

Cayuga County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2025, Via Zoom

Present: Erin Katzker, Kate Grindstaff, Jacob Hamilton, Amber Gansert-Dagnesi, Kari Terwilliger, AnnaMarie Vukmanovich, Stephen Selvek, Brian DiBernardo, Laura Hahn, Doug Dello Stritto, Kate Pelkey, Kristen Lunkenheimer-Slocum, Aileen McNabb-Coleman

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

Absent: Ahna Wilson, Ryan Marx, Mike Riley

Excused:

Presiding Officer: E. Katzker

Secretary: K. Lunkenheimer-Slocum

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 am by E. Katzker

I. Audit

Chris Timmons and Tom Lynch from FustCharles LLP presented a report on the 2024 Audit. As a reminder, CCCVB exceeds the threshold of \$1,000,000 and therefore requires a full audit. The Independent Auditors Report reflects an unmodified (also referred to as Clean) opinion which provides a reasonable level of assurance regarding the presentation of the financial statements. Any questions were welcomed; none were asked.

A motion to approve the draft of the 2024 financial statements was made by A. Gansert-Dagnesi, seconded by J. Hamilton. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

II. Approval of April 2024 Minutes and the Special Meeting on April 16th, 2025.

The April 2025 BOD meeting minutes and the minutes from the Special Meeting on April 16th, 2025 were presented for approval. No changes were made.

A motion to approve the April Minutes and Minutes from April 16th Special meeting was made by K. Grindstaff, seconded by A. Gansert-Dagnesi. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

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

D. Dello Stritto thanked K. Kuhl and L. Sweet for doing a great job as is evidenced by the clean audit report. There is nothing surprising in the financial report.

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

III. Committee Reports

a) Audit and Finance:

There has been discussion about where to pull the funds for the Executive Director search. The recommendation from the committee is to simply go over budget in the stipend line rather than eliminating programs to make up the difference. D. Dello Stritto added that historically we could also pull from the reserve account. K. Kuhl mentioned that with the instability in the financial markets the reserve account might be better left untouched. This will go back to the next finance meeting for vote.

b) HR (J. Hamilton):

The new slate of board directors has been distributed to the board:

Meg Goloub - Northville Arts Center – King Ferry, NY
Diana Plue – Sheats & Bailey, PLLC – Moravia, NY

Kyle Meddaugh – One Photo – Fair Haven, NY
Kelly King – Cayuga Works – Auburn, NY
Jackie Schnurr – Friends of Fillmore Glen / Owasco Inlet – Moravia, NY

Starting Own Full Terms

Laura Hahn – Little Yard Farm, Moravia, NY (starting own full term)
AnnaMarie Vuknamovich – Inns of Aurora, Aurora, NY (starting own full term)
Ryan Marx – Hilton Garden Inn, Auburn, NY (starting own full term)

Renewing Terms

Kristen Lunkenheimer-Slocum – starting second term - Lunkenheimers, Weedsport, NY
Brian DiBernardo – starting second term – Turtle Cove, Fair Haven, NY

A motion to approve the new slate of directors was made by K. Terwilliger and seconded by K. Grindstaff. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

The slate of officers was also presented:

Chair – Erin Katzker, Vice Chair – Kari Terwilliger, Secretary – Kristen Lunkenheimer,
Treasurer – Doug Dello Stritto

A motion to approve the new slate of officers was made by A. McNabb- Coleman and seconded by B. DiBernardo. All were in favor, and the motion was approved

c.) Executive (E. Katzker):

At the special meeting that took place on April 14th, 2025, a motion was made to approve Melody Smith Johnsons firm to conduct the Executive Director search. Concerns were expressed about a conflict of interest with hiring Melody Smith Johnson, as she was a current board member. Melody Smith Johnson has since resigned as a board member. Attorney, David Contiguglia, joined the board meeting to consult with the board of directors on the conflict-of-interest concerns. It was D. Contiguglia's statement that given that Melody Smith Johnson followed the RFP process, did not participate in any discussion of the search, recused herself from voting, and resigned as a board member, he is confident that The Board of Directors has faithfully followed the appropriate process. S. Selvek raised concerns during the April 14th meeting but he is now comfortable with hiring Melody Smith Johnsons' firm to conduct the search for an Executive Director.

A motion to approve that the proposal from Melody Smith Johnsons firm to conduct the search for the new Executive Director was made by K. Terwilliger and seconded by J. Hamilton. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

d.) Education (K. Kuhl):

The annual meeting will take place at the Samuel Center in Port Byron on June 3, 2025 at 12pm. The tourism awards will be focused on responsible tourism. The slate of 6 nominees for Sterling Nature Center, Heart & Hands Wine Company, Aurora Inn, Little Yard Farm, Otter Lake Farm & Fiber, and Izzos White Barn Winery. Also, a Frontline FAM has been planned for June 10, 2025, in the North end of the county.

e.) Planning (K. Terwilliger):

Once we get the strategic plan we will reassess the plans for all committees.

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

IV. Public Relations (N. Howard):

N. Howard gave a brief overview of the TAP report (which was sent with packet). Noah reported that we hosted travel writer, Alishia Hamilton, who explored nonalcoholic beverages. Our office secured placements in AARP, Lonely Planet and Matador.

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

Claire Dunlap remains on maternity leave. There is a report, Recite.me, that Karen shared in the packet. Recite.me is a visually impaired aid on our website that reads text as well as descriptions of images among other things. The report tells how people utilize the aid. Another report included in the packet is from Zartico, a research database to analyze data gathered from visitors to the county. It tracks the movements of visitors and where marketing decisions come from. At the NYSTIA conference, it was stated that New York State will not pull back any Inclusive Tourism initiatives. Karen also thanked K. Grindsaff for issuing the checks to the DEI Harriet Tubman Grants recipients. Karen also reported that the office held the Tourism Community conversation with Fair Haven/Sterling area. The Where Community Meets Tourism Event is tomorrow at Emerson Park. We have close to seventy-five participants.

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

VI Unfinished Business: None

VII. Announcements

K. Terwilliger: Matt Pearson from Simple Roast won Rural Small Business of the Year and Robin Long from Long Last won Small Business of the Year.

K Kuhl: A Youth Summit is happening at the Auburn Public Theater right now. Any board member that wants to share with the group is welcome.

E. Katzker: The Rev Theater Company hosted Hotel California last Saturday for two sold out shows. Rehearsals for Jesus Christ Superstar start on Monday and opens May 28th.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 9:40am by A. Gansert-Dagnesi and seconded by K. Terwilliger. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Approved by K. Lunkenheimer- Slocum

Recorded by Lynne Sweet