

**A Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, NY  
Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday, July 6, 2023 – 8:30 a.m.  
Hotel Canandaigua 205 Lakeshore Drive Canandaigua, NY 14424**

<b>Board Member Attendance:</b>	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	P		
Mike Kauffman, Eastview	P		
Mike Roeder, Ravenwood Golf		E	
Sheryl Mordini, 1795 Acorn Inn Bed and Breakfast		E	
Steve Fuller, Bristol Mountain	P		
Russ Kenyon, Boylan Code	P		
Mark Gilbride, Lazy Acre Alpacas	P		
Chris Vastola, Ontario County Board of Supervisors, Town of Canadice	P		
Lori Proper, The Lake House at Canandaigua		E	
Sherry Brahm-French, Arbor Hill Grapery & Winery	P		
Mike Darling, Crafty Ales and Lagers	P		
Darren Holden, Hotel Canandaigua	P		
Todd Plouffe, Indus Hospitality Group	P		

Staff: Valerie Knoblauch, Julie Maslyn, Tracey Burkey, Jessica VanDeMar, Steven Laros, Patti Rose, Theresa VanWormer.

**Call to Order, Attendance, Welcome and Introductions.** David Hutchings, Board Chair called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. He asked our host, Darren Holden, General Manager from Hotel Canandaigua to welcome the Board to the newly opened hotel.

**Consent Agenda.** David presented the consent agenda items which had been emailed to the board in advance. *Charles Parkhurst made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda - Minutes of May 4, 2023, Financial Reports: Budget vs. Actual – April; May; YTD Balance Sheet as of 5/31/23 P and L through 5/31/23. Bob Bennett seconded; all voted in favor of the motion.*

Valerie commented on the credit card report, highlighting the changes made, such as adding Theresa VanWormer as a card holder for FAM tours, introducing an Office Admin card for reoccurring charges not tied to one person. *Russ Kenyon made a motion to approve the Credit Card report as submitted, Charles seconded; all voted in favor of the motion.*

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**President Report.** She noted that she had drafted a budget based on this year's actual expenses, and if we were to do the same program as this year, we would have only \$150,000 of discretionary buying power. This did include all elements of the three contracts that we have as they cross over line items and are difficult to break out. Valerie discussed the previous year's budget process and acceptance of additional funding from the reserve for the Virtual Museum Grant and Winter marketing and Meetings and Conferences. For next year Chris DeBolt has presented his idea of a base budget funding formula. Valerie shared that she had advocated that for tourism to grow, we desired an accountability-based budget, tied to our performance; and that we needed to be competitive in an ever faster growing field of tourism promotions. Finally, she is uncertain, even after asking, about access to resources beyond which the county is calling the base contract. Valerie proposed a 2-year plan, noting that the completion of the Destination Vision plan is critical to have a common ground on what tourism revenues would be needed to address our common vision (that being common to the residents of the county, tourism business officials, community leaders, and elected officials who are helping to make decisions on the investments, RFP, and engagement of community leaders were addressed.

She requested a reaffirmation of the Master Plan/Destination Vision Plan and briefly outlined in these phases: Phase 1: Research, stakeholder identification, resident survey, and visitor survey to strategically align efforts and minimize duplication of effort. Phase 2: Master Plan Development timeline to be completed within twelve months and that there be an inclusion of our current strategic plan. And that the plan be tactical in nature assigning the responsible parties to get things done. Valerie referred to three different models and elements of each in developing this. They were Westchester County (for a county government model); Cheyenne for an integrated model using baseline community research, a DestinationNext components, and considerable community input, and the VisitRochester or Santa Monica model. Several questions were asked about the process and the board agreed on the necessity of moving this quickly.

*Steve Fuller made a motion to issue an RFP to seek a consultant or team of consultants experienced in working with not-for-profit and destination organizations. The consultant would provide a destination master/vision plan to enhance visitor experiences and quality of life for residents. Charles seconded the motion, and all present voted in favor.*

Valerie noted a few more considerations for the budget, specifically benefits, personnel costs, and succession planning. In the context of change, there may be some overlap, additional expenses and a need for refinement of benefit costs and offerings. Valerie is seeking advice from Jackie Lee at MMB about how to show the budget line items, specifically for the coming and going of grants and our capital projects. After further discussion, the board agreed that the detail should be reviewed by the Executive/Finance committee and submitted upon their approval.

