

## MEETING NOTES

COMMITTEE: ONEIDA COUNTY TOURISM COUNCIL

DATE/TIME: March 6, 2023 1:00 PM Central Time

PLACE: EDWARD U. DEMMER MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND ZOOM  
6961 W SCHOOL STREET, THREE LAKES

Attendees: Krystal Westfahl, Steven Schreier, Tom Kelly, Dennis Meadows, Chris Schultz, Lauren Sackett, Sherry Hulett, Jacqui Sharpe, Jennifer Gibson guests Jim Rosenberg, Jeff Anderson, Lyn Pilch, Theresa Smith, Jeff Verdoorn

### AGENDA:

- 1. Call to Order** (S. Hulett opened the meeting as Chair)
  - a. Meeting called to order at 1:08
  
- 2. Discuss/Approve agenda for today's meeting**
  - a. Motion to order agenda items at Chair's discretion by T. Kelly. Second by D. Meadows. Motion carried.
  
- 3. Discuss/Approve minutes**
  - a. S. Schreier would like to correct the minutes. He was noted as seconding the motion in the 12/5/22 minutes but he was not present. Motion to approve corrected minutes by T. Kelly. Second by D. Meadows. Motion carried.
  
- 4. Discuss/Approve Treasurer's Report - L. Sackett**
  - a. L. Sackett presented the treasurer's reports from 2022 and 2023. Motion to approve by C. Schultz. Second by T. Kelly. Motion carried.
  
- 5. Discuss/Approve Invoices - L. Sackett**
  - a. L. Sackett reported no invoices received.
  
- 6. Election of officer**
  - a. The December election of officers was delayed.
  - b. The current position is as follows:
    - i. President: K. Westfahl
    - ii. Vice President: S. Hulett
    - iii. Treasurer: L. Sackett
    - iv. Secretary: N/A
  - c. Nomination for K. Westfahl as president by T. Kelly.
  - d. Nomination for S. Hulett as vice president by T. Kelly.

- e. Nomination for L. Sackett as treasurer by T. Kelly.
- f. Nomination for D. Meadows as secretary by S. Hulett. Second by T. Kelly.
- g. Motion to approve the officer list by T. Kelly. Second by S. Schreier. Motion carried.

## **7. Short Term Rental (STR) Compliance Discussion**

- a. S. Hulett reviewed the compliance discussion for new attendees. D. Meadows explained Three Lakes is seeking to change the current ordinance from 7-day minimum stay to one rental per seven days with a letter to the County Board. J. Sharpe further explained they would like the ordinance to allow the individual municipalities to set parameters based on their own interests. J. Sharpe asked for OCTC to draft a letter to the County Board supporting the change.
- b. S. Schreier requested OCTC clarify the status of the letter. L. Pilch answered that the discussion is to determine whether or not OCTC has consensus on drafting the letter.
- c. Motion to have P+B to draft the letter to bring back to the council for submission to the County Board by T. Kelly. Second by L. Sackett. S. Schreier abstained from the approval. Motion carried.

## **8. Pilch & Barnet Marketing Report - L. Pilch**

- a. Mapping Project Update
  - i. L. Pilch updated new OCTC committee members on the initiative to obtain current maps of all Oneida County trails for a new fulfillment piece. L. Pilch reported that K. Westfahl met with representatives from Oneida County Land Information Committee to ask for their assistance on the project. After their talks, K. Westfahl found only a few sections of the trails need new maps. P+B has that trails list. Once OCTC has GIS data for the remaining trails, Oneida County Land Information will use the data to create a new map completed so it is included in Oneida County Land Information database.
- b. DEAI Project
  - i. L. Pilch reported the DEAI project has landed on a two-prong action plan for the project. The first is to expand the accessibility information for each trail in Oneida County to reflect actual accessibility and amenity offerings of the trails. This includes making the map accessible through means such as an audio option for people who have trouble reading the map and ADA accessible website pages. L. Pilch also reported that K. Westfahl has been in contact with a firm that could take on the responsibility of adding and

