

Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, New York
Board of Directors Meeting, Wednesday, March 27, 2013 8:00 a.m.
Farmington Town Hall, Farmington, NY

PRESENT

Lois Kozlowski
Mike Kauffman
Dick Maltman
Alexa Gifford
Frank Riccio
David Hutchings
Russ Kenyon
Jessica Bacher
Dan Fuller
Suzanne Farley
Mike Roeder
Lisa Fitzgerald
John Brahm

EXCUSED

Bob Bennett
Carl Carlson
Mary Luckern

ABSENT:

David Linger

GUESTS

Alison Grems,
Canandaigua Chamber
Liz Winter,
Geneva Chamber

STAFF

Valerie Knoblauch
David Lee
Holly Chaapel
Sara Paduano
Sue Schmidt

Steve Martin, Finger Lakes Casino & Racetrack
Ted Fafinski, Supervisor Town of Farmington

WELCOME – Suzanne Farley, Secretary and Valerie Knoblauch, President called the meeting to order at 8:16 am. Valerie initiated self-introductions and welcomed the guests. Supervisor Ted Fafinski welcomed everyone to the Town of Farmington and thanked us for extending the invitation. Steve Martin, Sr. Director of Marketing at Finger Lakes Casino and Racetrack, spoke about the Finger Lakes Casino and Racetrack Expansion Project. The goal of the project is to create a more comfortable experience for everyone. This \$12 million dollar expansion will include additional gaming, restaurant, bar and lounge, outdoor smoking area, new players club and a new loading dock. This will also create 75 new jobs, bringing their total to nearly 575. The projected opening for the expansion project is November 1, 2013. Steve thanked the board for their support with the Casino/Gaming Tables resolution.

CORRESPONDENCE NOTEBOOK- Holly Chaapel, Executive Assistant to the President, passed around the correspondence notebook. Holly mentioned key highlights for Ontario County but more specifically Finger Lakes Visitors Connection. Sara Paduano recapped the Best of the Web Awards and that FLVC took 1st place in Tourism and Hospitality category and Silver overall.

David Lee spoke about his recent trip with Valerie to Toronto as guests of Visit Rochester for a PGA hospitality event with media, tour operators and receptive operators. Since the trip, David has already received two contacts from golf promotional magazines writers who are interested in coming to the Ontario County area. Finger Lakes Visitors Connection is focusing on the off season packages.

Valerie Knoblauch announced that FLVC will be hosting an “Art Show” on May 10th at Hazlitt Red Cat Cellars Winery in Naples. The art show will be the Travel Guide Art Show.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS – Valerie Knoblauch asked the board for approval to amend the Board of Directors meeting schedule and cancel the April 24, 2013 meeting. She also asked to change the May 15th meeting to May 16th. Mike Roeder moved to **approve the changes in the schedule**. Dick Maltman seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Frank Riccio moved to **approve the Minutes of the January 16, 2013 Board of Directors meeting**. Alexa Gifford seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Russ Kenyon moved to **approve the Minutes of the February 27, 2013 Board of Directors meeting**. John Brahm seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The board of directors approved the minutes of the February meeting. All members present at the February and March meeting were asked to vote on paying off both of our mortgages through Five Star bank and to close our associated checking account at that bank, as per the motion in the February minutes. **All members voted in the affirmative. Motion passed.**

Valerie Knoblauch presented the financial reports, noting that we are under budget \$67,035.97 YTD. There were no questions from the board. Frank Riccio moved to **accept the February March & YTD financial reports**. Russ Kenyon seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Valerie Knoblauch presented the Victor Chamber of Commerce contract to the board. Valerie explained the focus of the contract is to get an inventory of businesses and hours of operation within Victor so FLVC can fill voids and create opportunities. Russ Kenyon moved to **approve the Victor Chamber of Commerce contract**. Jessica Bacher seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