*Steve Fuller made a motion to accept the 2024 budget electronically before July 31, 2023. Russ Kenyon seconded the motion, all present voted in favor of the motion.*

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Valerie asked for a motion to request official TPA status for Ontario County. This is important since we are a local development corporation to accept not only NYS Matching Funds, but also other grants that fulfill our mission and can help leverage additional resources for Ontario County. *Mike Kauffman presented a motion requesting that Ontario County Four Seasons be named the official Tourism Promotion Agency for Ontario County for the purposes of grants and matching funds administration. Mark Gilbride seconded the motion, all present voted in favor of the motion.*

Valerie mentioned a pause in Flexible PTO until September when she is suggesting that we adopt an Annual Leave Policy that mirrors (in most instances) Ontario County's policy. She also noted that Amanda Mulno had recently updated changes in the Employee Handbook based on HR rules and requirements changing in NYS. These items will be on our next Board Meeting agenda.

**Committees of the Board.**

**Finance and Audit.** Valerie informed the Board about the bid to replace the 2019 van with a 2023 van from Canandaigua Chrysler. She provided the details using the updated procurement policy. *Lisa FitzGerald made a motion to accept the bid of Canandaigua Chrysler to trade in the 2019 Chrysler Pacifica (for \$21,000) and to purchase a 2023 Chrysler Pacifica for \$21,097.50, based on this trade-in value. Sherry seconded; all present voted in favor of the motion.*

Valerie presented replacement language on **Reserve Policy #108** following recommendations to clarify the "stated purpose" and amounts for each category. Jackie Lee from Mengel Metzger Barr gave advice and insight, the resulting new categories for funding the reserves are: Emergency Operating Reserve; Building and Capital Assets Reserve; Marketing and Sales Asset Reserve; Capacity Building, Innovation, and Opportunity Reserve. This policy will include steps to use the reserves, and a stipulation that the Board may reverse or amend the reserve amounts at any time. The board should consider this a first reading of the policy.

**Governance Committee Report.** Lenore Friend presented recommendations on these policies on behalf of the Governance Committee.

*Lenore presented a motion to update Policy #201 to add the following sentence under additional requirements. "Board members respond to questionnaire(s) as provided to share their background and skills, allowing the leadership to tailor the board committee assignments to the members interests, experience, and skills." Chris Vastola seconded, all present voted in favor.*

*Lenore presented a motion to approve without change - Policies #202 Board Appointment Requirements; #203 Board goalsetting and self-evaluation; #204 Employee Handbook; #205 Board Training, all without change. Russ Kenyon seconded the motion, all present voted in favor of the motion.*

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**Nominating.** Charles Parkhurst mentioned that he would be activating the committee for 2024 Officers, Renewals of Terms, and Vacancies. Meeting date to be set during the month of August.

**Marketing Report.** Valerie asked the FLVC team members to present projects and do self-introductions, highlighting their respective roles. Updates were provided on the current brochure, the upcoming visitors guide, workshops for the Solar Eclipse, hosting travel writers, tours for bus operators, material updates at Eastview Mall, and marketing and sales endeavors to grow the Meetings and Conferences market.

**Visitor Services.** Patti Rose shared the Top 50 Must Dos and was followed by Theresa who mentioned that we were updating the Visitors Guide Magazine with a heavy focus on storytelling and tie-ins to the blogs and other content.

**Old Business.** Valerie touched very quickly on the following items. **Virtual Museum project**, we had a great first meeting with town historians introducing them to this program and getting them excited to be our partners, they will be a key resource.

**Visitor Experience Fund**, the award letters are out, some projects have begun. This remains popular and very necessary. Formal announcements remain to be done. Consideration of timing is important to maximize positive Public Relations for this formal program.

**New Business.** No new business was brought up.

**Call for adjournment.** *Bob made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00. Sherry seconded the motion and all present voted in favor.*

**Next Meeting:**

September 7. 8:30 am – 10:00 am - Naples Hotel

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**Attachment A  
Resolution – NYS Matching Funds  
Official Tourism Promotion Agency**

**ONTARIO COUNTY FOUR SEASONS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION,  
d.b.a. A Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, NY  
DESIGNATION TOURIST PROMOTION AGENCY AND AUTHORIZATION  
NEW YORK STATE TOURISM GRANT PROGRAMS**

WHEREAS, Ontario County contracts with the Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation to publicize and advertise Ontario County; and

WHEREAS, Per the contract between the Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation and Ontario County, one of the functions of the Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation is to coordinate and execute a plan for New York State tourism grant programs and

WHEREAS, A County authorized Tourist Promotion Agency (TPA) is required to make application and receive funds for most New York State tourism grant programs; and

WHEREAS, The Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation Board of Directors has recommended to the Planning and Environmental Quality Committee of the Board of Supervisors that the Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation be designated as the Tourist Promotion Agency for 2024; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Ontario County Board of Supervisors does hereby designate the Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation to be its official Tourist Promotion Agency for 2024; and further

RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be sent by the Clerk of the Board to the Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation.

