

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

1 **Date:** May 17, 2023
 2 **Time:** 3:00-4:30pm
 3 **Location:** Coltivare

4

5 **Attendees:**

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

6 **Guests:** Chris Abernathy

7

8 **Opening Remarks/Changes to the Agenda/Privilege of the Floor** –Chair Brett Bossard welcomed
 9 everyone to the meeting at 3:08pm. No changes to the agenda.

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11 **Action: Approval of April 2023 STPB Draft Minutes** – The draft April 2023 minutes were approved
 12 (moved by Kelli Cartmill, seconded by Steven Stull) with one edit: Doug Levine adjourned the
 13 meeting, not Brett Bossard.

14

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

16 Brett reported on recommended budget adjustment, which was approved by County Legislature.
 17 He thanked members for attending recent legislature meetings. Group talked about the
 18 importance of reporting periodically to legislators and educating them on work of STPB, as well as
 19 County Attorney’s ruling on budget adjustment.

20

21 **Staff Report/Visitor Profile Study Update**– *Nick Helmholdt*

22 Nick gave an update on Jason Sidle’s departure from TC3 and hence STPB; efforts to recruit new
 23 grant panelists through a diversity, equity and inclusion lens; and contract execution for
 24 Community Celebrations, Tourism Advancement, Arts and Culture Organization Development
 25 (ACOD), and Tompkins Outdoors grants. He also reported on release of request for proposals for
 26 Visitor Profile Study and opening of Strategic Tourism Implementation and ACOD Stabilization &
 27 Recovery Fund grant rounds following the County Legislature’s approval of budget adjustment.

28

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29 **Report: Draft 2024 Tourism Program Budget** – *Kelli Cartmill, Budget Committee*

30 Kelli provided an overview of the proposed 2023 Tourism Program budget. Her report and the
31 subsequent discussion covered budget committee deliberations, room tax revenue projections,
32 grant funding, room tax reserves, placemaking and wayfinding, and more topics. Budget
33 Committee several meetings. Room tax revenue projections -- \$4.4 million dollars.

34

35 **Action:** Ken Jupiter made a motion, which Doug Levine seconded, to recommend the draft 2024
36 Tourism Program budget for approval by the Tompkins County Legislature. Motion carried.

37

38 **Recognition for Gary Ferguson’s 20+ years of service to Ithaca and Tompkins County**

39 Group thanked Gary for what he’s done over the years for the community and recognized his
40 impressive body of work. Brett read a proclamation in his honor, Nick presented him with a
41 certificate of appreciation, and photos were taken. Doug thanked him for his mentorship and
42 others shared their experiences collaborating with Gary, highlighting his entrepreneurial spirit and
43 ability to get people to the table and compromise. Gary thanked everyone for the accolades.

44

45 **Member Announcements**

46 Members reported on events and items of interest to the community. These included an industry
47 bootcamp for new wine staff offered by Experience the Finger Lakes, productions at Tripphammer
48 Arts, Reggae Fest, Ithaca Farmers Market 50th Anniversary celebration, Discover Cayuga Lake
49 sunset cruises, Benefit the State variety hour at the State Theatre (Peggy graciously offered
50 tickets), Taste of the Finger Lakes at Ithaca Farmers Market, Cooperative Extension Tompkins’
51 Spring Plant Sale, the Special Olympics (volunteers needed), and more. They also shared news
52 about commencement and reunion weekends at Ithaca College and Cornell, addition of Stewart
53 Park on the National Register of Historic Places, passage in NYS budget of \$5 million in funding for
54 historic theaters (includes \$100K for State Theatre), regional tourism brochure exchange and
55 travel guide release, a bill sponsored by NYS Assemblyperson Lea Webb to allow bed-and-
56 breakfasts to serve alcohol on the premises, and more.

57

58 **Adjournment** – Chair Brett Bossard adjourned the meeting at 4:05pm.