BY-LAWS COMMITTEE REPORT- The by-laws committee (Jessica Bacher, Dick Maltman, Mike Roeder and Valerie Knoblauch) met and reviewed the by-laws in which updates were recommended. They noted that the clause regarding board of directors' terms with fiscal years is recommended for elimination. A second focus was on the ex-officio section within the by-laws. There is a desire to clear that up and perhaps expand it to incorporate more voices on certain topics. The recommendation was to replace the language regarding ex-officio with the language: *In addition, there shall be ex-officio directors who are appointed annually and may include, but not limited to, the Ontario County Four Seasons Local Development Corporation Honorary Board Chairperson, Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance CEO, the full time executive leadership of Ontario County Chambers of Commerce, a representative from Hobart and William Smith Colleges and Finger Lakes Community College, a student representative of local tourism or business programs and other such individuals who can complement and contribute to the strategic goals of the corporation.* Jessica Bacher moved **the suggested changes of the by-laws**. Dick Maltman seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Valerie Knoblauch suggested Mitch Donovan, President of Victor Chamber of Commerce, be considered as an ex-officio member of the board. Russ Kenyon moved to **approve to invite Mitch Donovan as an ex-officio board member**. Mike Roeder seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

CHAMBER REPORT- Alison Grems, President of Canandaigua Chamber, reported that they have been working on their 2013 visitors guide. It should be released May 10th. She also noted a few new businesses that are opening in downtown Canandaigua: Beehive Brew Pub, Il Posto, and Wick-edly Yummy Cupcakes. Alison also mentioned a cultural exchange trip to Cuba October 18-25.

Liz Winter, President of Geneva Chamber, reported that the visitors and events center project has started which will ultimately become the chamber's new office. The Geneva Chamber will be hosting a packaging day which will allow the industry to contribute and collaborate with other partners to create package deals. Liz noted that the chamber will be revamping the Finger Lakes Leadership program focusing on keeping individuals in the area with the connection of surrounding communities. Liz briefly mentioned the chambers Classic Christmas Markets trip to France, Germany, and Austria from November 30-December 8.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT- Valerie gave a brief overview of the policy: **Electronic Communications: Use of computers, internet access, e-mail and voice mail, etc.** This policy was adopted in 2003, and is recommended for updating. This had been out for review since October. Dick Maltman moved to **approve the policy**. Alexa Gifford seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

MARKETING REPORT- Sara Paduano recapped the Food Revolution and the Foodie Awards. She mentioned that although AJ was driving the revolution, the rest of the team was involved. The weather impacted attendance. The people who did attend were proud to be honored. FLVC invited four bloggers and two journalists for a FAM weekend. The bloggers and journalists have over 80,000 followers which is a significant social media reach. Sara was able to track the bloggers conversations over a five day period and produce a Tweet Reach Report which showed the reach of Tweets using the #FLXFoodRev hashtag; 164 tweets by 34 people, reaching 64,683 accounts and generating 1.1 million impressions. Valerie commended Sara for her quality analytical work to measure the value of the buzz of Ontario County; now FLVC needs to sustain it.

STRATEGIC PLAN – Valerie overviewed the strategic plan that was discussed at the February 27 Board Meeting which was held at the South Bristol Town Hall. Valerie explained that the strategic plan starts by introducing FLVC, followed by how FLVC developed the plan, and FLVC's interaction with Young Strategies, Inc.

She recapped the strategic plan stating that FLVC has created an executive summary overview of ten key points of focus: 1) Value of Tourism 2) Key Markets 3) Trends affecting Travel Behavior 4) Communities 5) Tourism Products 6) Weaknesses in Tourism Products 7) Strengths 8) Weaknesses 9) Opportunities 10) Development Challenges. Valerie indicated that there are three main areas of the plan – woven throughout. One is the attention to **Visitors** – their needs and experiences. The second is our need to fill in the **voids**. She used a chart within the plan to illustrate the occupancy levels between November and May vs. June through October. She illustrated if we were to close this gap with more business (November through May) that there was substantial potential financial benefit. **Vision** is the third area. This is our destination management and development needs – and to identify a new vision for our area – making sure that we are maximizing our role as an economic development engine for Ontario County and the region.

Valerie asked the board for affirmation that FLVC is moving in the right direction with the Strategic Plan. Valerie will take the plan to the Ontario County Planning and Research Committee for their endorsement. The board acknowledged that the plan looks complete and well done. Dan Fuller noted that the group has worked hard on the strategic plan. David Hutchings moved to **approve the Strategic Plan 2013-2016**. Lisa Fitzgerald seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

ADJOURN – Russ Kenyon made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by John Brahm and the meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Holly Chaapel.

Next meeting:

May 16, 2013

Geneva Town Hall

Geneva, NY

8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.