

## Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) Final Meeting Minutes

1 **Date:** May 15, 2024  
 2 **Time:** 3:00-4:30pm  
 3 **Location:** TC3 (170 North Street, Dryden)/Via Zoom  
 4

5 **Attendees:**

Member		Representation	Member		Representation
Brett Bossard	E	Arts-Culture	Steven Stull	P	Arts-Culture
Laura Winter Falk	Z	At-Large	Teri Tarshus	Z	At-Large
Richard Floyd	P	TC3	<i>Megan Barber</i>	P	<i>CAP, Non-Voting</i>
Jeff Golden	Z	Ithaca College	Peggy Coleman	P	Chamber, Non-Voting
Alexis Zaharis Grimm	E	Lodging	<i>Heather McDaniel</i>	P	<i>IAED, Non-Voting</i>
Ken Jupiter	P	At-Large	<i>Frank Doldo</i>	P	<i>Transportation, Non-Voting</i>
Jenna Kain	P	Lodging	<i>Nan Rohrer</i>	Z	<i>DIA, Non-Voting</i>
Doug Levine	P	Arts-Culture	<i>Mike Sigler</i>	A	<i>TC Legislature, Non-Voting</i>
Marian Levy Ware	E	At-Large	<i>Jennifer Tavares</i>	Z	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>
Kelly Makosch	E	Recreation	<i>Michael Miller</i>	P	<i>Associate Member</i>
Rick Manning	A	At-Large	<i>Jon Reis</i>	E	<i>Associate Member</i>
Greg Mezey	Z	At-Large	<i>Chuck Tauck</i>	E	<i>Associate Member</i>
Bethany Parisi	P	Arts-Culture	Nick Helmholdt	P	Tourism Program Director
Barbara Romano	P	Cornell University	Kristin McCarthy	P	County Staff
Monika Roth	Z	Agriculture			

6 **Guests:** Suzanne Smith Jablonski  
 7

8 **Opening Remarks/Changes to the Agenda/Privilege of the Floor** – Vice Chair Doug Levine called the  
 9 meeting to order at 3:07pm.  
 10

11 **Action: Approval of April 2024 STPB Draft Minutes** – The draft April 2024 minutes were approved (moved  
 12 by Steven Stull, seconded by Ken Jupiter) as submitted.  
 13

14 **Vice Chair's Report** – *Doug Levine*  
 15 No report.  
 16

17 **Staff Report** – *Nick Helmholdt*

18 Nick provided highlights from his monthly staff report, which was included in the agenda packet. His report  
 19 covered the schedule for the next rollout of tourism grants and the launch of the County's online room tax  
 20 payment portal. It also provided updates on two NYS 2025 budget items related to funding tourism  
 21 matching grants and sales tax coverage for vacation rentals.  
 22

23 **Presentation: Monumental Women** – *Carol Kammen and Joe Mareane*

24 Joe Mareane and Carol Kammen presented an update on the Monumental Women project, a gift of public  
 25 art honoring women in Ithaca. In 2021, an anonymous donor gifted \$500,000 to create two statues, with  
 26 conditions including the use of a renowned artist, depiction of people who lived and worked in Ithaca, and  
 27 representation of traditionally marginalized or underrepresented groups. A steering committee was  
 28 formed, chaired by Carol Kammen, to oversee the project. Meredith Bergmann, a renowned artist, was  
 29 selected to create the statues, which will depict Frances Perkins and Lucy Brown, representing social  
 30 justice and community activism. The statues will be life-sized, approachable, and part of the international  
 31 "Talking Statue" network. The statues will be placed at Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services (INHS)

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32 headquarters and adjacent to INHS' Breckenridge apartments, with a ceremony accompanying their  
33 unveiling in August. INHS has insured the statues and will apply an anti-graffiti coating. The project aims to  
34 enhance Ithaca's public art and cultural landscape, celebrating the contributions of notable women.  
35

### **Budget Committee: Draft 2025 Tourism Program Budget**

36 Nick led the discussion on the draft 2025 Tourism Program budget. The committee developed the budget  
37 over several meetings, aiming for a balanced approach. He shared that room tax is forecasted to stabilize  
38 and possibly decrease slightly in 2025. The discussion touched on the budget's impact on room tax,  
39 reserves, and expenses, including funding for the airport and various programs. Feedback and comments  
40 are welcome, with a deadline to submit to Nick as soon as possible. The Q&A session that followed covered  
41 various topics, including airport funding, marketing strategies, low-cost carriers, and reserve allocations.  
42  
43

### **Member Announcements**

44 Members shared news and events of interest, including updates from the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra,  
45 Triphammer Arts, Cherry and Kitchen Theatres, CCETC Plant Sale, Ithaca Reggae Fest, Downtown Ithaca  
46 Alliance's summer concert series and sidewalk showcase, and more. Additionally, it was reported that the  
47 downtown Ithaca Farmers Market will return to Dewitt Park, Music in the Hollow is celebrating its 20th  
48 anniversary, and the Spring Writes literary festival was a smashing success. The gathering concluded with  
49 everyone expressing their gratitude to Richard for hosting and wishing him well.  
50  
51

52 **Adjournment** – Vice chair Doug Levine adjourned the meeting at 4:13pm.