

ROOST Board Meeting Notes
Tuesday, May 12, 2015

Board Attendees:

Mike Beglin	Beth Hill
Ed Finnerty	Marc Glavin
Bob Hockert	Melinda Little
Cris Lussi	James Lemons
Charlie Cowan	Laura O'Brien (via phone)
Chris Ericson	
Jill Cardinale	

Staff:

Jim McKenna
Carol Joannette
Kerry Shannon Blinn

Guest:

John Huttlinger

Called to order 5:30 p.m.

I. Adoption of Agenda

- Moved by Beth Hill. Seconded by Mike Beglin. All in favor.

II. Approve Minutes

- Moved by Melinda Little. Seconded by Ed Finnerty. All in favor.

III. CEO Report & Departmental Updates - Jim McKenna

- Occupancy Tax report came today for March (5/12/15)
 - May be a few oddities in report. Overall, year-to-date is about even.
- Jim McKenna was appointed to Private Rental Review Committee for Occupancy Tax collections
- Essex County attorney says existing hotel tax law covers vacation rentals already, and does not need more legislation.
- Overview of Ironman bid process
 - We submitted a bid on behalf of Lake Placid on Thursday, April 30th. Site visits to short-listed cities will occur in May. Award will happen in June. Public announcement of Host City will occur in July.
 - Looking to utilize existing MarketNY grant to help us cover the Host Fee. (MarketNY grant was awarded for Empire State Winter Games to Go Global.)
 - If Ironman chooses Lake Placid, it affects existing Kiwanis group coming in, and we will work that out. (Kiwanis originally had wanted a different date, and their choice was based on room rates. We're confident it will be resolved.)
 - The event would be two races. Approximately 2,000 women would race on Saturday, and 2,500 men on Sunday.
- Franklin County Occupancy Tax passed Assembly, is currently in Senate.
 - Senator Little has been pursuing it.
- Regional Council update
 - Upstate Revitalization Fund: \$1.5 billion to be split into three awards of \$500 million. Would be paid over five years.
 - Council is really looking into "big ideas" and asking "what can change the economic picture?"
- Board requests to change staff updates to sentence or two summary

IV. Financials

- Status of Auditor RFP - Charlie Cowan
 - We received two bids. (Hoffman & Eells; Alexander Edwards & Co.)

- Large difference in cost between the two firms (Alexander Edwards is less expensive.)
- Both firms have a good list of clients.
- Alexander Edwards has a lot of experience with non for profits.
- James Lemons: Alexander Edwards is the auditor for the Lake Placid Center for the Arts and we are very pleased with him.
- Charlie Cowan recommends that the board accept the proposal from Alexander Edwards & Co.
- Motion to accept Charlie Cowan's recommendation, and contract with Alexander Edwards & Co. Moved by Melinda Little. Seconded by Ed Finnerty. All in favor.
- Kerry Shannon Blinn will draft a letter to Hoffman & Eells declining services, for Charlie Cowan to approve and sign.
- Numbers from Meister Accounting - Charlie Cowan would like to see them in a more user friendly format for the board.
 - Will look to do that with John Huttlinger moving forward.
- Contracted CFO - Charlie Cowan
 - ROOST needs more robust financial oversight that it has had in the past as it grows.
 - Charlie Cowan and John Huttlinger have discussed pertinent information and format
 - John Huttlinger will report to Jim McKenna as a contracted CFO
 - John Huttlinger will attend board meetings

V. Marketing Report - Carol Joannette

- Carol Joannette is resigning, effective the end of June.
- Handout provided with marketing information and statistics.
- Carol Joannette was looking to create for something consistent to use between meetings.
- Marketing Highlights
 - We had a set goal of at least 500 spins on AdirondacksUSA.com within a year, and we have achieved that goal. (717 spins)
 - The people in Hamilton County have been very supportive, and have been helping aggregate the site by being active.
 - We had a LBGT campaign to focus on mid-week winter.
 - TupperLake.com is not including in site stats as it's year over year, and it has not been a year for Tupper Lake's
- Cris Lussi: Can we change the subject line in those mass emails? Members need to know there is an action item.
- Working on getting all of our sites to be mobile compliant (non mobile friendly sites are ranking lower in Google searches)
- Michelle Clement went to Empire State Tourism conference, and reported that a lot people were talking about ROOST.

