

Tourism Committee Meeting

APPROVED MINUTES

February 11, 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 (Secretary, 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

Other Guests: Mohamed Paligh, Ken Wortz, Scott Ferguson, Mario Roefaro, Linda Holmes

- 1) Meeting opened at 6:35pm
- 2) Approval of draft minutes from last meeting. **Ron moves to approve. Rob seconds. All in favor, none opposed, so moved.** Approved minutes from December also distributed. Discussion of approved minutes being published onto Chamber website. **ACTION ITEM: Donna will get previously approved minutes published onto Chamber website.**
- 3) Guest Speaker Ken Wortz – Schoharie County Beverage Trail (SCBT)

Mr. Wortz gave an update on the SCBT and they plan to occasionally report to Schoharie County Tourism (SCT). Points included: SCBT is full year ahead of schedule. There are currently 4 producers. SCBT launched in June 2015. Brew Central reported \$15,000 worth of coverage for SCBT launch that reached from Troy to Berkshires to Hudson Valley. Since launch Brew Central has assisted in coverage of SCBT in at least ½ dozen articles- some in national publications. About 10,000 rack cards (co-branded with SCT) distributed in year one. SCBT has operated a shirt giveaway program which is acting like walking advertisement. SCBT reports their best event was Family Farm Day. KyMar reports over 1,000 visitors for that event. SCBT created 7 new jobs for Schoharie County residents. SCBT is starting a signage program this Spring to include signage on I-88. SCBT appreciates letter of support from SCT for grant application. Mr. Wortz continued with an update on their grant process. SCBT grant was rejected round 1 based on event with SCT as main point of issue. Reasoning was grant was designed to promote beverage producers. SCBT will reapply for grant in round 2 minus event part of application. Mr. Wortz then gave an overview of Brew Central and stressed that it's about tourism and not producers. Finally, Mr Wortz provided an overview of which businesses are part of SCBT and detailed what the requirements are to be producer members or Friends of the Trail.

- 4) Guest Speaker Mohammed Paligh – Mockup Tourism Website

Mr. Paligh gave an update on the website and explained that he will be trying to create widgets that can be used across various websites. Mr. Paligh presented on wireframe, listing pages and different options of how the website can look based on information from Kurt Pelton (Marketing) and also website trends in the travel industry. Discussion ensued and it was agreed to table further discussion for a Rebranding Sub Committee meeting. Discussion of a timeline occurred. **ACTION: Rebranding Sub Committee is to present a final version of the website at the March meeting for Committee approval.** Rebranding Sub Committee

has set a meeting date of Friday, February 19 at 9am at SUNY Cobleskill to continue discussions and development with Mr. Paligh.

5) Tourism Coordinator Update

Chris Guldner updated that over 50 applications were received for the Tourism Coordinator position. The Selection Sub Committee narrowed down those applications to a short list of 3 applicants for 1st round interviews. From those 3 interviews, 2 applicants have been chosen for second interviews that will occur Monday, February 15. Chris reports that the Tourism Coordinator is expected to start around the end of February.

6) Committee Reports

a) Advertising subcommittee update- Jessica Loden Kirby

- Jessica reported that she has drafted a letter of support for 2015 Matching Partner Program (MPP). This letter is to be used to garner support and buy-in for MPP 2016 and to be given to the Board of Supervisors at the next quarterly update by SCT in March.
- Advertising Sub Committee held a joint meeting with Rebranding Sub Committee this morning (Wednesday, 2/10). Jerrine Corallo from Schoharie Area Long Term (SALT) was a guest of this meeting and presented on SALT's grant for web development. SALT may also be helping facilitate an undergrad volunteer for SCT to use to assist with information collection about businesses for use in the Travel Guide and Website listings.
- MPP Mixer at the Apple Barrel had a great turnout with a lot of new faces. Jamie Casterlin sent a follow up email to attendees this morning.
- Creation of a new audio track "jingle" for commercials has been contracted under Kurt. Jingle is currently in production with a rough cut being available to the Advertising Sub Committee for review at their next meeting.
- Final photo selects will happen after the photo release contract has been reviewed and approved by John Lavelle, legal counsel for Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce (SCCoC).
- TV commercials and print ads will be given to the Tourism Committee for final approval after development of all pieces.
- Update on Travel Guide: John Sagendorf has sold over \$30,000 in ads so the SCT Travel Guide will now be at least 32 pages. Kurt is working on getting as many pages as possible within the budget. Will have rough draft of Travel Guide to Advertising Sub Committee in March so final draft can be given to Tourism Committee to allow time for review, approval and printing by beginning of May.

