

Destination Marketing Corporation for Otsego County (DMCOC)
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes - Thursday, November 14, 2019
2 to 4 pm, National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum, Main Street, Cooperstown

Attending:

Jim Miles, Chair

Bill Michaels, Vice Chair

Ken Meifert, Treasurer

Camilla Morris, Secretary

Meg Kennedy

Tara Burke

Todd Kenyon

Suzanne Olson

Mark Mosconi

Cassandra Harrington, DMCOC – Executive Director

Jacqueline White, DMCOC – Otsego County Travel & Trade Manager

Laiken Whittredge, DMCOC – Administrative Assistant

Absent: Hope Kabir

Chair, Jim Miles called the *Regular Board Meeting* to order at 2:03 pm

• **Chairman's Report by Jim Miles**

- Smith's Travel numbers are not in, but area has done considerably well for the fall. Overall, supply is up, and the demand is strong. Occupancy percentage may go down, but revenue will be up.
- Non-traditional, such as AirBnB, VRBO, Homeaway... are doing extremely well according to the rooms report summary. Another report will be received at the end of the year.
- Otsego County Board of Representatives approved the proposed renewal of our contract extending through December 31, 2022.

• **Proposed New Board Members – by Jim Miles**

- Schoharie County: Alicia Terry, Maureen Lodes, & April Islip.
- Vote to determine their term.
 - Bill motioned to appoint all three for 2 year terms to align with the contract.
 - Ken seconded.
 - Motion passed unanimously.

• **September, 12, 2019 Minutes**

- Correct location from Jordan Cottage, 20 Chestnut Street, to National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum, Board Room.
 - Meg Kennedy motioned to approve minutes with the corrections.
 - Cam Morris seconded.
 - Motion passed unanimously.

• **Financial Statement – by Ken Meifert**

- No notable changes. Still on target to come in close to the budgeted net income for 2019.
- Dipped into reserves at the end of 2018 to cover the cost of starting the new website. Budget was modified for this, so the reserves were replenished.
- Projected to have a little over \$1,300 in surplus that will go back into the cash reserves.
 - Bill motioned to accept financial statement.
 - Meg seconded.
 - Passed unanimously.

- **2020 Budget – by Ken Meifert**
 - DMCOOC Overall.
 - Budgeted with a net income of \$2,168
 - Otsego Co. Budget
 - Total advertising & marketing spend increased from \$490,000 to \$537,500. This is due to Schoharie County picking up part of the administrative expenses.
 - Schoharie Co. Budget
 - Schoharie county budget includes a projected income of \$26,000 for the Private Partner investment that may be difficult to achieve.
 - Meg Kennedy motioned to approve 2020 budget.
 - Todd Kenyon second.
 - Motion passed unanimously.

- **Schoharie County Update – Cassandra Harrington**
 - The \$26,000 Private Partner investment will likely be a paid enhancement within the new VisitSchoharieCounty.com – the site is being built with this in mind. Everyone would be represented on the website by their business category, in alphabetical order. They then will be offered a “pay to play” option to appear at the start of the list or in the website images.
 - Erynne attended the Schoharie Valley Association, Occupancy Tax Committee, Historical, Planning, Promotional, Youth and OFA Committee meetings to give update on the Program
 - Secured photo & video files from Kurt Pelton.
 - Met with Julie Pacatte of Schoharie Economic Enterprise Corporation. (S.E.E.C.)
 - Lodging crisis in Schoharie County. Julie is taking on the project of trying to fix that, with the green light to Erynne to help with their efforts.
 - Several of Schoharie County lodging facilities are renting their rooms out to the state for use by the homeless population.
 - Established Schoharie County Marketing Committee, consist of 12 tourism business owners.
 - Distributed web briefing to Marketing Committee to get their thoughts on the Schoharie County Brand. Their feedback will help BBG&G to create a rough redesign of VisitSchoharieCounty.com. Goal launch date is March 2020.

- **Update on Office Activities – Cassandra Harrington**
 - Registered with OneGroup Risk management Center to complete mandatory trainings, like Anti-Harassment, online.
 - Working on revisions to the employee handbook
 - Received award for 2018 marketing campaign from the NYSTIA Annual Meeting in Auburn.
 - Brainstorming hosting a FAM for tour operators in September 2020
 - Looking to do 2 days, 3 nights. Half a day in Schoharie County.
 - Possibly including a mini marketplace at the Otesaga.
 - Relying on the Sales team at the Hall of Fame for guest list, since they have a stronger relationship with tour operators.
 - Suggestion to do Sunday – Tuesday as opposed to Friday and Saturday when traffic is heavy for businesses. Suggestion of doing the third day as an option, instead of 3 solid days.
 - Cam offered to donate transportation.
 - Mark offered to help with lodging.
 - Did fall photo shoot with Crafting A Brand.
 - Presented at BOCES Career Day at SUCO on Tourism Marketing.

- Attended the Ontario Motor Coach Association in Ottawa, CA. Had 13 appointments with operators. More success with tour operators not CA based.
 - Hosted Partner Enrollment Presentation. Approx. 30 people attended, mostly new faces.
 - Brought lure guides to The Shipping Room. Only 5 cases remain of the 2019 guide, 35,000 were initially printed.
 - Renewal of contract with Otsego County through 2022. Secured letter designating DMCOOC as official TPA, required for Matching Funds application, which part II due Friday, November 15th.
 - Hired Laiken Whittredge as Administrative Assistant and converted board room to shared office space for Admin Assistant and Schoharie County Travel & Trade Manager.
- **Otsego Co. Marketing Committee Report – by Bill Michaels**
 - On track for the 2020 lure piece. Partners have until December 2nd to enroll. Set to have it sent to the printer on the 23rd of December.
 - I LOVE NY featured Otsego County in 3 different blog posts this Fall.
 - Suggestion of including regional attractions outside of Otsego county on ThisIsCooperstown.com. Not lodging.
 - The premise would be for visitors to use Cooperstown as a hub, spend the night here and visit other regional attractions.
 - Similar to the partner program, businesses buy in to have a link on the website and/or mentioned in the guide.
 - DRAFT Cover of the lure piece presented
- **New Business**
 - None.
- **Old Business**
 - None.

Co-Chair, Ken Meifert called Executive Session to order at 3:15.

- **Next DMCOOC Meeting**
 - Thursday, January 9th, 2020 at 2:00pm. Meeting place will be at the Courtyard Marriott in Oneonta.

Meeting adjourned.