

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
Meeting Minutes Draft – December 2014**

1 **Date:** December 17, 2014
 2 **Time:** 3:00-5:45pm
 3 **Location:** Coltivare
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Attendees:

Name	✓	Representation	Name	✓	Representation
Anne Kellerman	✓	At-Large	Sue Perlgut	✓	Arts-Culture
Ian Golden	✓	Recreation	Susie Monagan	✓	Arts-Culture
Ethan Ash	✓	Arts-Culture	John Spence	✓	CAP, Non-Voting
John Gutenberger	✓	Cornell	Bruce Stoff	✓	CVB, Non-Voting
Lynette Scofield	✓	Lodging	Dwight Mengel	A	Transportation, Non-Voting
Rick Adie	✓	Lodging	Gary Ferguson	✓	DIA, Non-Voting
Rita Rosenberg-Barber	✓	Agriculture	Jennifer Tavares	✓	Chamber, Non-Voting
Andy Zepp	✓	At-Large	Martha Armstrong	✓	TCAD, Non-Voting
Stephen Nunley	A	At-Large	Will Burbank	✓	TC Legislature, Non-Voting
Steve Hugo	✓	At-Large	Beverly Baker	A	Associate Member
Ken Jupiter	✓	At-Large	Carol Kammen	A	Associate Member
Mike Mellor	✓	At-Large	Jon Reis	✓	Associate Member
Anne Gossen	✓	At-Large	Tom Knipe	✓	Staff
Sue Stafford	✓	TC3	Jennifer Turner	✓	Staff
Christy Agnese	✓	At-Large			

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9 **Also in attendance:** Ronda Roaring, Jon Reis

10 **Meeting Agenda**

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 12 October STPB Meeting Minutes
 13 Privilege of the Floor
 14 Chair's Report – Rick Adie
 15 Staff Report – Tom Knipe
 16 CVB Report – Bruce Stoff
 17 Membership and Bylaws Committee –Lynette Scofield
 18 **ACTION** – Recommend appointment of new STPB members
 19 Finger Lakes Wine Center REPORT and DISCUSSION - Christy Agnese
 20 Ticket Center Ithaca REPORT and DISCUSSION – John Spence
 21 Planning & Evaluation Committee REPORT – Ken Jupiter
 22 AirBnB legislative resolution REPORT – Will Burbank
 23 Community Celebrations Grant Review Committee
 24 **ACTION** – approve proposed modifications to the grant guidelines, evaluation criteria, and
 25 application process
 26 Nominating Committee Report – Anne Kellerman
 27 Ag & Culinary Tourism Task Force update – Rita Rosenberg-Barber, Ethan Ash
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30 **The meeting was called to order** at 3:07 PM.

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 32 **Privilege of the Floor** – Ronda Roaring spoke on the importance of the inclusion of students in tourism
 33 funded events. She asked members of the STPB to be more aware of whether there are elements that
 34 encourage student and family participation when going through the grant application process.
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36 **Chair's Report** – Rick Adie reported on the Trailhead Dedication on November 6th which was a joint event
 37 that focused on the opening of the last trail head of the Cayuga Waterfront Trail and the recognition of two
 38 Tourism Partner Awards presented to Tony Damiani and Jeff Christen with the HEDW conference in 2013.
 39 Amanda Mott was also presented with an award for the New York State Veterinary Conference of 2013.
 40 Rick Manning was congratulated for his efforts with the trailhead at Stewart Park. Rick Adie noted the
 41 heartfelt email from Sandy Stein regarding the kind words spoken on behalf of the late Stuart Stein.

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Staff Report – Tom Knipe announced that the bids for the final phase of the Cayuga Waterfront Trail came in under budget with construction scheduled to begin in March and a completion date in September. The Cayuga Nature Center received \$1,250,000 from two separate grants and had received letters of support from the Strategic Tourism Planning Board. The Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan is in process and will be moved through the Legislature in early 2015. Room tax is on track to meet the projections of 5% growth for the year. Tom noted that early next year the Tourism Program will need to identify a process for allocating the \$150,000 in funding available in 2015 for Strategic Tourism Implementation. The Legislature has approved both the 2015 STPB grants and budget. The Convention and Visitor's Bureau is working to develop a program evaluation plan that other tourism programs will be encouraged to use to develop and implement evaluation plans in the next year.

CVB Report – Bruce Stoff reported that through working more efficiently this past year, the Convention and Visitor's Bureau is under budget by \$40,000-\$45,000. He noted that part of the savings may have been related to the Ithaca Commons Opening Celebration scheduled for this past fall that was canceled. The event is now slated for summer of 2015. Room revenue according to the STR report is up 9% for October; STR report numbers for November are currently not available. The CVB is in the process of hiring a new marketing coordinator and suggests that members of the STPB share this with their networks for potential candidates. \$30,000 has been awarded by the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council to the CVB for its mobile technological Visitor Services initiative. The project will focus on capturing more than the current 20,000 of the 800,000+ visitors yearly that visit the Visitors Centers. Matching funds from the State this fiscal year are \$61,541 with \$22,000 for regional spending. Bruce noted his nomination as Chair of the Finger Lakes Regional Tourism Council.

