

# **Tourism Committee Meeting**

January 13, 2016 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM  
Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce  
143 Caverns Road, Howes Cave, NY 12092

## **In Attendance**

**Voting Members:** Christopher Guldner (*Chairman*), Jessica Loden-Kirby (*Advertising subcommittee co-lead*), Jamie Casterlin (*Vice Chair, Events subcommittee co-lead*), Chris Kenyon, Jess Goblet, Robert Strong (*Advertising subcommittee co-lead*), Ron Ketelsen, Lin Quinn

**Tourism Coordinator:** Donna McCabe

- 1) Meeting opened at 6:35pm
- 2) Guest Speaker Lori Solomon – President of Van Tourism Specialists.

Ms. Solomon runs a tourism consulting business. She develops and sells new packaged tours. Lori spoke about her business and promoting/marketing tourism in Schoharie County. She would like to set up new tours in Schoharie County and asked the committee for suggestions of businesses/places to be part of themed tours—particularly beverages/breweries and farms, farm-to-table restaurants. The Beverage Trail was suggested as a jumping off point. **ACTION ITEM: Donna will look up the categorized list of businesses/establishments in Schoharie County and send to Lori.**

- 3) Approval of draft minutes from last meeting. **Ron moves to approve. Jamie seconds. All in favor, none opposed, so moved.**
- 4) Election of Officers for 2016

Lin nominated Chris Guldner as Chair, Jamie Casterlin as Vice Chair, and Jessica Loden-Kirby as Secretary. Ron seconds. **Lin motions to accept ballot of nominees and direct the Secretary to cast a unanimous vote in favor of Chris Guldner for Chair, Jamie Casterlin as Vice Chair, and Jessica Loden-Kirby as Secretary. Ron seconds. All in favor, none opposed, so moved.**

- 5) Tourism Position – Discuss vetting process and review/interview panel
  - Chris Northrop has received 35+ applications/resumes. Discussed forming a selection committee. Volunteers for the committee are Chris G, Jamie, Ron, and Scott F.
  - Discussion ensued regarding the vetting process. Leave to discretion of selection committee or create a triage system? Chris G suggested: Can they do the job?; Will they do the job?; Will they fit in with the organization? Base this on background and accomplishments within the places they have worked. Select a top five to interview.
  - **ACTION: Selection Committee will meet Thurs, 1/21, at 8pm to select candidates to interview.**
- 6) Travel Guide Thumb Drive – Circulation
  - Lin reports that the Ad Committee is doing the selection of photographs to use for the Travel Guide.

## 7) Committee Reports

### a) Advertising subcommittee update:

Rob reports that he is no longer a co-lead for the Ad Sub-Committee. Lin gave report.

- Getting ads for Travel Guide is in process. Brief discussion ensued regarding specific business that have or have not committed to ads.
- Sub-committee is working on a generic commercial and book ends for Schoharie County Tourism matching partner program advertisements. Scott F reminded everyone that significant changes to ad campaigns may require approval of the full Committee. **ACTION: Need to set up a joint meeting with the Advertising and Re-Brand Subcommittees. Committee needs to review and approve new ads if there are changes in verbiage or other significant changes.** Anything presented at the Tourism Mixer (1/28) will only be conceptual.
- Planning Tourism Mixer on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 6pm at the Apple Barrel to announce the Matching Partner Program and soft release of the new re-brand and Travel Guide.

### b) Events subcommittee update

Jamie's report:

Subcommittee went over criteria for grants. Two grants will be offered. \$5,000 for new events/infrastructure and \$10,000 which is matching funds eligible for event advertising.

### c) Rebranding subcommittee update

No report given.

### d) Tourism update:

Donna's report:

- 2016 Budget was approved at the last meeting.
- Agreement with County needs to be renewed by August.
- Meeting with Otax board on 1/25, 1pm. Chris G will give a report. Others are encouraged to attend.

## 8) Open Discussion

### a) Finance Committee - TABLED

### b) Website Development - TABLED

### c) Brochure Distribution

What brochures do we send to travel shows? We send out the general Schoharie County Tourism brochure, the Beverage Trail brochure, the Haunted History Trail brochure. Discussion ensued about what is included on the Haunted History Trail brochure and website. Concerns were raised that businesses that bought in did not get what they thought they were going to get. Donna will research.

9) Adjourn. **Jamie moves to adjourn. Rob seconds. All in favor, none opposed, so moved.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm

Next meeting February at 6:30pm at the Chamber Office.