VI. Readdress Committees - Mike Beglin

- Executive; Finance; Marketing

VII. Regional Reports

- Lake Champlain Region - Beth Hill
 - Champlain Area Trails has expanded to 44 trails within our region! Information on LCR hiking trails is one of the most frequently requested items! CATS 2nd Annual Hamlet to Hamlet-Grand Hike takes place this Saturday. They also have expanded their programs and will include Medicinal Plants, Wild Edibles and Gourmet Mushroom hikes this summer.
 - 28 Fishing Tournaments are calendared for this upcoming season within the LCR
 - The Crown Point Bird Banding Association once again will be in operation at the Crown Point State Historic Site from May 9-23. This is their 40th year. Over the years they have captured and banded 100+ different species during the spring on this migratory flyway. They report participation has increased dramatically particularly with area youth and school groups.

- Adirondack Architectural Heritage currently has 9 summer tours planned within our region showcasing our agriculture, history, and recreational opportunities as well as our unique architecture.
 - Our region has caught the attention of the Lake Champlain Chapter of the national Antique and Classic Boat Society! They are planning a “rendezvous” at the recently upgraded Port Henry Marina this summer. This will take place in conjunction the annual Moriah-Stock, a concert series that plans to hold their event on the same day on the adjacent Port Henry Pier
 - The LCR is also becoming a key site for antique and classic car buffs. 5 Classic Car Shows are planned throughout the region this summer. Many report participation and attendance continues to expand annually.
 - We will have a new lodging property in the Town of Moriah opening very soon, the Velo Inn at Edgemont, that plans to cater specifically to cyclists and group tours exploring Lake Champlain Bikeways, particularly the Adirondack Coast Bikeways.
 - Ticonderoga Chamber along with other area groups including Fort Ticonderoga continues working with ROOST on Tourism Destination Master Plan for 5 Towns, 3 counties, and 2 regional economic development councils.
 - Crown Point Chamber has merged with Ticonderoga Chamber of Commerce.
 - Ticonderoga Chamber along with Ticonderoga Montcalm Street Partnership and the Town of Ticonderoga are gearing up for 2015 events including Farmers Market, Best Fourth in the North, Car Shows, etc.
 - TACC is celebrating 90 years of service in 2015. We will be have a number of new events (National Small Business Week participant, 90th Birthday Bash, etc.) as well as projects/initiatives we will be working on during 2015 (Support Local Campaign, Marketing/Branding, TACC Taglines, etc.).
 - Pride continues to press forward on plans for the Sawmill in Ticonderoga. Discussion were held last month with Fort Ticonderoga regarding the operations of the Saw Mill and integration of the Saw Mill into Fort Ticonderoga’s interpretive/historic trades program. FT helped with research for the design.
 - Town of Ticonderoga expanding fishing tournaments as well as add additional tournaments to support our shoulder seasons.
 - Ticonderoga Area Natural Food Coop expected to open this summer; location tbd.
 - Fort Ticonderoga opened for season on May 9 – New this year: Boat Tours on Lake Champlain (3 times daily; evening cruises; charters); Heritage Breed Animals – cattle and chicken; Highlighting story of 1756: Front Line of New France; 4 new exhibits; 2 new gardens, new behind-the-scenes daily and evening tours; numerous special events; Mount Defiance experience; Canoe rentals; new family tours, and more!
 - Fort Ticonderoga’s Board approved 12 year plan; pre-campaign work-underway; continuing to seek funding for major project development.
 - Fort Ticonderoga and Amtrak partnership launching “rails to wheels” beginning Memorial Day weekend. Fort Ticonderoga will offer shuttle service to all Amtrak passengers to the museum campus and Best Western Hotel.
 - Fort Ticonderoga launches a Graduate Fellowship Program in June 2015 attracting graduate student residents from across country for immersive residential program; funded in part by NYSICA.
 - Fort Ticonderoga preparing for 3 week long residential teacher workshops this summer funded in part by NEH.
- High Peaks Region - Jim McKenna
 - Recently presented Retail Survey results, which are on ROOSTADK.com
- Saranac Lake - Melinda Little
 - Daff-fest went very well
 - Soap box derby was very popular
 - “Canvas, Cake & Cocktails” - painting party at Harrietstown Town Hall, was very well received
 - Round The Mountain Canoe & Kayak Race coming up
 - Hotel projects: Lake Flower property needs to meet with planning board; Hotel Saranac has been quiet on updates

