Actual YTD – October through 1/31/23; and Balance Sheet as of 1/31/23.

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A motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting on December 8, 2022; the Profit and Loss for November, December, and January, as well as the Budget vs. Actual through January 31st and the Balance Sheet as of January 31, 2023, was made by Charles Parkhurst. Steve Fuller seconded the motion, all present voted in favor of the motion.

Executive. David Hutchings presented the Calendar proposal for the remaining Finger Lakes Visitors Connection Board Meetings through this fiscal year. After a poll of the board, it was apparent that 70% of the board wanted to go with a morning time, and the calendar reflects this.

Mike Roeder made a motion to approve the calendar for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2023 as revised. Darren Holden seconded the motion; all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Valerie has a request for a task force to review and update bylaws. A one meeting “job.”
Members appointed included: are Russ Kenyon, David Hutchings, and Mike Kauffman. This should be done by the end of the fiscal year.

Finance and Audit. The committee has an upcoming meeting to tackle financial related policies (reserve fund in particular), renewal of the CD, and review of tourism investment formula ideas. Additionally, Valerie noted that all SAM.Gov requirements have been met and we are eligible if and when we receive federally funded grants. She has been using Ostrander Consulting for guidance. In preparing for that paperwork, Valerie asked for certain authorizations in the record. Specifically, she asked that the bank accounts include all members of the executive committee. In the future, this will be included in the annual meeting agenda.

Charles Parkhurst made a motion, and it was seconded by Mark Gilbride to update the authorization of signatories for the bank accounts to include all members of the executive committee as potential signers to all of our bank accounts. Valerie noted that the main signature would still be Lisa Fitzgerald, as Treasurer, and herself. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Steve Laros reported on the RFPs for the Cleaners and the Landscapers. He noted that this process was diligent in following the updated procurement guidelines. Digital files are being maintained on the bidding process, the bidders, and the successful bidder being onboarded. Although these do not generally require board approval, given that this is the first in the process, Valerie asked that the board approve for the record. Steve presented the overview of the results of the sealed bids for the cleaning contract. There were two bidders. Noting that the contract would begin on April 1, 2023 and run for one year with an automatic renewal with an out-clause by either party, with a quoted price of \$175 per service, his recommendation was for Virtuous Cleaning Services from Palmyra, NY. Virtuous was the lowest bid, and also noted as most experienced and ability to meet our schedule. Additionally, they came with strong recommendations.

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Charles Parkhurst made a motion to award the cleaning contract to Virtuous Cleaners, Palmyra. Chris Vastola seconded the motion and all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Mike Kauffman joined the meeting at this point.

Next, Steve presented the RFP results for lawn services and landscaping. He noted the recommendation to go with the same company for both services – landscaping and lawn services. These will ultimately be separated out in terms of cycle and billing. It is noted on the procurement form that Uber Lawn and Landscaping was selected as the lowest bid, and most experienced and ability to meet our schedule. They also had the strongest referrals. *Mark Gilbride made a motion to contract with Uber Landscaping for ongoing lawn and landscape maintenance services. Steve Fuller seconded the motion and all those present voted in favor of the motion.*

Governance. Lenore Friend gave a report for the Governance Committee which had recently met and made progress reviewing the Board Policy Manual. After Lenore’s overview, the following motions were presented for board approval.

Sherry Brahm-French made a motion to sunset the Honorary Advisory Board, Policy #202. Lori Proper seconded the motion and all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Sherry Brahm-French made a motion to renew Policy #105 Accounts Receivable and Advertising Restrictions as is. Charles Parkhurst seconded the motion and all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Steve Fuller made a motion to edit Policy #112 – Capitalization of Assets as presented by the committee and incorporate these changes into the Policy Manual. Sherry Brahm-French seconded the motion and all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Lenore presented a new policy. It would be Policy #400. Adopting a Position Statement. This policy outlines the concept that position statements are fluid and may sunset, and perhaps should not be included in a policy document, but rather a position statement collection. If the board likes this approach, then the committee is asking for two motions. One would be to adopt this draft position statement on Adopting a Policy. The second would be to remove the position statements from the policy manual into a reference guide. Once in the reference guide, the committee could review these and sunset them as issues change. A short discussion followed with support from members to take this action.

Mike Roeder made a motion to add new Policy #400. Adopting a Position Statement. He also moved that all position statements be removed from the current Board Policy manual and be included in a Position Reference Manual. Mike Kauffman seconded the motion and all present voted in favor. The motion carried.

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Nominating. Charles Parkhurst re-welcomed the newest board members and let everyone know that Frank Riccio was recognized by the Board of Supervisors as a long-standing member of the Finger Lakes Visitors Connection Board. Charles spoke about the requirements of PARIS and volunteered to help with the onboarding of the three new board members: Darren Holden, Todd Plouffe, and Chris Vastola.

Marketing Report. Valerie shared an sheet for Winter Marketing and the Meetings and Conferences programming. These sheets were developed for the County as part of the deliverables for contracts for these specific programs.