b) Events subcommittee update- Jamie Casterlin

- Update on 2016 SCT grant. Currently grant is on SCT and SCCoC websites. Emails have gone out to various organizations that may be interested in the grant. Applications are due by March 1.

- Update on I Love NY (ILNY) Matching Funds (MF) eligible parts of grant regarding radio. It was agreed that some radio can be done as part of grant program as long as it doesn't exceed the \$500 that the awardee is pledging and all other advertising would be matching funds eligible. Scott agreed. It was stressed that Kurt would design the advertising program with the awardee to reflect this.

c) Rebranding subcommittee update- Lin Quinn/ Scott Ferguson

No further report given after presentation by Mr. Paligh.

d) Tourism Coordinator update: Donna McCabe

- At Occupancy Tax Board meeting SCT was asked to come to Board of Supervisor's next meeting for quarterly update. This will occur at the March meeting now (instead of February as originally planned). March 18 at 9am at Schoharie County offices.
- Asked by Deb Taylor to remind SCT Committee about Meet Your Legislator Day- March 1 at State Offices.
- Donna brought forward information about booth at Sunshine Fair. Discussion ensued about this booth being worthwhile with regards to time and cost. **ACTION: Donna to follow up with Becky and get feedback about her experiences from this booth in 2015 and her opinion as to whether it should be continued in 2016.**
- Also reported that Kris Northrup is now taking care of bookkeeping services for SCT in house. Working after administrative hours so can accurately keep track of time.

7) Open Discussion

a) Presentation by Linda Holmes- Mayor, Village of Cobleskill

- Ms. Holmes presented to SCT about 4th of July in Cobleskill. The usual groups that have planned 4th of July festivities in Cobleskill no longer want to organize. She wanted to stress that she feels this is a county wide event and something SCT can capitalize on. There are some volunteers that are still willing to help with 4th of July 2016 plans. They are looking for a sponsor regarding insurance needs (policy holding) and fireworks costs. All money previously fundraised for 4th of July fireworks. She has sent emails to other Villages regarding this situation. Discussion ensued. Ron Ketelson suggested this becoming more of a County wide event with a tie into Sharon Springs planned 4th of July parade. Lin stated she would bring back this concern and situation to Middleburgh Area Business Association (MABA) regarding a tie in with 1st Friday. Suggestions by Scott and Chris to discuss this with Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce (SCCoC) board; their feeling is if Cobleskill can keep self-funded for 2016 then SCT, SCCoC, SCBT may be able to take this on for 2017. Suggestion by Ron to still coordinate events and cross promote regardless of who organizes 4th of July fireworks. Ms. Holmes to report back to Chris with CPI's response to consider at next SCCoC board meeting.

b) Finance Committee

- Chris reported there has been some discussion about this outside of regular committee between he and Scott. Finance Committee suggested including SCCoC President, SCT Chair, SCT Co Chair, Tourism Coordinator and Treasurer. Chris suggested creating Treasurer role and vote on someone to fill that seat at the next SCT Committee meeting.

c) Lin resigned from her Voting Member seat. She will email a formal letter of resignation to Donna. Will still engage with Advertising and Rebranding Subcommittees.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm

9) Executive Session.

a) **Chris moves for Executive Session. Rob seconds. All in favor, none opposed, so moved. 9:32pm**

b) **Chris moves for conclusion of Executive Session. Rob seconds. All in favor, none opposed, so moved. 9:37pm.**

Next meeting March 9 at 6:30pm at the Chamber Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Loden Kirby