managing the accessibility information for the trails. The second component of the action plan is following the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's business filter system by surveying Oneida County businesses to obtain their information. The DEAI committee's goal is to create an ADA+ system of gathering and disseminating information. The OCTC website would be updated with this information. The survey gives businesses a reminder to update their information currently on the website or get their business added. L. Pilch explained that this project is necessary because Rhinelander hosts two types of events that require such accessibility information. The two types of events are hearing and sight related respectively and this information will serve as tools for their trip planning.

- ii. D. Meadows asked if there is a spreadsheet that contains the information about the trails needing maps. L. Pilch explained that there is currently a spreadsheet she can send with the notes.
  - iii. L. Pilch summarized the road map for the Year-1 of the DEAI Project as follows:
    - 1. Creating GIS the remaining trails.
    - 2. Review the quote from the firm for reviewing, adding, and managing accessibility information for the trails.
    - 3. Creating the piece with the up-to-date information and house the information online.
  - iv. L. Pilch also reported that P+B added a staff member who will serve as a Northwoods representative. Theresa Smith will help with project coordination, along with photography, meeting attendance and information collection.
  - v. J. Gibson expressed her concerns about Hazelhurst not having their own chamber. L. Pilch explained they can email businesses listed on Hazelhurst website. J. Gibson also expressed concerns that recipients may not fill out the survey if not sent through senders that they trust. L. Pilch provided the option to send the survey through postcards or physical mail from OCTC. L. Pilch will budget for these options.
- c. Additional item: Continuing discussion from the last meeting regarding non-chamber members included in chamber listing and promotions.
- i. Additional item: Continuing discussion from the last meeting regarding non-chamber members included in chamber listing and promotions: L. Pilch reintroduced the discussion from the last meeting about chamber members from outside of Oneida County being listed on the website.

The Council discussed several including continuing to include them to provide the most comprehensive information possible to the people which will likely include providing information about non-Oneida County partner businesses, making distinctions between featuring and listing businesses on the website if they are not in Oneida County, removing non-Oneida County businesses on the website. S. Schreier explained he would be less likely to object to including non-Oneida County businesses if there is evidence other counties include Oneida County businesses on their website. S. Hulett asked for OCTC's mission statement to base her decision. L. Sackett provided the text used on the OCTC website.

- ii. Motion to have the OCTC website include only Oneida County businesses—regardless of whether they are chamber members or not—by L. Sackett. Second by S. Schreier. Call for discussion.
- iii. K. Westfahl said the Vilas County website includes information that promotes Oneida County businesses and should be taken into consideration in the decision making process. K. Westfahl suggested the council investigate the Vilas website/visitor guide before reworking the listing on OCTC website.
- iv. Previous motion withdrawn by L. Sackett. Withdrawal second by S. Schreier.
- v. Motion to investigate further on the item and continue the discussion in the next meeting by S. Schreier. Second by L. Sackett. Motion carried.

**9. The Northwoods of Wisconsin Discussion** (K. Westfahl continues meeting as Chair.)

- a. JEM grant for ATV/UTV
  - i. L. Pilch reported that the project is in its final stages with the maps sent out and the website updated. L. Pilch then reported the details about the growth from the past promotions.
- b. NOW
  - i. L. Pilch reported that NOW members have been attending trade shows. NOW members then discussed details about promotional materials for upcoming trade shows.

**10. Grow North & OCEDC Report - L. Sackett**

- a. L. Sackett reported that Growth North is currently having a strategic planning and meetings to construct plans. L. Sackett will update the council after the March meeting.

- b. J. Verdoorn reported updates on OCEDC including their focus on broadband and their application of a new funding for their broadband project.