Business Development Report. Steve reported on Shared Rentals, using the See Transparent data we had contracted for in September. This company scrapes the short-term rental platforms such as VRBO and Airbnb. We can utilize the data to show the proliferation of units in a defined geographical area. We are working with an Senior, Molly (Martha Dutton) from Hobart William Smith Colleges who will use this topic as her senior seminar, providing an overview of the economic impacts as well as the sociological impacts of these changes in lodging options.

Ontario County Parks and Recreation Plan. Valerie reported that Ontario County is doing a study on Parks and recreational amenities, and they have requested our help getting visitors thoughts on parks. This outreach from Ontario County planning gives us the opportunity to put our resources towards projects that align with our goals and foster partnership with the County.

President's Report. No further items were mentioned.

Old Business. Visitor Experience Fund. Valerie explained that the original timeline for this fund needs to be adjusted due to some questions the County had about this grant, which resulted in a delay in the process. The Executive Committee has requested that this topic be put back to the Board, to reaffirm their support for this fund.

Lenore Friend made a motion directing the President to proceed with the Visitor Experience Fund Not-for-Profit award notifications with appropriate redefinition of deadlines and renaming the fund to be the 2023 Visitor Experience Fund for Not-for-Profits. Mike Roeder seconded the motion, and everyone present voted in favor of the motion.

Per a recommendation of the finance and executive committee, the recommendation is to pause on a small business, for-profit Visitor Experience Fund, and seek further clarification from the county of either other opportunities for our small businesses and/or measures in which this type of a program could work and improve accessibility across sectors. Valerie has written to the county administrator seeking future discussions on this idea.

Charles Parkhurst left the meeting at this point.

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Market NY CFA Update - "Virtual Museum Project" grant update: Valerie provided a status update on the Virtual Museum Project. She distributed a 1 sheeter summary of what this grant is, steps, projected outcomes, etc. She answered questions from the board in particular about the financing and long term commitment to this project with an end date of December 2024.

Supervisor Chris Vastola made a motion to accept the incentive proposal for the Market New York Capital Grant for the "outdoor, interactive, virtual museum for Ontario County" contingent upon our ability to access the reserve fund for tourism for a portion of the 2023 and 2024 match, with the rest of the match for the first-year expenses to come from the Finger Lakes Visitors Connection capital and operating budget. Sherry Brahm-French seconded the motion, all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Valerie reported that there has been no notification on awarding the New York State Subgrant – Meetings and Conferences. She noted that the original notification date was December 2022.

New Business. Valerie talked about the Preserve NY grant for house improvements pertaining to accessibility and conservation. The deadline for intent on this grant is March 24, with an application date of March 31. The match for this grant would come out of our capital improvement funds. Nichola Ostrander submitted all the paperwork on our behalf.

Darren Holden made a motion authorizing Valerie to apply for a Preserve NY Grant to do a historic structure assessment on 19 Susan B. Anthony Lane and to seek proposal which outlines addressing the accessibility of the building for all. Lisa FitzGerald seconded the motion; all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Good News/Announcements/Round the Table. Given the time frame and our impending Tourism Thursday event, to which the board was invited, we decided to share good news at that time.

Mark Gilbride made a motion to adjourn, at 4:40 pm. David Hutchings seconded the motion; all those present voted in favor of the motion.

P 5 – March 2, 2023

P 19 – FYE 2023

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Attachment A

**Calendar October 2022 through October 2024
Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation - d.b.a. A Finger Lakes
Visitors Connection
Board of Directors Meeting Schedule**

2023 FYE	DATE	TIME	Focus	Location
OCT. 2022	Wed. 10/5/22	11:30 a.m.– 1:00 p.m.	Annual Meeting, Budget, Business matters – Policy Updates Final Budget	Lake House on Canandaigua
DEC. - 2022	Thurs. 12/8/22	3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Finance Committee meeting to review the audit	Young Lion
DEC. - 2022	Thurs. 12/8/22	3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Audit Presentation: Mengel Metzger Barr Board Self-Evaluation Due	Young Lion
MAR 2023	Thurs. 3/2/23	3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Destination Master Plan – Our analytical tools and Research stockhouse	Geneva On the Lake
MAY 2023	Thurs. 5/4/23	8:30 am – 10:00 am	National Tourism Week, Report, Update on any grants programs Bandwango and other Digital Tools	
JULY 2023	Thurs. 7/6/23	8:30 am – 10:00 am	2024 Budget 1 st Draft Approval	Hotel Canandaigua
SEPT 2023	Thurs. 9/7/23	8:30 am – 10:00 am		Proposed: Naples Hotel
OCT. 2023	Thurs. 10/5/23	8:30 am – 10:00 am	Annual Meeting	Ravenwood Golf Course, Victor
DEC. 2023	Thurs. 12/7/23	8:30 am – 10:00 am	Annual Audit	
FEB. 2024	Thurs. 2/1/24			
APR. 2024	Thurs. 4/4/24			
MAY	Thurs. 5/2/24		National Tourism Week	

