

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
Final Meeting Minutes – April 17, 2019**

1 **Date:** April 17, 2019
 2 **Time:** 3:00-4:30pm
 3 **Location:** Tompkins County CVB/Chamber of Commerce, 904 E. Shore Drive, Ithaca NY
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Attendees:

Name	✓	Representation
Brett Bossard	P	Arts-Culture
Kelli Cartmill	P	Lodging
Laura Winter Falk	P	At-Large
Josh Friedman	P	Arts-Culture
Ken Jupiter	P	At-Large
Connie Kan	P	At-Large
Katie Kutz	P	At-Large
Doug Levine	E	Arts-Culture
Rick Manning	E	At-Large
Mike Mellor	P	At-Large
Cara Nichols	P	Ithaca College
Todd Parlato	P	At-Large
Barbara Romano	P	Cornell University
Monika Roth	P	Agriculture
Sue Stafford	P	TC3
Baruch Whitehead	P	Arts-Culture
Scott Wiggins	A	At-Large
Andy Zepp	E	Recreation
<i>Martha Armstrong</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>TCAD, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Peggy Coleman</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>

Name	✓	Representation
<i>Gary Ferguson</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>DIA, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Anna Kelles</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>TC Legislature, Non-Voting</i>
<i>John Spence</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>CAP, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Jennifer Tavares</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Matthew Yarrow</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Transportation, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Ethan Ash</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Jim Brophy</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Erica Frenay</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Henry Granison</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Theresa Hollister-Ball</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Carol Kammen</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Michael Miller</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Jon Reis</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Wylie Schwartz</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Nick Helmholdt</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Staff</i>
<i>Kristin McCarthy</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Staff</i>

8 **Guests:** Ronda Roaring
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10 **Opening Remarks/Changes to the Agenda** – The presentation by Julia Mattick from the
 11 Tompkins County Workforce Development Board was rescheduled for June. In its place, Nick
 12 Helmholdt reported on the work of the Strategic Tourism Plan Steering Committee.
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14 **Privilege of the Floor** – Ronda Roaring updated the group on her plans for a waterfowl migration
 15 festival.
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17 **Approval of the March 2019 STPB Meeting Minutes**

18 **Action:** Brett Bossard moved approval of the March 20, 2019 minutes. Laura Winter Falk
 19 seconded. Motion carried.
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21 **Chair’s Report – Kelli Cartmill**
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23 An ad-hoc wayfinding committee is forming. Anyone interested in joining should contact Kristin
 24 McCarthy and she will inform Kelli. (Laura said she would like to participate.)
 25

26 **Staff Report – Nick Helmholdt**
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28 John Spence released an RfQ for the Taughannock Giant public art installation. Nick gave a quick
 29 overview of his April 2019 staff report, highlighting first-quarter room tax numbers.
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CVB March Monthly Report – Peggy Coleman

Peggy was absent due to illness. Jennifer Tavares reported that Peggy helped coordinate and attend a sales mission to Albany and did some advocacy work while there as well. Peggy wanted to make sure everyone has the May 10th opening of the Tompkins Center for History and Culture (TCHC) marked down in their agendas. The Downtown Visitors Center has moved into the TCHC building and is open to the public.

Update: Tourism Capital Grant Panel – Martha Armstrong

Martha Armstrong thanked Ken Jupiter for chairing the grant review committee and other STPB members for serving on it as well. The committee evaluated 12 applications asking for a total of \$600,000, but only had \$200,000 in available funding and spent at least 12-15 hours to review these applications. Two projects were denied funding, and the rest received between 15-80% of their original request. In closing, several committee members thanked Martha for her leadership.

Action: A motion was made by Brett Bossard, and seconded by Mike Mellor, to recommend the 2019 Tourism Capital Grant funding awards. Motion carried.

Report: Planning and Evaluation Committee – Ken Jupiter

Ken updated the group on the work of the Arts and Culture Subcommittee, which has been working diligently over the last several months to revise guidelines for the Arts and Culture Organizational Development (ACOD) grant program. The new ACOD guidelines have been evaluated by the Planning and Evaluation Committee and are now ready for consideration by the full STPB. The overarching aim of the subcommittee was to simplify the ACOD grant application and open the program up to smaller and more diverse applicant organizations.

These guidelines would be part of a one-year pilot, which would be re-assessed at the end of that time. Under the pilot program, which is designed to be more competitive and points-oriented, the maximum grant award would be \$35,000, or 10% of the budget, and the minimum would be \$4,000. In addition, protections would exist for current ACOD grant recipients, with funding never to be at less than 90% of the previous year's award.

Action: Baruch Whitehead made a motion to recommend the proposed changes to the ACOD Grant program as part of a one-year pilot. Josh Friedman seconded. Motion carried. Brett Bossard abstained.

Strategic Tourism Plan Steering Committee – Nick Helmholdt

Before the start of Nick's report, print copies of the 2018 Tourism Program Annual Report were distributed to members.

Nick updated the group on the activities of the steering committee since its inception in August 2018. Most recently, the committee has drafted a preliminary table of contents along with lists of aims and focus areas. The committee is looking for other STPB members to help flesh out content for the latter, in particular sports, waterfront, and niche (e.g. wellness, cannabis tourism). At their next meeting, the committee plans to look at a few destinations comparable to Ithaca in demographics and amenities, including State College, Pa., Ann Arbor, Mi., and Athens, Ohio. Committee is hosting a stakeholder meeting with former grant recipients on April 22 to solicit their thoughts and recommendations and will be holding a focus group in the near future with recent

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82 graduates of the GIAC Hospitality Employment Training Program. Final results from the Visitor
83 Profile Study should be available by early to mid-summer. The committee hopes to have a draft
84 plan ready for public comment in December 2019.

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86 **Member Announcements**

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- 88 • Finger Lakes Environmental Film Fest was a great success, with 42 screening events over five
89 days, and 1,300 people in attendance.
- 90 • Spring Writes Literary Fest takes place May 2-5, and the Finger Lakes Pottery Tour will be held
91 May 11-12.
- 92 • Josh Friedman launched a new website for his consulting business,
93 www.fingerlakesnonprofit.com.
- 94 • Cornell is hosting the National Science Olympiad May 29-June 1.
- 95 • Tompkins Festivals held a series of event planning workshops, with an average of 20-25
96 attendees per day.
- 97 • Both Cornell and Ithaca College have had many prospective students and their families visit
98 campus lately.
- 99 • Ithaca College is hosting a “family immersion” weekend, July 19-21, to familiarize incoming
100 students and their relatives with the broader Ithaca community.
- 101 • “Movies in the Park” is gearing up for Friday nights in August. The State Theatre will serve as
102 the rain location except on the weekend of the Woodstock Festival.
- 103 • The Chamber of Commerce launched the “Live in Ithaca” website.
- 104 • Baruch commented on how communication between event organizers at local colleges and the
105 greater area community might be strengthened even further, citing the recent production of
106 “Considering Matthew Shephard” at Ithaca College as an example of a lost opportunity to
107 attract more of the public.
- 108 • In late May TCAT will start Saturday service for Route 22, which makes 4-5 trips per day from
109 downtown Ithaca to Taughannock and Buttermilk Falls State Parks during the summer.
110 Weekday service will start in late June.

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112 Chair Kelli Cartmill adjourned the meeting at 4:32 p.m.