

**SULLIVAN COUNTY VISITORS ASSOCIATION MINUTES**  
**100 Sullivan Ave., Ferndale, NY June 15, 2010**

**Present:** Roberta Byron-Lockwood, Herb Clark, Phyllis Andrews, Anne Hart, Paul Carlucci, Elaine Giguere, Jill Wiener, Darlene Fedun, Richard Delia, Rick Lander, Barbara Gref, Jim Rafferty

**Absent:** Cliff Ehrlich, Lori Jahn, Deborah Schott, Joe Tinari, Norman Duttweiler, Michele Caltabellotta

The meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

**MINUTES** – The minutes of the April and May meetings were emailed and attached. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Lander and seconded by Delia. Approved.

**FINANCIAL REPORT** – The financial report through the end of May was attached. There was a question regarding the matching funds income (none coming in probably for 2 years) which will be discussed in the updates portion of the meeting. A motion to accept the financial report was made by Delia and seconded by Lander. Approved.

**MEMBERSHIP** – The Membership Report was attached. A motion to accept the new members was made by Wiener and seconded by Gref. Approved

### **UPDATES**

**2010 Travel Guide** – The guide is going out fast. We just received our second shipment of guides from Kenyon Press. 150,000 copies were printed. Jill stated that she has had customers comment on how good the map within the guide is.

**Web Updates** – The stats for last month were reviewed, compared to last year's data and circulated around the table. Comparisons showed that all categories were up over last year except the bounce rate which is down significantly.

**Matching Funds** – Our local matching funds ads are still running. The NYS ESD has stated that there will be no matching funds program for this year or next year. However, they plan to use the funds for their own advertising. The TPA Council will file a law suit if ESD does this because those funds were legislated for the Matching Funds Program. We are working with the county to have their portion (that that is usually used to obtain the state's match) placed with us for a continuation of the local matching funds program which has been very successful. As it stands now, we first supply them with the state's letter showing the amount of our Matching Funds Grant. The county legislature needs to approve a resolution to change the wording so that we can get the funds. Once we do, those dollars will be used to match our member business's amounts for advertising.

[www.catskillshop.com](http://www.catskillshop.com) – We own the web address. We are applying for a \$10,000 grant to help build the site. It will be offered to our members (only) to place their items for sale. We will be using authorize.net (instead of paypal) for customers to charge their orders. The only cost the members selling merchandise on the site will be to offset the cost of the site (web address, design, authorize.net). We will not be charging a commission percentage of each sale.

**Blog Update** – Our blogger has not been doing anything. We also have not paid her for any time she hasn't put in. Ellen Stratton (with Fisher Mears) said she will do it at the same cost. A motion to approve placing the blogging position with Ms. Stratton was made by Delia and seconded by Hart. Approved.

**You Tube & Facebook** – We have two videos up on You Tube. We also have several more that need to be edited and placed on the site. We have 1150 fans on Facebook.

**Virtual Portal** – We are suppose to have a draft of the site today.

**Bus Wrap** – We have been talking to Shortline regarding a bus wrap. We are trying to get our price to be only that of the cost of producing the wrap. The cost will be divided up amongst our member business who what to take part in the wrap.

**2010 Co-op Marketing Report-** The local co-op campaign has many partners. The Trout Parade was very well attended last week, and they think it's because of the extra advertising they received through us. It was pointed out the Thunder was running several ads concurrently which shouldn't be the case. We will talk with them about splitting the ads up.

**Getawaynewyork.com** – The TPA Council bought and redid the site and is now available for accommodation packages to be listed. Herb put up 6 packages last week. We can put as many as we want on the site. All packages must be accommodation packages.

**International Pow Wow** – We did very well this year. We have already sent our literature to interested entities and are now working on packages/itineraries.

**NYS Tourism Update** – State legislators and county representatives are displeased with ESD.

**Sullivan County Cultural Map** – We have started to look at producing a cultural map and will be working with the county's Planning Department on the design.

**Board Retreat** – We are looking at October for the retreat. Darlene will get back to us with dates for it to be held either at Bethel Woods or the CVI building.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**WPDH Promo with Bethel Woods** – There will be 50-60 people coming this weekend as a result of the promo. Darlene asked for packets on the county to hand out to them. We will get them ready.

**Social Media Aspect** – Jim Rafferty has 5 points regarding the social media which he will discuss after the meeting with anyone interested. They are: 1) Travel Planning on the Coasts – social media sites are currently the biggest media tool being used 2) The key is finding the best social media site for your business 3) They are not for P.R. – writing MUST be conversational such as stories or testimonials 4) Find a voice – a young person practiced in this medium is essential 5) Be prepared – stories will become viral and they are usually not the ones that you expect...it's usually the "strange" ones that become viral.

**Kenyon Press** – Barbara recently helped with the Town of Rockland guide which was printed through Kenyon Press. She wonders, since there are many within the county that use them, can we group together to get better prices.

**Natural Gas Extraction** – There was much discussion regarding the drilling, public statements from other county entities, and the possibility of the SCVA releasing a public statement on its stand on the issue. A letter from the SCVA, which was sent out to the Bureau of Oil & Gas Regulation late last year, was distributed to those in attendance. It was decided that we would first update this letter, have it available at Department of Planning meetings, and revisit the issue of condensing it into a public statement at the next meeting.

**Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m. with a motion by Lander and a second by Carlucci. Approved.

**Next Meeting** – Tuesday, July 20, at 9 a.m. in the SCVA Conference Room in Ferndale.