



Greene County Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, May 21, 2013 9:30 a.m.
Location: Greene County Office Building
Catskill, NY

Attendance:

Committee Members Attending – Kevin Lewis, Chairman, Greene County Legislature Economic Development and Tourism Committee; Chuck Tomajko, Fairlawn Inn B&B; Troy Ketcham, Windham Mountain; Suzanne Oldakowski, Bavarian Manor Country Inn and Restaurant; Russ Coloton, Hunter Mountain

Others in Attendance - Patty Handel, Greene County Legislator

Staff - Warren Hart, Heather Bagshaw, Teri Weiss, Karl Heck

Minutes:

The minutes of the March 26, 2013 meeting were approved.

Destination Marketing Report:

Warren opened the meeting discussing the tourism seminar that had taken place in April hosted by Hunter Mountain. The feedback and feelings he received were very positive. The number in attendance exceeded their expectations. The Business After Hours sponsored by the Great Northern Chamber of Commerce offered everyone a chance to network about social media and digital marketing.

Future seminars will be held on an annual basis dedicating it as the “Orville A. Slutzky Tourism Seminar. There will also be one or more working groups or breakouts per year, focusing on digital technology.

Warren spoke about the Strategic Website Assessment grants. Seven applications have been submitted and a couple more may be coming in. The deadline will be extended and kept open at this point. The applications are being approved and turned around quickly to KathodeRay media.

There was a discussion regarding the reservation systems and the appropriate role for the County. Warren recommended that a sub-committee should be formed to look into this further. We currently have 15 or so properties that use a third party reservation provider. Russ Coloton shared his thoughts and experience with the reservation system used by Hunter. Warren will work with Adworkshop to set up the details for the sub-committee with a schedule to begin around the third quarter. This project will

require considerable discussion and something that we don't want to build and launch unless there is considerable buy-in and participation from lodging businesses. Everything needs to be considered; cost, staffing and time.

Heather updated everyone on the Adventure Passport Campaign and the delivery of the tourism vehicle. She also mentioned the role out of the Mobile Adventure Tour and the locations throughout the county that the Jeep will be participating. It will be hitting most of our larger events, family friendly resorts and various other places within the County, but also traveling to different trade shows too.

Warren updated everyone on two art organization grants awarded during the 2012 round of the Capital Region Economic Development Councils. The Mainly Greene grant, awarded to the GCCA for advertising and marketing of the arts from Catskill to Prattville. The Thomas Cole grant awarded to advertise and market the Art Trail. County Tourism has partnered with both arts organizations in support of the grants. County Tourism has also worked in partnership with the Irish Cultural Center in support of the new websites an advertising campaign they have implemented for the Irish Cultural festivals this year.

Heather spoke on destination marketing and public relations, pay-per-click campaigns. She also mentioned the new link on the tourism website, which was added to simplify adding events to the Calendar of Events page. Our fishing page is now linked to the DEC site and in the process of developing a tournament page. There was a request to add restocking of fish information to the site. We are currently updating the hiking page and we've refreshed the bike path page and added a downloadable map. With the growth biking amenities and the new opening of the Kaaterskill Rail Trail and the Windham Bike Path, new maps and information is being provided to tourism for placement on the website.

Heather also informed everyone that we're making some changes to the website to bring our locational map and interactive trip planning maps to the homepage to make them more accessible to the visitor to showcase where Greene County and the Great Northern Catskills are located in relation to NYC.

Warren discussed the Governor's Path Through History Campaign and ILNY advertising for upstate NY.

Warren spoke about the County Trail Plan in relation to the 2013 CFA grants through the Capital Region economic Development Council.

Congratulations go to Fairlawn Inn for receiving the "Good Earthkeeper" title for 2103, by NYS Hospitality and Tourism Association and to Bavarian Manor Inn for "One of the Best Hudson Valley Inns" awarded by Capital Region Living Magazine.

The next meeting is Tuesday, June 25, 2013 at Albergo Allegria to meet with the B&B Lodging sector beginning at 9:30am to 11:00 am.