

**A Finger Lakes Visitors Connection, Ontario County, NY
Board of Directors Meeting – Wednesday, June 14, 2017 – 8:00 a.m.
Seneca Art & Culture Center at Ganondagan
Victor, NY 14564**

PRESENT

Mike Kauffman
Mike Roeder
Suzanne Farley
Dan Marshall
David Hutchings
Bob Bennett
Meg Joseph
David Linger
Russ Kenyon
Steve McGuire

EXCUSED

Donna Yudin
John Brahm
Alexa Gifford
Frank Riccio
Dan Fuller
Audrey Carrier
Carl Carlson

GUESTS

Peter Jemison, Manager
Ganondagan State Historic Site

EX-OFFICIO

Lenore Friend, FLCC
Ethan Fogg, Canandaigua
Chamber
Mitch Donovan, Victor Chamber

STAFF

Valerie Knoblauch
Carol Hicks

Welcome - Chairperson Mike Kauffman called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. He introduced ex-officio member, Ethan Fogg, Executive Director, Canandaigua Chamber of Commerce. Ethan provided a brief professional and personal background to the group and he was warmly welcomed. Mike then requested self-introductions around the room.

Mike Kauffman introduced Peter Jemison, Director of Ganondagan State Historic Site. Peter honored our group with a traditional welcome in his native language. He gave a brief history of the Seneca people and followed with information on the Seneca Art & Culture Center, including upcoming events, projects and exhibits.

While Peter was still present, Valerie gave the board a quick review of the upcoming Visitors Guide which has a Ganondagan photo as the cover shot. Mike thanked Peter and wished him and his team great success. Valerie finished her review of the design of the guide, focusing how it aligned with our marketing research on customer inquiries and interests.

Correspondence Notebook - Carol Hicks presented the Correspondence Notebook. Valerie added a folder of additional articles, that she shared with the board.

Official Business - Bob Bennett made the *motion to approve the following: the minutes of the February 2, 2017 meeting; Financial Reports March, April and May; YTD; Balance Sheet as of May 31, 2017. The motion was seconded by David Hutchings.* All present voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Executive Committee – Mike Kauffman presented the Section 125 Resolution for ADP. He explained that the board had approved the conceptual adoption of the Section 125 plan at the February meeting, however, ADP requires a specific resolution from the board. Russ Kenyon *made the motion to approve the ADP resolution to adopt the Section 125 plan; the motion was seconded by Dan Marshall.* All present voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Valerie recommended reauthorization of the HR One Contract through June 2018, providing the board with an overview of the benefits that we have received, and will continue to receive using these services. *David Linger made the motion to reauthorize the HR One contract through June 2018 and the motion was seconded by Bob Bennett.* All voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Due to a conflict with the Ontario County Board of Supervisors retreat, Valerie requested that the October meeting and annual meeting be rescheduled. Mike Roeder *made the motion to hold the October board meeting and annual meeting on October 4, 2017. Russ Kenyon seconded the motion.* All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Valerie presented to the board an organizational update on employees and job descriptions. She and Amanda Mulno, of HR One, met with team members regarding interests and goals. The strategic plan was revisited as well. There is a need for an elevated position in marketing and communications to lead marketing endeavors while Valerie focuses on economic development and corporation management, and strategic direction. Valerie presented Christen Smith's resume to the board, as an excellent candidate for the Director of Marketing and Communications.

Recognitions – Mike Kauffman informed the board that FLVC received the Canandaigua Chamber of Commerce's 2017 business award in tourism. He also noted Valerie's Women in Travel and Tourism International, (WITTI) Top Woman in Marketing Award, received in Washington, D.C. on Sunday, June 4th. Suzanne Farley was honored with a nomination for the Professional Women of the Finger Lakes award.

Finance & Audit Committee – Valerie reviewed the sanitary and storm sewer repairs that need to be completed at the office. Superior Plumbing has provided an estimate for the repairs. Bob Bennett *made the motion to approve up to \$14,000 for the Sanitary and Storm Sewer and Suzanne Farley seconded the motion.* All voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Governance Committee – Bob Bennett reported that the Board of Directors Policy Notebook is now separate from the Employee Handbook, as requested by HR One. The board needs to reaffirm the Board of Directors Policy Notebook, without changes. Mike Roeder *moved to adopt the Finger Lakes Visitors Connection Board of Directors Policy Notebook; the motion was seconded by Dan Marshall.* All present voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Nominating Committee – No report.

