

**Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, New York  
Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, July 21, 2010 8:30 a.m.  
Geneva Area Chamber of Commerce, Geneva**

**PRESENT**

Jessica Bacher      Bob Bennett  
Alexa Gifford      Mary Luckern  
Dick Maltman      Frank Riccio  
Dan Fuller      Lois Kozlowski  
Russ Kenyon  
Mike Kauffman  
Lisa Fitzgerald

**EX-OFFICIO**

Alison Grems, Canandaigua Chamber  
Cindy Kimble, FLTA  
Bob Matson, FLCC

**EXCUSED**

Mike Roeder  
Chris Iversen  
John Brahm  
Suzanne Farley  
John Maerhofer

**STAFF**

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

**WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS** – Chairman Russ Kenyon called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and asked for introductions.

**CORRESPONDENCE NOTEBOOK** – Rebecca Donovan passed the correspondence notebook, noting the Budget Travel Girlfriend Getaways ad, the cover of Oenophilia with a photo taken by Valerie, and the USA Today feature story with a full size photo of Canandaigua Lake and a focus on real estate values in the Finger Lakes. AJ followed up with a report on recent PR activities, which have been happening at a hectic pace.

**MARKETING REPORT** –AJ reported on the USA Today article on the Finger Lakes that resulted from a Quinn and Co. lead; the New York Wine & Culinary Center was singled out as “Don’t Miss.” The story was picked up by RNews, Finger Lakes Times, and Daily Messenger, and Valerie was interviewed by Rochester Channel 8. AJ Shear distributed his Public Relations Update and PR Tactics and planning report, noting that our relationship with Quinn and Co. has helped him reach publications that are difficult to infiltrate, such as USA Today, Budget Travel, and the Chicago Tribune.

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

Bob Bennett moved to approve the **Minutes of the May 5, 2010 Board of Directors meeting**. Frank Riccio seconded. The motion passed unanimously, with Mary Luckern abstaining.

Valerie presented the financial reports, noting that the actual numbers show as under budget because we are operating on the assumption of no matching funds. Mary Luckern made a motion to approve the **April, May and June Financial Reports**. Dick Maltman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Valerie discussed the board metrics report prepared by her and David Lee, and encouraged the board to consider philosophically whether these metrics were meaningful and valuable information. Valerie suggested that a comparison to 2009 numbers is not a good idea; a better comparison would be against 2008 numbers. Bob Bennett suggested showing 2008 numbers also. Russ Kenyon suggested that a month-to-month metric is too tight, and that quarterly/seasonal would be more effective. Bob Bennett moved to **adopt the Board Metrics with the changes discussed**. Mary Luckern seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Russ Kenyon indicated that the executive committee would like a group to focus on the Chamber of Commerce contracts. He appointed Mike Roeder, Lois Kozlowski, and John Maerhofer to that committee.

Russ Kenyon appointed a Nominating Committee to review expiring board terms and to propose a Slate of Officers to be voted on at the Annual Meeting in October. The Nominating Committee will be chaired by Jessica Bacher, and includes Dick Maltman and Frank Riccio.

Valerie presented some options for board self-evaluation forms. She indicated that the board had occasionally done a self evaluation but under the PAAA it was recommended to be done annually. The board commented on the elements of the two forms that they felt matched measurement and application to our mission. Russ Kenyon directed the Executive Committee to review these options and come back to the board with a version for the next meeting.

Russ Kenyon tabled the review of the Distribution of Mailing Lists policy, then presented the results of the Executive Committee's review of the following position statements:

The Canandaigua Airport Expansion was reviewed, updated and represented by the Executive Committee. Dan Fuller moved to **adopt the revised position paper on the Canandaigua Airport Expansion**. Lois Kozlowski seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Frank Riccio moved to **remove the current Watershed Compact** from our policy manual. Mike Kaufmann seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. It is understood that there is a new agreement coming out from the watershed alliance and that the Finger Lakes Land Trust was also modifying some statements regarding environmental resources in our area.

Valerie shared an updated version of the position paper on occupancy taxes. This paper acknowledges that other local occupancy taxes exist and defines our role in the discussion surrounding those taxes. The board wanted to review this a bit more and asked the Executive Committee to bring this back in September.

**MARKETING REPORT** – Valerie gave an update on the status of print publications. The “mini-guide” will replace our current visitors guide, and will be printed in greater quantities. The prototype version should arrive mid-August. The 10,000 quantity will be used as a prototype for sales to our industry of content modules. The Mega-guide, as our office fondly calls it, is intended to interest visitors and direct visitors to visitfingerlakes.com and the insiders for more information. The 2010-2011 Tablet Map also came out in June.

