

## SULLIVAN CATSKILLS VISITORS ASSOCIATION

**Present:** Sims Foster, Tanya Hahn, Paul Carlucci, Paul Ciliberto, Anthony Bruno, Emily Casey, Dan Paradiso, Stacy Cohen, Brian Facquet, Franklin Trapp, Phil Vallone, Jay Quaintance, Shawn Lang, Elaine Giguere, Roberta Byron-Lockwood, Herb Clark, Holly Gassler

**Excused:** Rick Lander, Ariel Shanberg, Jennifer Grimes, Donna Hemmer, Johnny Pizzolato

Sims Foster called the meeting to order at 8:33am

**Minutes:** The minutes from the October Board Meeting were attached. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Dan Paradiso and seconded by Paul Carlucci, all in favor. Motion carries.

**Financial Report:** The Financial Report was attached. A motion to accept the financials was made by Emily Casey and seconded by Shawn Lang, all in favor. Motion carries.

**Membership Report:** The New & Renewing membership report was attached. A motion to accept the New & Renewing Members was made by Stacy Cohen and seconded by Paul Carlucci, all in favor. Motion carries.

**Finance Committee:** Tanya Hahn provided a summary of P&L and the Budget v. Actual Report.

The PPP Loan may be forgiven.

There is a voucher that has been submitted to the County in accordance with our contract.

Travel guide income for advertising has diminished due to the pause in the travel economy.

SCVA gave a 20% discount (due to COVID-19) to advertisers in good standing.

SCVA is working on the 2021 budget, it will be sent to all voting members of the board for approval.

**Executive Committee:** Due to COVID-19 the SCVA cannot hold an annual meeting in person therefore it has been decided that we will do a pre-recorded video for all members to watch on December 16<sup>th</sup>. It will include highlights from 2020 & what is upcoming for 2021 from Sims & Roberta, complete with a virtual tour of our new offices by Franklin. The SCVA has created a Member Appreciation Package for all members to pick up & enjoy while watching the virtual event.

**Nominating Committee:** Five SCVA Board positions are opening for the 2021 year. All incumbents wish to remain, two other candidates have expressed interest. Incumbents and new candidates' info were shared with the present Legislators to approve. After approval of the slate by the County, the candidates' names & bios will be sent to membership to vote.

**Marketing Team:** We are in post-production for the fall TV ads to promote Catskills Confidence through the eyes of tourism-business employees. Ads will run across OTT, SCVA website, and SCVA social media channels. There will be a total of 4 spots, Participants included: Resorts World Catskills, Eagle River Guides, Roscoe Beer Company, Hilly Acres Farm, Northern Farmhouse Pasta and Villa Roma.

We have had a 12% increase in website visitors. Social media followers are now up to 62k – with 700 new followers.

SCVA is currently working on:

- NYS Vacation Planner
- The Republican Fall Ads & Editorial
- Food & Travel Magazine
- Layout of the 2021 Travel Guide
- Website images reflect fall activities – soon will reflect Wintertime

The Governor released the Tourism Economics Oxford Study – The Sullivan Catskills ranked the highest in NYS for tourism growth at 12.2%, the next highest in NYS was the Bronx at 8.3% & Kings County at 7%. 2018 was Sullivan Catskills record high of 14.8% increase.

Since 2009 tourism spending has increased 85% from \$311,670,000 to \$577,900,000 in the 2019 numbers.

Sales tax has increased over 82%- contributing over \$35,700,000 in sales tax to Sullivan County. Without tourism, each resident would have to pay an additional \$2407, annually to be provided the same services.

**New Business:** The SCVA is promoting Wintertime-Fun Time which includes Peace, Love & Lights at Bethel Woods Center for the Arts and community events throughout our Sullivan Catskills. The SCVA is seeking to afford point of purchase of products made within our Sullivan Catskills.

**Old Business:** It has been approximately five weeks since the County Legislative Executive Committee had put on the agenda that they were looking to cancel the SCVA contract. Three legislators sat down with Sims, Brian R. & Tanya to hash out the desired changes to the SCVA contract. Since then, Sims has not been successful in setting up a follow up meeting with the legislature to discuss the desired changes.

**Chairman's Report:** If you are on the air with Bold Gold, tout the Tourism Economics Oxford Study numbers, as a board member, we should be immensely proud of the report.

Roberta attends the Legislative meeting the first Thursday of the month at the Government Center. In support of the SCVA, Sims asks that you one or two board members attend with her each time to stay informed, please reach out to Roberta with the date that you are available to attend.

**Next Meeting:** December 22, 2020.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:59am with a motion by Stacy Cohen and seconded by Dan Paradiso all in favor. Motion carries.