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**Attachment B  
Policy Updates**

**Section 200. Board Organization**

**201. Board Member Job Description and Board Norms**

Position Title:	Board Member	Reports to: Chairperson
Qualifications:	Finger Lakes Visitors Connection is a not-for-profit organization (501c3) and LDC formed by Ontario County. The members of the Board of Directors are nominated by the corporation and appointed by Ontario County. While the Board is appointed from specific entities or organizations, the Board is focused on the overall good for the broad Ontario County travel industry.	
Function:	The Board makes planning and policy decisions; is responsible for financing those decisions; oversees, reviews, and monitors organizational plans; and promotes community understanding of and support for the organization.	
Additional Requirements:	Board members are required to sign a conflict of interest and code of ethics statement, and to complete mandatory training for the Public Authorities Accountability Act within the first year.  Board members respond to questionnaire(s) as provided to share their background and skills, allowing the leadership to tailor the board committee assignments to the members interests, experience and skills.	
Tenure:	Each Board member's term is reviewed every three years or when a member has a change in employment. Other requirements are within the bylaws.	
Principal Activities:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Be prepared for, attend and actively participate in a majority of the Board meetings</li><li>2. Contribute to at least one committee – actively participate in its deliverables</li><li>3. Be willing to grow within the board structure, advocate for the organization and assume leadership positions</li><li>3. Follow the <i>board norms</i> on decisions of the board and adopted meeting practices</li><li>4. Subscribe to the <i>team core values</i></li></ol>	

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**BOARD NORMS AND TEAM VALUES**

**Board Norms**

Meeting Protocol

1. Call or email and confirm your attendance at meetings
2. Arrive at meetings on time
3. Commit to the full meeting. All meetings will be a maximum of one-and-a-half hours
4. Declare conflicts of interest where applicable on any agenda or discussion items
5. Working from a consensus agenda requires trust and consideration of the committee work. Prepare for the meeting and when possible, ask for clarification in advance.
6. Use the electronic resources of the organization for communications and preparation.

Role Protocol

1. Recognize that the board position is one of oversight and fiduciary responsibility as a volunteer member of a policy making group, rather than a paid staff position. Leave the staff work to the staff and contribute to the policy to guide the staff.
2. Actively participate in the decisions of the board. All decisions will be arrived at by consensus after all viewpoints are heard, understood, and considered. By working toward consensus the decision for the organization will have the broadest possible backing, understanding, and wholehearted support of board members
3. Abide by the adopted policies of the Board of Directors

**Team Values**

Commitment. Interest and commitment to the tourism industry and its interconnectivity to the local community and economy in achieving our **vision**: Ontario County's Visitors Connection (FLVC) is viewed as an intentional community leader and equity partner in economic development, social and environmental responsibility. Our destination is valued as a dynamic place to live, work, play and be well.

Enthusiasm. Enthusiasm and positive energy toward the goals and performance of the organization in our **mission to** curate, distinguish, and develop Ontario County's destination brand inspiring travel, creating economic vitality for our stakeholders, and providing quality of life benefits for our residents.

Engagement. Engagement is a step beyond participation. It's more than showing up; it's bringing active, innovative, and innovative ideas and advice. Participation in a team atmosphere.

Playful and Fun. Travelers want fun, relaxation. Working in a playful atmosphere – even on serious matters ultimately contributes to the delivery of “happy” and “fun” and in the case of Finger Lakes hospitality – authenticity.

Date: December 6, 2017

Update: July 6, 2023

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**202. Board Appointment Requirements**

The FLVC Board of Directors shall recommend to the Ontario County Board of Supervisors qualified candidates for the board. Members will be appointed by Ontario County Board of Supervisors committee endorsement and resolution of the Ontario County Board of Supervisors.

Approved Board members shall complete the Oath of Office, provided through Ontario County, and such other paperwork as required by FLVC or Ontario County or the State of New York at the time of taking office, and subsequently on an annual basis as required. Such paperwork includes:

Providing a resume or credentials statement

Conflict of Interest Statement, including the Code of Ethics

Acknowledgement of receipt of Policy Notebook and other training materials

Acknowledgement of Fiduciary Responsibilities

Date: October 6, 2021

Update: July 6, 2023

**203. Board goalsetting and self-evaluation**

The board shall annually develop its organizational goals and report those and the results through the PARIS reporting system.

Date: December 6, 2017

Update: July 6, 2023

**204. Employee Handbook**

The board shall maintain an Employee Handbook which is reflective of current law and practice in Human Resources.

Date: December 6, 2017

Update: July 6, 2023

**205. Board Training**

Board members shall participate within the first year of their appointment in the training required by the Public Authorities Accountability Act. Finger Lakes Visitors Connection staff will maintain records of the successful completion of the training.

Date: December 6, 2017

Update: July 6, 2023