Email Julie@visitfingerlakes.com or Valerie@visitfingerlakes.com Finger Lakes Visitors
Connection phone number is 585.394.3915; Valerie cell is 585.690.4242

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Attachment B

**2023 Not-for-profit Visitor Experience Fund
Focus on Accessibility**

Updated: 2/28/23

Total Project Value:

\$36,800.88

Total Match Provided by Finger Lakes Visitors Connection:

\$17,475

Still available to be awarded: \$7525

City of Canandaigua

\$1,500

\$1,500 cash match

Mobi-chair which is a floating beach wheelchair to be used at the public swim beach at the head of Canandaigua Lake

Geneva Historical Society, Geneva

\$2,705

\$3,923 in-kind

Interpretive signage (exterior for increased accessibility in non-traditional hours and without specific guide service) on the Geneva Historical Society/Rose Hill Mansion location.

Inclusion in Motion, Town of Canandaigua

\$5,000

\$5,000 match

Commitment to a portion of construction of the accessible pavilion at the "Motion Junction" grounds in Town of Canandaigua.

Main Street Arts, Clifton Springs

\$2,494

\$2,000 in-kind and \$500 cash match

Install automatic door openers at 20 West Main Street, Clifton Springs

Sonnenberg Gardens, City of Canandaigua

\$5,000

Match: \$3,750 in-kind and \$1875 cash match

Upgrade all paths and walkways with ADA compliant stone dust for wheelchair accessibility.

Naples Historical Society, Naples

\$776

Match: \$777.88 in-kind

Installation of an ADA compliant handicapped ramp (aluminum) at the Cleveland House, Naples

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Attachment C

“Winter” – Off-Season Programming

- A. Provide research data (trade and consumer) including, but not limited to mobile geofencing, industry ground data which targets opportunity segments for highest ROI for advertising, sales, promotion, and development.
- B. To commit to and facilitate a Multi-Channel Integrated marketing program which includes Interactive Travel guide, programmatic media, Expedia activation partner marketing, including the VisitTheUSA Landing Page
- C. To purchase Google display network ads linking partner content to VTU.com in flights of up to 10 weeks between April and June and potentially between November and March.
- D. To leverage and promote off-season community events (in cooperation with the local BIDs, Chambers of Commerce, and other partners) including, but not limited to Winter in Canandaigua, Explore Naples, Vintage Vines and Valentines, Finger Lakes Welcome Center, the Wedding March, and more by creating an umbrella marketing approach to cooperative programming and messaging.
- E. To participate in the regional programs focused on seasonal assets. These programs will include, but are not limited to Where Brave Women Winter, the Canadian PR program through New York State Tourism Industry Association
- F. To host at least three familiarization tours of media contacts who will generate stories about the off-season in the Finger Lakes.
- G. To partner in niche market opportunities with messaging related to return visits, extended length of stay. An example of this will be trade and consumer shows in market segments such as skiing, golf, and art
- H. To procure photography and videography assets for future promotions that focus on the off-season and non-traditional venues.
- I. To seize PR opportunities and space by seeding third party sites (such as I Love NY, Finger Lakes Regional Tourism Council) with curated content that will leverage our Search Engine Optimization, Social Media data and click through rates to promote winter and other seasonal content. Examples include “maple, sustainability – Earth Day, Voluntourism.” Many of these topics are provided through input sessions and educational sessions from our industry partners who share our joint desire to improve visitation in the off season

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Attachment D

Meetings, Conference Group and Trade Marketing

- A. Build awareness of Ontario County as a destination for small conferences, meetings, incentive groups, and group travel markets through various activities, including, but not limited to Client (group operator or leader) Events, Client Familiarization Tours, In-destination cooperative programming.
- B. Facilitate plan for social media (primarily linked) channel exposure.
- C. Lead Generation and Competitive Presence in trade associations specializing in these markets. Engage through memberships and contracts and sales endeavors including, but not limited to: SDR (Strategic Database Research), MINT lead matcher, C-vent lead generator, ESSAE (Empire State Society of Association Executives), American Bus Association, National Tour Association, Meeting Planners International, Tourism Alliance Partnership and TAP Dance).
- D. Research partner readiness and site and product opportunities for new experiences (post COVID); using the results of this survey, consider market opportunities and product development opportunities in both markets, and produce a position/opportunity paper on Ontario County's Tourism Industry readiness for the group market – Post Covid.
- E. Meeting and Group services including a presence at welcome events, messaging for extended stay opportunities, and general promotion to cross-markets to leisure and lifestyle awareness. This follows-up that a great place to play and live is a great place to have your business. 2023 intro level program, thematic development.
- F. Participate in a high-level targeted trade show.
- G. Develop opportunistic cooperative partnerships both within the county and outside the county to extend our common product platform messaging for the incentive and corporate market.
- H. Provide program results using an economic impact calculator model similar to Destinations International.
- I. Provide at least three opportunities for industry training in these markets – one targeted endeavor is Destination Activation through Alon.
- J. Build Ontario County's group and meeting video and photo and trade show brand/assets to remain competitive in visually and socially and directly pitching meetings and conference and group market opportunities.