Membership and Bylaws Committee – Lynnette Scofield reported that she, Sue Perlgut, and John Gutenberger met in the fall and bring the following recommendations to the board:

- Kelli Cartmill (Sales Manager at the Hilton Garden Inn) – Lodging
- Josh Friedman (Hangar Theatre) – Arts & Culture
- Rita Rosenberg-Barber – Reappointment to the Agriculture seat

Action: Lynnette Scofield's report served as a motion to move the recommendations, seconded by Christy Agnese and passed by unanimous vote. The recommendations will be forwarded to the Legislature.

Finger Lakes Wine Center REPORT and DISCUSSION – Christy Agnese provided a full report which was based in part on interviews conducted regarding the closing of the Finger Lakes Wine Center. Christy asked members of the STPB for questions or feedback on the report. A rich discussion followed with a number of comments from STPB members. STPB Members will be asked to adopt the report at the January STPB meeting. Her report can be viewed in the STPB Agenda packet for the month of December.

Ticket Center Ithaca REPORT and DISCUSSION – John Spence thanked Lynnette Scofield and Steve Hugo on their support and feedback with the report he compiled "Understanding the Closure of the Ticket Center". He noted that his report did not include the interview questions but added that the questions asked were the same as the questions included in the "Understanding the Failure of the Wine Center" report. His report can be viewed in the STPB Agenda packet for the month of December.

Member Comments and Feedback – Members provided a number of different comments and feedback on both reports. The Board will vote to adopt the reports in January and may present the reports to the Legislature at a later date.

Planning & Evaluation Committee REPORT – Ken Jupiter reported on recent policy discussions. Discussions centered on three questions. The Planning and Evaluation Committee has determined that there is a lot of potential in expanding the goal of CVB services to include "additional spending" from those already coming into the market for the colleges, those staying with friends and family, and day-trippers. . Another key element discussed was expanding our understanding of the audiences and delivery methods for Visitor Services to include digital (especially mobile), not just the Visitors Centers. Sales efforts were discussed as needing to be broadened for greater impact outside of the normal range of new meetings and

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99 tours. A noted challenge is the lack of convention space for visitors. Discussions centered on finding ways
100 to increase stays by focusing on college visitors and community assets to draw longer visits. The CVB will
101 be working on creating a final evaluation plan that will include the new policy guidelines to be presented to
102 members of the STPB at a later date. Members are encouraged to send any questions or concerns to
103 Bruce Stoff or Tom Knipe.

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105 **AirBnB legislative resolution REPORT** – Rick Adie reported on the resolution drafted by Tom Knipe and
106 first brought to the Economic Development Committee regarding addressing the issues related to the
107 growth in short-term online rental platforms such as AirBnB. Rick noted the urgency in drafting the
108 resolution as the Tompkins County Legislature requested the resolution be brought to the EDC in order to
109 be presented to the New York State Association of Counties and be presented at the next Legislative
110 session.

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112 Will Burbank went on to report that a goal in creating the resolution was to see if support can be offered at
113 the State level to encourage active compliance with existing laws. He went on to report that although some
114 Members of the Legislature felt it was too early to ask the State for support, the resolution did pass.

115
116 Tom Knipe commented on the media and public interest on the room tax issue. Two workshops will be
117 hosted this week by a group of Airbnb operators to provide information about the room tax registration
118 process and compliance with other local laws. Tom noted his conversation with the Public Policy Manager
119 at AirBnB who will be meeting with us when he visits Ithaca.

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121 **Community Celebrations Grant Review Committee ACTION** – Tom Knipe reported on the two changes
122 made to the application process. The 1st change will be to move the application process online. Other
123 avenues for applying will still be made available to applicants. The 2nd change will allow not-for-profits the
124 opportunity to apply directly without using a municipality as a fiscal sponsor. With no objections, the
125 changes were accepted by the Strategic Tourism Planning Board.

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127 **Ag & Culinary Tourism Task Force update** – Rita Rosenberg-Barber reported on the launch event on
128 November 10th at the Space at GreenStar. She noted the great success and 100 participants and the 300
129 comments received. A draft outline for the Agriculinary Tourism Implementation Plan will be presented at
130 the February STPB meeting. Special thanks went out to Kristy Mitchell for her efforts.

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132 **Nominating Committee Report** – Anne Kellerman reported that she, Ken Jupiter, and Rick Adie have
133 nominated the following slate to be voted on at the Strategic Tourism Planning Board meeting on January
134 21, 2015.

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136 Sue Perlgut – **Chair**
137 Christy Agnese – **Vice Chair**

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139 With this meeting being Rick Adie's last meeting of the STPB, he went on to note some of the challenges,
140 accomplishments and joys of chairing the Strategic Tourism Planning Board and thanked members for their
141 continued support.

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143 With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:20pm. A tour of Coltivare and reception followed.

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145 Respectfully Submitted,
146 Jennifer Turner, Administrative Assistant
147 Tompkins County Planning Department

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149 **Next Meeting Scheduled**
150 Wednesday January 21, 2014