

Cayuga County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2025, Via Zoom

Present: Erin Katzker, Kate Grindstaff, Jacob Hamilton, Amber Gansert-Dagnesi, Kari Terwilliger, AnnaMarie Vukmanovich, Stephen Selvek, Diana Plue, Doug Dello Stritto, Aileen McNabb-Coleman, Mike Riley, Jackie Schnurr, Meg Goloub, Kate Pelkey, Brian DiBernardo

Staff: Lynne Sweet, Noah Howard, Karen Kuhl, Dawn Lubaszewski, Claire Dunlap

Absent: Laura Hahn, Ahna Wilson

Excused: Kristen Lunkenheimer-Slocum

Presiding Officer: E. Katzker

Secretary: A. Vukmanovich

The meeting was called to order at 8:32 am by E. Katzker

I. Approval of Minutes

The August minutes and the special meeting minutes were presented for approval. One line needed verbiage clarification for Lynne Sweet.

A motion to approve the September Minutes, with the one correction and Minutes from August 20, 2025 Special meeting was made by A. Gansert-Dagnesi, seconded by J. Schnurr. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

II. Treasurer's Report (D. Dello Stritto)

We are on budget with our expenses and no anomalies or surprises. Yet, we did want to let the board know that we over projected the 2025 occupancy tax and therefore Karen has identified a set of projects to hold until we know the total impact.

A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by A. Gansert-Dagnesi, seconded by Diana Plue. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

III. Committee Reports

a) Executive (E. Katzker):

Courtney Casper has accepted the position of Executive Director. She will begin work on September 29, 2025, and have about a month to work with Karen through the transition.

The county legislature proposed to change the occupancy tax law, retaining 25% instead of the current 5%. The changes to the law did not pass. J. Hamilton expressed concern for the future when this is brought to a public hearing again for a vote. He pointed out that some of the legislators did not have confidence in the data proving the return on investment. K. Kuhl said that the strategic plan's recommendation of quarterly reports to the municipalities will help with this.

(b) Audit and Finance (A. Gansert-Dagnesi):

There are some projects that will stay on hold until we know the amount of the next occupancy check

(c) Advocacy (K. Grindstaff):

Charlene Tarver has accepted the contract for \$30,000 to work on the incubator/accelerator for non-profit organization's financial sustainability

A motion to approve the committee reports was made by K. Terwilliger and seconded by A. Gansert-Dagnesi. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

IV. Marketing (C. Dunlap):

Claire highlighted from her report that The Culturalist campaign: Make it Count Season 2, did well. 1.4 million impressions 87% video completion rate. That is outstanding across any industry. Group Black Online Video Partnership, which is a myriad of different outlets that gave us just over 300,000 impressions and a 94% video completion rate. Video on YouTube had almost 600,000 impressions. 64% video completion rate, which is still great, considering you get the little skip button. Sweet Treat Trail's fall giveaway is underway, ending on the 15th of October. We already have over 640 entries which is outstanding, considering the last few times we've tried to do a sweepstakes mail-in, we got 5. Claire also thanked the board for their support during her time working at the tourism office.

V. Public Relations (N. Howard):

Noah reported that there is a group FAM for Underground Railroad Month for four nationally known travel writers. One of our placements was in Sheen magazine about local artist Arthur Hutchinson and his Harriet Tubman mural. Noah published his article in The Citizen called Into the Woods. It was an article promoting fall trail use at Emerson Park, Fillmore Glen, Owasco Flats, the Sterling Nature Center, which reported a lot of good feedback.

VI. Marketing and Executive Director (K. Kuhl):

Karen reported that the STR report is no longer available as it has quadrupled in price. Other data is available from other sources. It needs discussion to determine what data the BOD desires to be reflected here. The EDA sub-tourism grants have both come to an end. The Wheel the World initiative is finishing up soon. The landing page for the region should be going live shortly. A Canadian sentiment report has reaffirmed that communications and relationships with Canada are still very tenuous. This is one of the reasons our occupancy is underperforming from our projections. Karen went on to spotlight the partners page on our website. Dawn and Lynne will be attending the World Canal Conference in later September and that she will be attending the NYSTIA Conference where she will receive the lifetime achievement award.

A motion to approve the Marketing, Public Relations and Executive Director reports was made by K. Terwilliger and seconded by A. McNabb. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

VI Unfinished Business: None

VII. Announcements:

K. Terwilliger: Small project grant is due Friday

M. Riley: The Seneca will NOT be stopping in Cayuga County

Cheryl Longyear is planning a welcome party for them when it passes by at the Richmond Aqueduct. The nearest stop is Clyde.

E. Katzker: Bonnie and Clyde opens Sept 24th, Oct 15th and 16th. Also, coming up is Rumors, which is a Fleetwood Mac tribute band.

A. Gansert- Dagnesi: two Charcutier classes are coming up. An Adult and a kids class.

M. Goloub: September 27 is chocolate lovers high tea at Northville Arts Center.

At 9:28am E. Katzker called for executive session and K. Terwilliger seconded it. E. Katzker reported that the executive session ended at 9:30am. K. Terwilliger made a motion to adjourn the meeting and M. Riley seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:31am.