- Schroon Lake Region - No representative
- Whiteface Region - Bob Hockert
 - Work on the NY Route 86 bridge in the center of town is ahead of schedule and will reopen, at least partially, by June 1.
 - Work on the Whiteface Memorial Highway is also on schedule. Paving of the lower section is presently underway.
 - Sale of the Birch Tree Lodge Motel in the center of town formally closed this past winter and the building is currently undergoing extensive renovations. The new owners are avid biking enthusiasts, and are renaming the facility Cadence Lodge.
 - Work continues slowly but steadily on the renovation of the Green Mountain Lodge. A recent tour and inspection by the Supervisor Preston and Planning Board chair Peters indicates the work being done is quite exceptional.
 - The sale of the Ledge Rock, which originally fell through this winter, has been finalized.
 - AuSable River Two Fly is coming up this weekend, May 15, 16 2015.
 - Wilmington Whiteface Bike fest is on track for June 5, 6, 7 2015.
- Tupper Lake - Adam Boudreau (not present, no report)
- Hamilton County - Laura O'Brien
 - INLET:
 - IABA has been having some very productive meeting/socials. There is definitely an interest and excitement with this group again and that is exciting. You can see whether have been up to at www.goinletny.com
 - Northern Lights tells me they will be bringing hot dogs and grilled cheese back to their ice cream stand.
 - June 13 will be the 20th anniversary of the Black Fly Challenge. The race starts in Indian Lake this year and ends at Fern Park in Inlet where there is a big party with live music by the band Showtime, food & more! The next day Fern Park will host the BFC Mountain Bike Rodeo & Races. They brought this family fun event back last year and are excited to do it again. There will be a kids race, circuit race & hill climb. The rodeo events will include a slow race, balance race, barrel races, log pull & longest wheelie. www.blackflychallenge.com
 - The summer concert series is set www.inletconcertseries.com.
 - New event for 2015 will be a renaissance festival at Fern Park on August 11 & 12. Tim Parker is the contact for this event, which sounds like fun. Tim is responsible for the Mayfaire on the Green that takes place in Holland Patent.
 - LAKE PLEASANT:
 - The First Quarter of 2015 Winter ended up being a cold season that had some adverse effects on ski and snowmobile visits. The conditions were excellent at Oak Mt., as well as our extensive County wide system of Snowmobile Trails for those hardy enough to brave the temperatures. This seems to be a common problem throughout the entire Northeast.
 - The 2 most exciting developments for our region this Spring are SPARC.....our Speculator Piseco Area Regional Council.....which will be assisting our communities in developing Events and promoting a better business climate, as well as an exciting lodging project proposal!
 - After 9 months of meetings and pre application wrangling, our Village Planning Board voted 4-2 to issue a Conditional Permit for the Lake Pleasant Lodge. This 80 room Hotel with Restaurant, meeting facility, and indoor pool will replace an 11 room motel and Restaurant property that has been on this site for 50+ years.....allowing for the first project of this type in Hamilton County in 60 years. While the permit only allows the project sponsor to seek investorsand we are a long way from construction.....the prospect of a true ANCHOR STORE on our Main Street is invigorating to the business community.
 - As Summer approaches, we all anticipate a busy Tourist season.....and welcome our new Acting Director of Tourism & Eco Dev...Christy Wilt !!

- The first Event from SPARC is a reprise of our colorful Speculator Fly In , welcoming both Seaplanes to our many lakes and traditional fixed wings to Piseco Airport. From June 19 - 21, this fun and educational celebration of Adirondack Flyers is a great way to Kick Off Summer
- Franklin County - Jim McKenna
 - We have been moving forward with our work on this
 - GolfMalone.com has gone live
 - Working on VisitMalone.com
- Discussion:
 - Jill Cardinale: I see so many empty storefronts in Lake Placid, is there some type of push that we can do?
 - James Lemons: There are for-profits partnering with non-profits. LPCA going into a storefront for 4 months, and it creates a win/win situation for both businesses.

VIII. Open Issues

- Spring Retreat - We will plan for Fall
- Public Relations Committee
 - Local communications
 - Cris Lussi, Sarah Wilson
- Reservations System
 - Try to have for next meeting
 - We have an aging reservations system that is not meeting everyone's needs and wants
 - Pull together committee for a meeting - Cris Lussi, Sarah Wilson, Mike Beglin, Jill Cardinale

IX. New Business

- Set date for Executive Committee Meeting - Mike Beglin is working on this

X. Adjournment

- Moved by Chris Ericson. Seconded by Melinda Little. All in favor.