

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)  
Meeting Minutes – January 2016**

1 **Date:** January 20, 2016  
 2 **Time:** 3:00-4:15pm  
 3 **Location:** CVB  
 4  
 5

**Attendees:**

Name	✓	Representation
Anne Kellerman	✓	At-Large
Ian Golden	✓	Recreation
Ethan Ash	✓	Arts-Culture
John Gutenberger	✓	Cornell
Lynnette Scofield	✓	Lodging
Kelli Cartmill	✓	Lodging
Rita Rosenberg	✓	Agriculture
David Blake	✓	At-Large
Andy Zepp	✓	At-Large
Stephen Nunley	✓	At-Large
Steve Hugo	✓	At-Large
Ken Jupiter	✓	At-Large
Mike Mellor	✓	At-Large
Anne Gossen	✓	Arts-Culture
Sue Stafford	✓	TC3

8

Name	✓	Representation
Christy Agnese	E	Ithaca College
Sue Perlgut	✓	Arts-Culture
Josh Friedman	✓	Arts-Culture
John Spence	✓	CAP, Non-Voting
Dwight Mengel	✓	Transportation, Non-Voting
Gary Ferguson	✓	DIA, Non-Voting
Jennifer Tavares	E	Chamber, Non-Voting
Martha Armstrong	✓	TCAD, Non-Voting
Will Burbank	✓	TC Legislature, Non-Voting
Beverly Baker		Associate Member
Carol Kammen		Associate Member
Jon Reis		Associate Member
Tom Knipe	✓	Staff
Jennifer Turner	✓	Staff

**Also in attendance:** Sarah Imes, Sales Manager,

9 CVB; Christine Lam, TCAD

10 **Meeting Agenda**

- 11  
 12 1) Nominating Committee – Sue Perlgut  
 13 2) December STPB Minutes  
 14 3) Privilege of the Floor  
 15 4) Chair's Report  
 16 5) Staff Report – Tom Knipe  
 17 6) CVB/Chamber Monthly Report – Jennifer Tavares  
 18 7) STPB Member Goals – Group Discussion  
 19

20 **The meeting was called to order** at 3:01 PM.

21  
 22 **Nominating Committee** – Mike Mellor made the motioned to elect Anne Gossen as Chair and Christy  
 23 Agnese as Vice Chair. Rita Rosenberg seconded the motion. The slate was approved by unanimous vote.  
 24

25 **December 2015 STPB meeting minutes were approved** with no changes.  
 26

27 **Privilege of the Floor** – Martha Armstrong introduced Christine Lam who is currently assisting with tourism  
 28 related work at Tompkins County Area Development. Andy Zepp circulated the Finger Lakes Land Trust  
 29 newsletter, noting Mark Twain's Quarry Farm that their group has protected in Elmira.  
 30

31 **Chair's Report** – Anne Gossen opened her report by giving an update on Christy Agnese's efforts with the  
 32 Higher Education Tourism Committee, noting the first meeting will focus on the scope, purpose and  
 33 committee composition. The conflict of interest policy was discussed, with an emphasis on transparency.  
 34 Members were given the opportunity to fill in their form and were given the opportunity to ask questions.  
 35 Tourism Board Member Roles and Responsibilities were discussed and the slate of topics, and monthly  
 36 meeting locations suggestions were welcomed. Draft committee assignments were circulated.  
 37

38 **Staff Report** – Tom Knipe reported on the history of room tax revenues through the fourth quarter of 2015,  
 39 and noted that actual revenues have been within less than 1% of our budget revenues for the past three  
 40 years. We were within \$5,000 of projections in 2015. He will not be recommending any modifications to the

## Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) Meeting Minutes – January 2016

41 budget but that a full report with the covering 2015 year end expenditures, and current reserve balances will  
42 be provided to the Budget Committee this spring. Through the efforts of both Tompkins County  
43 Department of Finance and County Attorney's office, all lodging properties registered with Tompkins County  
44 are current on their room-tax payments. Tom went on to report that the room-tax law passed at the  
45 Legislature meeting on January 19, and will be recorded with the Department of State, followed with the  
46 new definition of hotel that will remove any previously indicated thresholds, and change the word "building"  
47 to "facility". Discussions with AirBnB on the upfront collection of room-tax are ongoing. . The Outdoor  
48 Recreation Tourism Taskforce has had two meetings, and will be working on their plan over the next six  
49 months. A full-day Agritourism workshop (funded by a USDA grant) will be held on March 8, at Coltivare.  
50 The workshop will include keynote speaker Laura Ten Eyck from Indian Ladder Farms, and will include  
51 information on progressions with farming elements, interests, resources, financial education, hosting, and  
52 farm stays. Tom reported that the Heritage Tourism Plan is progressing, and the network will meet next  
53 week and look at proposed revisions based on public comment, and will then be presented to the STPB in  
54 February for adoption.. The Beautification, Signage, and Public Art plan is moving forward and will also be  
55 presented in at the STPB meeting in February. Tom discussed the Draft Annual Work Plan, included in the  
56 agenda and provided background efforts and plans for support, and asked members to provide feedback.  
57 The FTP site was discussed as a repository for Board documents that will be accessible to all board  
58 members. A link with the username and password will be circulated.