#### **11. ITBEC Marketing Committee Report - L. Sackett**

- a. Great Heritage Waterway project
  - i. L. Sackett reported she is working to connect other organizations with ITBEC to help this project based on its current status. L. Sackett believes the project will come back to OCTC when it's ready.
  - ii. J. Anderson provided further explanation on the initiative to brand the Wisconsin River as the Great Heritage Waterway. The current tentative schedule is to promote the waterway in April with a JEM grant.
  - iii. S. Hulett added that Merrill and Tomahawk have worked on the initiative and will provide assistance if requested.
  - iv. L. Sackett also reported that ITBEC is trying to launch a Non-Motorized FAM Tour in Oneida County in spring. J. Anderson provided some details about the tour.

#### **12. Department of Tourism Report - J. Anderson**

- a. J. Anderson reported that the main call to action for the winter campaign is the Wisconsin Snow Report and it brought significant traffic to the website, hitting its peak during the snowstorm in February.
- b. J. Anderson reported on the Wisconsin Governor Tourism Conference held in Green Bay next week.
- c. Travel Wisconsin is preparing for National Travel and Tourism Week from May 7-13. K. Westfahl asked if the economic impact number will be available then. J. Anderson answered that the number will be available in early June.
- d. J. Anderson added that JEM grants were approved for Year-2 of Northwoods Fall for about \$22,000 and Year-3 of Project North for about \$10,000.

#### **13. Community Reports**

- a. D. Meadows reported on Three Lakes:
  - i. The motion to approve for drafting the letter is appreciated
  - ii. There is a new buyer for Oneida Village Inn property and will bring welcome changes to the retail and housing dynamic in Three Lakes. The Chamber will look into new space hosting events.
  - iii. Three Lakes will be at Canoecopia in Madison.
  - iv. Trails are still open, but may not remain so for long.
  - v. March Mania will be in two weeks.

- vi. Shop Small Shop Local event will be on March 17 and 18.
- b. L. Sackett reported on Rhinelander
  - i. Up North Community Expo on March 2 with 22 chambers in 7 county regions and 74 businesses attended the event. The Expo received great feedback. Rhinelander will continue the Expo next year. The Expo is designed to be a business to business event, which is why it was held on a Thursday.
  - ii. The Rhinelander Chamber launched a new website.
  - iii. Rhinelander also added a new staff member.
  - iv. Days Inn Downtown will be remodeled and updated.
  - v. Rhinelander has also been nominated in Governor's Tourism Awards in the Arts, Culture and Heritage.
  - vi. Explore Rhinelander website won a bronze Addy's award.
- c. K. Westfahl reported on Minocqua:
  - i. The Chamber appreciated the effort of Rhinelander in hosting Up North Community Expo and would like to provide continual support for the event.
  - ii. The Chamber is knocking down the iconic snowman.
  - iii. The Chamber held the successful American Pond Hockey event.
  - iv. The Chamber is taking up the role of event managing for many current and future events.
- d. J. Gibson reported on Hazelhurst
  - i. Hazelhurst is adapting to the decision on charging room tax.
- e. S. Hulett reported on Tomahawk:
  - i. Super 8 is being remodeled and updated to become American Inn
  - ii. Four Seasons is will be updated as well
  - iii. Home, Garden, Health, Travel Expo with WJJQ is coming up in April.
  - iv. The Chamber held the successful The Taste of Tomahawk event last Saturday.
  - v. S. Hulett is nominated for Rising Star for Wisconsin Governor's Award.

#### **14. Public Comment/Communication**

- a. K. Westfahl stated that she is in contact with Pelican River Forest and requested the item be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

#### **15. Items to include on the next agenda**

- a. K. Westfahl requested Pelican River Forest be added.

- b. Oneida County business listing on website as a carried motion from section d. of item 9.
- c. Letter to County board for Three Lakes from item 8.

**16. Set Date and Location**

- a. April 3, 1 pm in Minocqua

**17. Adjournment**

- a. Meeting adjourned at 2:42pm