Ex-Officio – Lenore Friend reported for **Finger Lakes Community College**. The college is currently waiting on authorization for the reorganization papers to consolidate the hospitality program, combining food and beverage, along with the resort and general tourism management programs. Commencement was held on May 20th with 54 tourism related graduates. FLCC has adopted their budget, which is different this year due to the Excelsior Scholarship program which has a different tuition rate for new students and a freeze on tuition for current students.

Ethan Fogg reported for the **Canandaigua Chamber of Commerce**. He mentioned the need for networking opportunities between organizations looking for qualified employees and the FLCC tourism-related graduates. Danielle Roder is the new Coordinator of Membership and Administration. Ethan has been making facility updates and improvements at the office. The tourism committee has been revitalized.

David Linger reported for **Geneva**, noting that he'll share what he knows, but is not representing any organization in particular. The BID is looking for a new Executive Director. They have an intake person, Pat Healy working part-time. Smith Opera House is looking for a new Executive Director and actively interviewing candidates. Linden Street recently hosted Rose Soiree, which was well attended. Linden Street is closed to traffic Friday, Saturday and sometimes Sunday. Geneva is waiting for Governor Cuomo's announcement on the Downtown Revitalization Initiatives. Foundry site is getting cleaned up.

Mitch Donovan reported for the **Victor Chamber of Commerce**. The tourism work group has been formed with Mike Roeder as chair. They are researching a touchscreen information unit to be installed at Pinnacle Athletic Campus and possibly at other high traffic areas. The Chamber is working on an Explore Victor Trails initiative to highlight the hiking and biking trail systems in Victor, including Victor Hiking Trails. Website improvements are being made.

President's Report – Valerie talked about the Gateway Initiative funding, which is available to chambers and our partners. She shared an update on former personnel: Karen Miltner is working part time at the Smith Opera House. AJ Shear and his wife, Ryan, have a new baby boy named Oliver. The tourism industry raised over \$6,000 for Mike Linehan's family.

All insurances are going out for rebid. She welcomed recommendations of insurance agents.

Valerie presented the key performance indicators (KPIs) that David had summarized for the new website. She indicated that she is having the Findings report repeated against the benchmark and we'll see how the site performs versus our goals and emphasis, etc. Valerie gave an update on the Canandaigua Airport. Mercy Flight has taken over operations at the airport, and they are setting up a new terminal with a gateway presence working with FLVC.

Finally, FLVC is being asked to provide artifacts for display at the New York State Visitor Center at Geneva. Jake will be reaching out to the industry to make sure that Ontario County and Geneva are well represented at the center. There will be only one regional guide at the Visitor Center. This created the need for a special publication and the Finger Lakes Regional Tourism Promotion Agency group created a new brochure for this purpose. Finally, Valerie reported on the Motorcoach Seminar, held June 13, at Sonnenberg. This had received positive reviews and had almost 60 attendees.

Old Business – Occupancy Tax update from Valerie. Per Gary Curtiss, County Attorney, the legislation has been held at several different levels of state government. Senator Pam Helming is closely working on it. At issue is some of the language put in by the county, specifically extending the definition of tourism and raising the administration fee from 5% to 15%. If the legislation is not approved before the end of the term, the current legislation will be renewed.

New Business – Suzanne Farley reported on the success of our frontline people, as reported by a group of women traveling from Louisiana. Bob Bennett noted the upcoming Father's Day car show at Sonnenberg Gardens. David Hutchings reported on a successful Roses and Rose' at Sonnenberg Gardens. Ganondagan will be participating in Path Through History weekend.

Adjourn – *Russ Kenyon made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mike Roeder. All present voted in favor of the motion.* Mike Kauffman adjourned the meeting at 9:47 a.m.

Next Meeting – Wednesday, September 13, 2017 – Location TBD

Minutes submitted by Carol Hicks

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