

Cayuga County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes from February 4, 2025
Via Zoom

Present: Erin Katzker, Kate Grindstaff, Doug Dello Stritto, Jacob Hamilton, Amber Gansert-Dagnesi, Brian DiBernardo, Kristen Lunkenheimer-Slocum, Kari Terwilliger Ahna Wilson, Sara Douglass, Melody Smith Johnson, AnnaMarie Vukmanovich, Ryan Marx, Stephen Selvek

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

Absent: Laura Hahn

Excused: Mike Riley Aileen McNabb-Coleman, Kate Pelkey

Presiding Officer: E. Katzker

Secretary: K. Lunkenheimer-Slocum

The meeting was called to order at 8:32 am by K. Terwilliger

I. Introduction of Nur Asri from Think Place

K. Kuhl introduced Nur Asri from Think Place, the organization that CCCVB has hired to do our 5-year strategic plan. Each board member introduced themselves to N. Asri. This was followed by a brief description of Think Place and an overview of the plans for over the next few months.

II. TAP Final 2024 Report

TAP delivered a recap of the 2024 campaign. Their efforts resulted in 27 key media placements and 29 key social media placements and more than 1.8 billion impressions for all media mentions. The report also described content creation with monthly blog posts, press trips throughout the year, and key placements.

III.

Approval of December 3, 2024 Minutes

The minutes were not included in the packet, they will be included in the March 2025 packet and presented for approval at the meeting.

Treasurer's Report (D. Dello Stritto)

No substantial changes or surprises.

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):

The strategic plan was discussed along with the short-term rental tax that was recently passed. A reminder that the tourism summit is May 7, 2025, at Emerson Park Pavillion. The committee asks that the Board of Directors make this event a priority in their calendar. K. Kuhl added that BOD members are encouraged to bring a resident or two. Also discussed was the DEIA statement as an organization and decided that we do not need to change any of our messaging. The question was asked if the Federal Grants that we participate in would be impacted with the new administration's abolishment of Federal DEI programs. K. Kuhl responded that the two program grants we participate in (Finger Lakes Outdoor Experience and Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway) are state funded, however they may have federal funds funneled through the state. Regardless, if these programs are affected, it will not have an impact on our financials.

b) Education (K. Kuhl):

The committee discussed having the annual meeting in June at the Samuel Center in Port Byron in commemoration of the Erie Canal Bicentennial. Also discussed was a Summer and a Fall FAM, the Tourism Summit in May and Leadership Cayuga.

c) Advocacy and Outreach (K. Grindstaff):

The committee met to discuss and launch the Harriet Tubman DEI grant and had a workshop for those interested in applying. The workshop was also sent out virtually.

d) Human Resources and Board Development (J. Hamilton):

The committee discussed the Wheel of the World (travel accessibility), and the addition of an ex officio member from the Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce. Also discussed was the use of AI and offsetting its environmental impact.

e) Conflict of Interest (K. Lunkenheimer- Slocum):

Nothing to report.

A motion to approve the Committee Reports was made by J. Hamilton and seconded by D. Dello Stritto. All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

IV. Group Sales and Marketing Report (C. Dunlap):

Claire reported that she just joined the sustainability task force with NYSTIA and she will bring up the AI environmental impact if it isn't addressed. Karen and Claire both attended the Future of Black Tourism Conclave. Claire also reported that we have commissioned a poster for the Erie Canal Bicentennial, and she signed us up for a table at the World Canal Conference in October.

V. Public Relations (N. Howard):

Noah reported that we had some great media placements in January. Last week we hosted Evita Robinson, an Emmy award winning travel writer. Evita is the founder of NOMADNESS Travel Tribe. All details are in his report.

VI. Executive Director (K. Kuhl):

Karen reported that the occupancy report once again may not be available in future due to the extreme increase in price of report. Overall, for the year 2024, occupancy increased. The Underground Railroad Consortium is meeting in Syracuse next month. Karen attended the New York Travel and Adventure Show in NYC. Karen is keeping tabs on the new Short Term Rental tax conversations. The Erie Canal Bicentennial strategies include updating and relaunching Treasurers Along the Erie Canal app, the commissioned poster, and a landing page on our website with an events calendar.

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

VII. Unfinished Business:

None

VIII. Announcements:

E. Katzker: Tickets at the Rev Theater went on sale, with Jesus Christ Superstar being the most popular

A. Gansert-Dagnesi: Mackenzie Childs is doing production tours on Monday through Thursday and house tours are on the weekends. Also, Authentically Amber is now a wholesaler for Macenzie-Childs and has a kitchen at White Rabbit Roasting.

J. Hamilton: The Powers Library has a card making workshop on Feb 21 at 10am. The Hamilton Salon has Yoga on Wednesdays at 6pm. Empire State Development is offering a minority and women owned business enterprise certification Initiative.

B. DiBernardo: Fair Haven will host the Ice Drags on Little Sodus Bay. There will be a lot of activities around this event.

A motion to adjourn was made at 9:51am by D. Dello Stritto, seconded by A. Gansert -Dagnesi All were in favor. The motion was approved.

Approved by K. Lunkenheimer- Slocum

Recorded by Lynne Sweet