

**Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, New York
Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, March 30, 2011 8:00 a.m.
Finger Lakes Casino & Racetrack, Farmington**

PRESENT

Mary Luckern	John Brahm
Russ Kenyon	Frank Riccio
Suzanne Farley	Dan Fuller
Bob Bennett	Jessica Bacher
Alexa Gifford	Chris Iversen

EX-OFFICIO

Alison Grems, Canandaigua Chamber
Spike Herzig, Geneva Chamber

EXCUSED

Mike Kauffman
Lisa Fitzgerald
Mike Roeder
Lois Kozlowski
Dick Maltman

STAFF

Valerie Knoblauch
Sue Schmidt
AJ Shear
Rebecca Donovan
Meg Colombo
David Lee

GUEST – Amy Lippitt,
Dumbwaiter Design LLC

EXECUTIVE SESSION – At 8:00 a.m. the Board went into Executive Session to discuss legal matters. No action was taken.

WELCOME – 2nd Vice Chairperson Bob Bennett called the regular meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. and asked for introductions. Valerie Knoblauch shared that Mike Roeder was necessarily absent due to a family emergency. Valerie introduced Anthony Ottaviani, Events Manager at Finger Lakes Casino & Racetrack, who welcomed the board and described the casino's recent renovations, including the new meeting space.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM – Valerie introduced Amy Lippitt, Managing Director of Dumbwaiter Design, LLC, who is heading up the website redesign project. Amy presented an update of the current status of the new website. Amy noted that the strategy phase in December identified FLVC's objectives, and that the FLVC team really understood what was needed. Amy illustrated the tactics that were used by the design team to fulfill FLVC's objectives, showing several examples of wireframes and design comps. Valerie noted that the original proposal targeted a July launch, and the positive relationship developed with Dumbwaiter Design. Bob Bennett asked Amy Lippitt whether Dumbwaiter Design has projected future maintenance costs. Amy replied that the site was designed with a great deal of flexibility, and that updating of the site will be handled by FLVC staff through a content management system; future costs could be incurred if design changes are requested.

COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS – AJ Shear is working with Meg Colombo to produce a Lifestyle Kit, whose primary audiences are the Office of Economic Development and the Supervisors and their contacts. AJ met with town and city Supervisors to create community cards, along with cards on lifestyle amenities like golf, wine, education, transportation, etc.

Valerie noted that the Ontario County Planning & Research Department has recently made several requests for opinions or data, and Valerie has been invited by Maria Rudzinski to develop a May educational session focusing on Tourism Product Development.

COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS – continued

Valerie reported on various marketing endeavors. Sue Schmidt hosted a writer from *SnowEast* magazine last year who produced an article this year; Valerie hosted Paris Wolf, a free-lance writer, at Bristol Mountain; AJ will be hosting a writer from *Buffalo News*, writing on one-tank trips. VisitRochester and a Finger Lakes county cooperative called Welcome Surprises will partner again to target the Canadian market with print and radio. Sue Schmidt reported on a group request she received in December from a Rolls/Bentley car club resulting from the cooperative's September insert in the Toronto Globe & Mail. Finally, the Routes 5 and 20 cooperative will be producing a Z-card promoting the best food on 5 & 20.

Valerie reported that the industry Cooperative Marketing Program has succeeded beyond her expectations. The current focus is on the top partnership levels for the print publication, while all partnership levels will be addressed with the web, social media, and upcoming marketing campaigns. To date, we have received commitments from 13 partners at the Strategic level (\$3450), 11 partners at the Premier level (\$2250), 17 partners at the Valued level (\$1100), and 6 partners at the Participant level (\$360). She noted that partnership development will be an ongoing strategy for all staff members this year and that she is providing sales incentives and rewards for developing these positive relationships.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Chris Iversen moved to **approve the Minutes of the January 12, 2011 Board of Directors meeting.** John Brahm seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Valerie presented the financial reports for January, February and year-to-date. Russ Kenyon moved to **accept the January, February and year-to-date financial reports.** Frank Riccio seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS - Valerie noted that the By-Laws Committee, consisting of Lois Kozlowski, Mike Kauffman, Russ Kenyon and Frank Riccio, met to review board term language and the withdrawal of Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance as an ex-officio member. No changes are recommended at this point. Valerie requested the appointment of a Nominating Committee to address the status of a board member whose position has changed. It has been a practice to automatically review board member status when these types of changes occur. Bob Bennett appointed Dick Maltman, Jessica Bacher and Lois Kozlowski to the Nominating Committee.

CHAMBER UPDATES – Alison Grems invited participation in an April 5th conference call with the Business Council of NYS on the Wage Theft Prevention Act. Alison reported that the Canandaigua Chamber is joining with other suburban chambers for a Mega Mixer to be held at the Penfield Country Club on May 5th. The Chamber, in cooperation with Rotary, will award Small Business of the Year at Steamboat Landing on May 12th. The Chamber is optimistic about CMAC's upcoming concert season, and is already getting phone inquiries.

Bob Bennett welcomed Spike Herzig, interim president of the Geneva Chamber. Spike reported that he is working part-time during the transition period and that a search committee has been formed. The Geneva Chamber will bestow its Citizen of the Year award at the Geneva Country Club on April 27th.

MARKETING AND SALES REPORT – David Lee reviewed the February metrics reporting that according to the STR report, occupancy Levels were up 4.5% over the prior year and that RevPar had also increased by \$10.20. Valerie recommended changing the way Sue Schmidt’s stats are reported, as the stats do not accurately reflect her efforts. Valerie reminded the board about Sue’s online report as a more accurate picture. David reported that we received several consumer inquiries from a *Trailer Life* magazine article. David has shipped visitor guides to four trade shows, and has attended two – Western NY Sport & Travel Expo in Hamburg, NY and the Cleveland Outdoor Adventure Show. David reported that PR impressions were up due to Inspire Moore’s inclusion in *Brides* magazine that resulted from a cooperative effort by Valerie and Quinn & Co. Valerie noted that David had done a cost analysis on the distribution of FLVC brochures by NYSTVA, FLTA and partner TPAs at recent shows: the cost ranged from 79¢ to \$2 per brochure. This will guide our show selection in the future.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT – Valerie showed the board a list of new tourism-related businesses in the county, prompting a discussion by the board. Valerie reported that Sue and David attended Legislative Action Day, and met with Assemblyman Brian Kolb to discuss per diem rates in the county. Valerie reminded the board of important upcoming dates: the next board meeting is May 4th at Ravenwood Golf Club in Victor; the Marketing Update and Tourism Legacy Awards will be held May 10th at Ravenwood Golf Club; and the Literature Exchange will be held on June 8th at a location to be determined.

OLD BUSINESS - Valerie distributed the results of the Board Self-Evaluation, a requirement of the Public Authorities Accountability Act, and said the results were very positive. The weakest self-rating was to the question of attendance at FLVC events; Valerie reminded the board that sending a representative to events is also valuable.

NEW BUSINESS – Chris Iversen asked about budgeting in the future for the next website redesign. Valerie responded that she does not intend to spend this much again for a major overhaul, but would instead budget for consistent “small” projects. Valerie also noted that additional revenues from our cooperative marketing program will help to offset the expense of the redesign.

ADJOURN – Suzanne Farley moved to adjourn the meeting. Russ Kenyon seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Next meeting: May 4, 2011 8:00 a.m. Legacy Awards
 Ravenwood Golf Club, Victor

Goal B. Marketing and Service Excellence and Effectiveness

Strategy 8: Create a familial, high level collegial atmosphere for the Ontario County hospitality industry, resulting in a welcoming environment for all.