

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) Final Meeting Minutes

1 **Date:** Jan. 17, 2024
 2 **Time:** 3:00-4:30pm
 3 **Location:** Via Zoom

4

5 **Attendees:**

Member		Representation	Member		Representation
Brett Bossard	P	Arts-Culture	Teri Tarshus	P	At-Large
Laura Winter Falk	A	At-Large	<i>Megan Barber</i>	E	<i>CAP, Non-Voting</i>
Richard Floyd	P	TC3	Peggy Coleman	P	Chamber, Non-Voting
Jeff Golden	E	Ithaca College	<i>Heather McDaniel</i>	P	<i>IAED, Non-Voting</i>
Alexis Zaharis Grimm	P	Lodging	<i>Vacant</i>	N/A	<i>Transportation, Non-Voting</i>
Ken Jupiter	P	At-Large	<i>Nan Rohrer</i>	A	<i>DIA, Non-Voting</i>
Doug Levine	P	Arts-Culture	<i>Mike Sigler</i>	A	<i>TC Legislature, Non-Voting</i>
Marian Levy Ware	P	At-Large	<i>Jennifer Tavares</i>	P	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>
Kelly Makosch	P	Recreation	<i>Michael Miller</i>	P	<i>Associate Member</i>
Rick Manning	P	At-Large	<i>Jon Reis</i>	E	<i>Associate Member</i>
Greg Mezey	P	At-Large	<i>Chuck Tauck</i>	P	<i>Associate Member</i>
Barbara Romano	E	Cornell University	Nick Helmholdt	P	Tourism Program Director
Monika Roth	P	Agriculture	Kristin McCarthy	P	County Staff
Steven Stull	P	Arts-Culture			

6 **Guests:** Chris Stephany, Jenna Kain, Bethany Parisi, Suzanne Smith Jablonski, Chris Stephany

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8 **Opening Remarks/Changes to the Agenda/Privilege of the Floor** – Chair Brett Bossard opened the
 9 meeting at 3:07pm, welcoming all attendees. There were no privilege of the floor requests. New members
 10 Bethany Parisi and Jenna Kain reintroduced themselves.

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12 **Action: Approval of December 2023 STPB Draft Minutes** – The draft December 2023 minutes were
 13 approved with minor edits (moved by Marian Levy Ware, seconded by Greg Mezey). Motion carried.

14

15 **Chair's Report** – *Brett Bossard*

16 Brett touched on committee assignments for the upcoming year. He expressed optimism about the
 17 tourism sector's performance and mentioned the upcoming opening of the downtown conference center,
 18 for which he had recently taken a hardhat tour. Brett encouraged members to volunteer locations for
 19 future meetings and referenced the draft summary schedule in the agenda packet.

20

21 **Staff Report & Q4 2023 Room Tax Report** – *Nick Helmholdt*

22 Nick Helmholdt presented updates on new member orientation, committee sign-ups, member
 23 recruitment, the need for budget committee volunteers, and the recent grant cycle. He noted a 15%
 24 increase in room tax for the first quarter compared to last year, with both occupancy and rates showing
 25 improvement. Nick highlighted the need for alignment between revenues and expenses for 2023 and plans
 26 to process a budget adjustment to bring 2023 unspent funding into 2024. Greg Mezey shared that the
 27 Housing and Economic Development Committee will meet the first Wednesday of the month, 3:00-
 28 5:00pm. Questions were raised about allocating more room tax toward the fund balance or reserve,
 29 average grant awards, and availability of content for sharing out grant opportunities via member social
 30 media networks and elsewhere.

31

32 **Action: Re-Nominate 2024 Officers**

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33 Nick clarified a procedural matter regarding the reappointment of the chair and vice chair. He noted that
34 although the board had voted during the December meeting to reappoint Brett as chair and Doug as vice
35 chair, a revote was necessary today. This was due to a stipulation in the bylaws, which specify that such
36 appointments must occur during the January meeting.

37
38 Monika Roth, acting on behalf of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of officers for a vote.
39 Nominations were solicited from the floor, but none were given.
40

41 Action: Monika Roth made a motion, which Steven Stull seconded, to reappoint Brett Bossard 2024 chair
42 and Doug Levine 2024 vice chair of the Strategic Tourism Planning Board. Motion carried.
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Membership & Bylaws Committee

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45 On behalf of the committee, Doug Levine gave an update on the at-large vacancy, mentioning that four
46 interviews had been conducted so far. However, the committee postponed their decision due to a member
47 not being able to attend the meeting. He also extended a warm welcome to new members Bethany and
48 Jenna. Brett thanked the committee for their efforts, and group asked questions about the interview
49 process.
50

CVB Q4 2023 – Peggy Coleman

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52 Peggy Coleman introduced herself to new members and provided updates on various aspects of the CVB's
53 work in the latter part of 2024, including the streamlined agricultural grants process. She highlighted the
54 marketing team's efforts, such as hosting media throughout the fourth quarter, and noted that the CVB's
55 website exceeds industry standards in user engagement. Additionally, she mentioned a partnership with I
56 LOVE NY for statewide networking and direct sales to the travel market, as well as collaborations with
57 TrailFinders in the United Kingdom, which has been recognized as a leading producer of overnight stays in
58 New York State. Coleman also discussed booking itineraries for school groups during winter and other slow
59 periods, along with preparations for the Ithaca Loves Teachers event.
60

Member Announcements

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62 Members shared items of community interest. These included a Cayuga Chamber Orchestra fundraiser and
63 the Bob Marley Birthday Tribute Show for the New Roots School's Cayuga Wetlands Restoration Project.
64 Monika offered to host an STPB meeting at the Ithaca Farmers Market in the summer. Richard Floyd
65 announced that TC3 has hired a new executive chef for Coltivare, and Rick Manning provided an update on
66 the Stewart Park splashpad.
67

68 **Adjournment** – Chair Brett Bossard adjourned the meeting at 3:43pm.