

Cayuga County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
December 2, 2025
Via Zoom

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

Staff: Courtney Kasper, Hilary Fenner, Dawn Lubaszewski, Noah Howard, Lynne Sweet,

Absent: Laura Hahn, Diana Plue

Excused: Jackie Schnurr, Kristen Lunkenheimer-Slocum

Presiding Officer: E. Katzker

Secretary: A. Vukmanovich

The meeting was called to order at 8:33am by E. Katzker

I. Approval of Minutes

The November minutes were presented for approval.

A motion to approve the November minutes was made by S. Selvek, seconded by A. Gansert-Dagnesi. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

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

No surprises in financial statements. We will be cutting it close to the budget at the end of the year, which was anticipated and planned for.

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

III. Committee Reports

(a) Executive (E. Katzker):

Legislature Shea asked for 2025 financials and 2026 proposed budget. After discussion with executive committee, we did provide the requested materials.

(b) Advocacy (K. Grindstaff)

The Mix and Mingle event last month with Charlene Tarver went well. We will be sending out an information page to not-for-profits partners with her very impressive resume and creating an application for the incubator program for county nonprofits.

(c) HR (A. Gansert- Dagnesi):

Kate Grindstaff has taken the position as Visitor Experience Manager at NYS ERHC. With this new role, Kate's position on the board comes into question. Therefore, a vote is needed for her to maintain her position on the board. The Seward House Museum reported that they did not have a representative at this time to fill the vacancy. In Kate's new role, she will serve as director for the City of Auburn's Historic and Cultural Sites Commission, therefore representing all historic/cultural organizations including the Seward House Museum.

A motion was made by A. Gansert-Dagnesi to retain Kate Grindstaff on the CCCVB Board of Directors in her new capacity of Visitor Experience Manager at the NYS Equal Rights Heritage Center and seconded by K. Terwilliger. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

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

1) Draft Budget Review (C. Kasper): C. Kasper shared that the changes reflective in the revised draft budget include the approximately 12% increase to health insurance premiums and the estimated award for NYS Matching Funds at \$65,934.

At 8:45am E. Katzker made a motion to go into Executive Session, A. Gansert-Dagnesi seconded the motion. All were in favor. The staff left the meeting. At 8:54 the regular meeting resumed.

A motion to approve the 2026 budget (95% allocation version) was made by K. Terwilliger and seconded by M. Riley, all were in favor, and the budget was approved.

A motion to approve the committee reports was made by K. Terwilliger and seconded by S. Selvek. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

IV. Marketing (H. Fenner)

Hillary provided a comprehensive update on her first month in the Group Sales and Marketing role. She highlighted several key initiatives, including updating a groups magazine to better target bus groups and larger gatherings, submitting a venue proposal for the Association of Public Historians of New York's 2027 conference, and advancing a luxury campaign for the Lakes Regional Tourism Council. Hillary also mentioned her new role as co-chair of the membership committee for NYCA and ongoing work on the 2026 marketing plan, which will be informed by an upcoming marketing audit. She emphasized the importance of strategic marketing improvements, including better integration of LinkedIn with social media and potentially more video content in 2026.

VI. PR (N. Howard):

Noah provided a November update on communications and media outreach, highlighting holiday season pitches, recent media placements for Inns of Aurora and Village of Aurora, and ongoing work on the 2026 Public Relations Plan. Noah also shared plans for future Fam trips, including a Wine Region of the Year Showcase FAM, Go Beyond Outdoors Fam, and a Crow Convention Fam.

VII. Executive Director (C. Kasper):

Courtney presented the Zartico report, highlighting trends in visitor markets, luxury travel, and the continued popularity of food and beverage experiences. She also discussed the success of the Cayuga Cuisine campaign and plans to partner with the Cayuga County Chamber Restaurant Week. Courtney noted strong interest in outdoor experiences and targeted markets like New York City and Philadelphia. She then touched on the need to inform partners about available data resources like Zartico. Courtney then opened the discussion of the short-term rental occupancy tax. The board discussed the Cayuga County Legislature's decision to put forth an opt out of the registry list, with Aileen noting confusion over changing advice and the upcoming public hearing on December 11. Courtney shared that neighboring counties like Seneca are likely opting out due to lack of funding, staffing, and STR companies like Airbnb approaching counties, while Kari emphasized the potential loss of both occupancy and sales tax revenue if they opt out. The group agreed to gather more information from the treasurer's office and regional partners.

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

VI. Unfinished Business (E. Katzker):

Historically the January meeting is cancelled due to the proximity to the holiday.

A motion was made to cancel the January meeting by S. Selvek and seconded by A. McNabb-Coleman. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

VII. Announcements:

- **A. Gansert-Dagnesi:** has two charcuterie classes on December 7 at Quarry Ridge Winery and on Dec 20th at the Prison City Market on North St.
- **K. Terwilliger:** The second survey is open through December 11th, and the third survey comes out on December 12th. Kari also encouraged everyone to stop at the Ward O'Hara museum to see the tree her department put up for the festival of trees.
- **E. Katzker:** Seward House Candlelight Tours are starting. Ugly Sweater Christmas Party tickets are on sale for Dec 17-20th.
- **J. Hamilton:** **Reminder that the 25th anniversary of Christmas in Moravia** is this upcoming weekend. Also, the grand opening of Jacobs business is this Saturday.
- **D. DelloStritto:** Friends of Sterling Nature Center received a grant which will be used for programming and trail work. Friends of Emerson Park will have Paint and Sip on December 14th.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 9:46am by J. Hamilton and seconded by K. Terwilliger. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned.

Approved by AnnaMarie Vukmanovich

Recorded by Lynne Sweet