

SULLIVAN COUNTY VISITORS ASSOCIATION MINUTES
100 Sullivan Ave., Ferndale, NY, July 26, 2016

Present: Roberta Byron-Lockwood, Herb Clark, Phyllis Andrews, Richard Glisson, Rick Lander, Scott Conley, Jennifer Grimes, Sims Foster, Alan Rosenblatt, Elaine Fettig, Paul Carlucci, Sonja Hedlund, Elaine Giguere (phone), Danielle Gaebel (Phone), Stacy Cohen (phone)

Absent: Franklin Trapp, Steve Vegliante

Call-In Number: Board members not able to attend a meeting may conference call in (712-432-1500 access code 778746#). Please let us know ahead of time if you will be using this option.

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 a.m.

Minutes: The minutes of the June meeting was emailed & attached. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Glisson and seconded by Foster. Approved.

Financial Report: The Financial Report was distributed last month. The cost for this year's Literature Exchange was less expensive than last year. We received a \$5000 contribution from China City toward the cost of producing the 2016 travel guide. The increase of county payment from bed tax this year is due to an increase of bed tax receipts last year. A motion to accept the financial report was made by Grimes and seconded by Hedlund. Approved.

Audit: Copies of the audit were distributed last month. There was some strong language in the audit, and a response letter is being formulated. A motion to accept the audit was made by Grimes and seconded by Hedlund. Approved

Membership Report: The membership report was attached. A motion to accept the new members was made by Glisson and seconded by Carlucci. Approved.

COMMITTEE TEAMS:

Executive Board – We need a finance person on the Board. George Kinney was asked but he is too busy. Tanya Hahn was suggested. Fettig will check with her. We need hands-on financial support – to be determined. There was a meeting with the county attorney and 3 legislators to discuss: 1) increase the length of our contract 2) are/can we be exempt from an RFP process. We will need to present the county with a budget reflecting percentages as we approach an increase in funding due to the expected increase in bed tax receipts resulting from Montreign. Hedlund suggested that we need to look at various new ways to promote the area as the dollars increase – support new businesses, villages, etc. There should be a sub-committee to create a chart of different ways to address this.

Visitors Center Building Team: Tim Lies is leaving EPR at the end of the year. They are no longer offering funding assistance but will still provide the property. All work will be on us. Senator Bonacic and Assemblywoman Gunther are in support of the project (not financially). We need to figure out ownership of the building and funding. Foster asked “if we no longer have the dollars, should we pull back and concentrate on promotion of the area?” We qualify with the USDA as a public facility. We could also look into IDA funding assistance. If we can't finance the new building then we need to look for a new location.

Bylaws Team: We should hold on the bylaws until we are done with the county contract issue and we need to make sure they have the most current bylaws on file.

Strategic Plan: Most have been addressed. The “took Kit” and employee handbook outline were distributed.

Marketing Team: 1) Website: Foster thinks the prospective new site is a great improvement and we should keep progressing – the current site is up 30% according to Google Analytics. 2) There are several new logo options under consideration 3) Representatives from our PR agency, The Door, were in the county last week and will be doing a story.

NEW BUSINESS

NACL – A NACL presentation, “Courage”, was presented last weekend at Apple Pond Farm. There were over 100 people for each performance.

Tourism Statistics – The numbers from the Oxford Study are out. Sullivan County is showing a nice increase in visitors spending: up 4.4% for 2015 over 2014. We cannot release these figures to the media/public yet.

Pokémon GO – Should we participate in this? Concerns include safety/liability.

Next Meeting – August 23 at 8:30 a.m. in the SCVA conference room.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m. with a motion by Lander and a second by Grimes. Approved.