59  
60 **CVB/Chamber Monthly Report** – Sarah Imes, Sales Manager at the CVB circulated copies of the January  
61 monthly report; a full report will presented to the Board at the meeting on February 17.

62  
63 **STPB Member Goals** – Anne Gossen asked members to break into small groups to go over the previous  
64 year's goals and to go over possible board goals for the current year.

65  
66 **Group 1** – Anne Kellerman, Lynette Scofield, Stephen Nunley, David Blake, and Sue Perlgut's group  
67 commented on the progress with the ongoing work of the board, noting the recent efforts with agricutinary  
68 work that is in progress. She went on to discuss the importance of a conference space with a capacity of  
69 more than 250. Members of their group suggested implementing a day of activities that would involve  
70 partnerships between local businesses, and or bus tours. Finger Lakes tourism groups were mentioned as  
71 an outlet for ideas for marketing strategies. It was suggested that the benefits for each of the tourism  
72 initiatives should include measurable proof of the strategy and the realistic markets captured.

73  
74 **Group 2** – John Spence reported on the discussion between their group that included input from Rita  
75 Rosenberg, and Andy Zepp. The importance of the data within the "Chmura study", as well as the Strategic  
76 Tourism 2020 plan was discussed. Continuation of the efforts related to conference center and agricutinary  
77 plan were noted efforts of interest. The complexity of the policy criteria for evaluation was noted, and the  
78 monetary threshold was questioned as to whether it would serve as an effective indicator for the  
79 determining factor for an organization's success.

80  
81 **Group 3** – Ethan Ash, Ian Golden, and Steve Hugo discussed enhancing the demographic diversity of the  
82 STPB and suggested establishing a cultural seat as well as establishing affiliations with groups that  
83 represent various demographics in order to enhance awareness of opportunities available through the  
84 tourism program. Public outreach was noted as another way to promote awareness of the programs  
85 available.

86  
87 **Group 4** – Martha Armstrong reported on her groups' discussion that included Gary Ferguson, and Kelli  
88 Cartmill. She went to report on the importance of the "Chmura study" as information to be used to refresh  
89 board focuses moving forward. Demographic and topical that would include age, race and diversity factors  
90 noted topics that may be covered by the study. The importance of the visitor's center and higher education  
91 working group were discussed, and questions centered on the best approaches in determining key players  
92 that could help enhance tourism and increase revenue. Offering more voice on the Board to hotels and  
93 restaurants was noted as a potential idea moving forward.

94  
95 **Group 5** - Tom reported on his group's discussion that included Jodi LaPierre, Dwight Mengel, and Ken  
96 Jupiter. In addition to maintaining momentum on strategic board initiatives started in 2015 and the higher  
97 education tourism task force, he suggested a goal for later in 2016 and into 2017 could be for the STPB to

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)**  
**Meeting Minutes – January 2016**

98 evaluate the budget in light of opportunities being identified by the strategic planning and evaluation work  
99 that is being done, as well as the results of the next visitor profile study. He also responded to a question  
100 about one of the 2015 goals about how the possible long range strategy could focus on marketing activities  
101 to visitors already in the county in order to encourage overnight stays and additional spending, as opposed  
102 to focusing exclusively on marketing to attract new visitors from outside.

103  
104 Members discussed the possibility of allowing an organization to use a portion of funding to be used for  
105 audience and organizational growth strategies to become less reliant on support from the tourism program.  
106 Budgeting and strategic priorities alignment was further discussed as priority areas of focus. Diversity,  
107 increased return on investment to increase an organizations funding, the separation of Arts & Culture, and  
108 the comparison of new information related to recent committee work in order to come up with a 4 year plan  
109 were discussed.

110  
111 Anne Gossen wrapped up the discussion, noting the upcoming discussions on communications plan, and  
112 CVB director.

113  
114 With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:42pm.

115  
116 Respectfully Submitted,  
117 Jennifer Turner, Administrative Assistant  
118 Tompkins County Planning Department

119  
120 **Next Meeting Scheduled**  
121 February 17, 2016

122  
123