Meg Colombo reported that we received a social media strategy from Paramore Redd Marketing (Hannah Paramore), which recommends 3 phases. The first phase suggests tightening our brand and maintaining consistency in messaging. Phase 2 focuses on social campaigns, including contests, giveaways and online ads. Phase 3 is a continued engagement of the whole office.

## **MARKETING REPORT** – continued

Sue Schmidt reported on the Social Life Magazine promotion with Quinn and Co. This was an elective, cooperative program offered to all Finger Lakes counties; its focus was wine and style. Ontario, Cayuga, Livingston, and Wayne counties participated. Imagine Moore, Arbor Hill Grapery, Billsboro Winery, Finger Lakes Wine Center, and Casa Larga Vineyards participated with Ontario County. The program included a series of three ads and editorial in Social Life Magazine, as well as donated wine and gift bag inserts for three special events in the Hamptons.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT** – Valerie reported that she attended an I Love NY meeting with the TPAs in Albany - the first in 2010. I Love NY reported the amount of matching funds for 2011, and that regional grants might be available for 2010; Valerie noted that the announcement is not a guarantee. I Love NY is producing a fall TV commercial with donated talent and airtime. Valerie indicated that there is a great deal of uncertainty about matching funds and several of the regions have abandoned their regional efforts. The Finger Lakes is still working together. The group has begun to consider management for next year and whether or not they need to designate anyone official. Valerie has informed the Finger Lakes TPAs that she will work with someone next year but prefers not to be the designated regional director in 2011. Dan Fuller noted that the current budget of \$3.8 million to promote New York worldwide is directed to certain areas, and the funds have not been released. Valerie noted that she has heard at national meetings that other states are spending more because they believe there is a void in the marketplace as places like New York step back and don't advertise and promote.

Valerie presented the 2010-2011 budget, noting that she budgeted for revenue of \$760,000. The occupancy tax increased 2%, 4%, and 12% in the last three reported quarters, and she is predicting occupancy to be midway between 2007 and 2008 levels. Bob Bennett and Jessica Batcher commented on occupancy levels and average daily rate as they are seeing them and concur that this might be a budgeting technique. All agreed that there is a new consumer dynamic out there – where empowerment over value and costs is happening.

Valerie reported that Hazlitt 1852 Vineyards has made a purchase offer on the Widmer facility. Valerie attended a public forum in Naples with Mike Manikowski and Maureen Duggan of Economic Development. The Naples school district, Village, Town and Town of South Bristol were represented, and many Naples residents attended. The spokesman for Hazlitt announced their intention to have a full-fledged tour and interpretive visitor experience at the facility. The Naples community spoke several times to the importance of tourism and the importance of feet on the street in Naples.

The Office of Economic Development invited FLVC to review our presence on their new website. Meg Colombo attended the meeting and provided photo content, and AJ Shear provided written copy. Meg and AJ's next project will be a Lifestyle Kit – a tool for promoting the quality of life in Ontario County.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Valerie reported that Dave Hanlon has provided drawings for the back porch project at no charge to us as a not-for-profit. Dave sees the project as a simple renovation. Dick Maltman moved that **the board authorize the president to put out three bids and complete the back porch renovation with a cap of \$20,000.** Dan Fuller seconded. The motion passes unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS** – The board offers best wishes to Katie Brahm in her recovery from major surgery.

**AGENCY REPORTS** – Cindy Kimble reported that visitation is up slightly, and that the FLTA 2011 Marketing Plan has been presented for review. In the past, counties were considered members and private sector facilities were considered partners. In 2011, all will be considered partners. This will allow counties to select programs, rather than be given a package.

Alison Grems reported that the festival season is in full swing, with the Waterfront Arts Festival coming at the end of July. A recent economic impact study at festivals indicated there were more lookers than buyers. Alison noted that Heron Hill Winery has opened a new tasting room at the site of the former South Bristol Cultural Center. The Canandaigua Chamber is answering the general information phone number for CMAC during the concert season. Upcoming events include a joint chamber mixer with the Victor Chamber at Ravenwood Golf Club, and the chamber's Anniversary Gala at The Inn on the Lake.

No representative from the Geneva Chamber was available for a report.

**ADJOURN** - Russ Kenyon adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

**Next meeting:**           September 8, 2010    8:30 a.m.  
                                  Location to be determined (change from published schedule)