

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

1 **Date:** Dec. 21, 2022
 2 **Time:** 3:00-4:30pm
 3 **Location:** VIP Room, Athletics & Events Center, Ithaca College Ithaca, NY 14850

AGENDA

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7 **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	P	Lodging	<i>Gary Ferguson</i>	P	<i>DIA, Non-Voting</i>
David Harker	P	Ithaca College	<i>Vacant</i>		<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>	P	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>
Kelly Makosch	E	Recreation	<i>Patty Poist</i>	P	<i>Transportation, Non-Voting</i>
Rick Manning	P	At-Large	<i>Carol Kammen</i>	A	<i>Associate Member</i>
Greg Mezey	E	At-Large	<i>Michael Miller</i>	P	<i>Associate Member</i>
Vacant		TC3	<i>Jon Reis</i>	E	<i>Associate Member</i>
Barbara Romano	P	Cornell University	<i>Wylie Schwartz</i>	E	<i>Associate Member</i>
Monika Roth	P	Agriculture	<i>Chuck Tauck</i>	P	<i>Associate Member</i>
Steven Stull	P	Arts-Culture	Nick Helmholtz	P	Tourism Program Director
Jeremiah Swain	E	At-Large	Kristin McCarthy	P	County Staff

8 **Guests:** Suzanne Smith Jablonski, Craig Liston (virtual)

9
10 **Opening Remarks/Changes to the Agenda/Privilege of the Floor** – David Harker, STPB
 11 representative for Ithaca College, welcome everyone to the meeting at 3:13pm. No changes to
 12 the agenda or privilege of the floor.

13
14 **Action: Approval of Nov. 16, 2022 STPB Draft Minutes** – The draft November 2022 minutes were
 15 approved as submitted (moved by Josh Friedman, seconded by Kelli Cartmill).

16
17 **Chair’s Report** – *Brett Bossard*

18 Brett thanked everyone for making his commute to today’s meeting so easy. He shared that he
 19 looks forward to seeing what 2023 brings (like the 2022 fourth quarter room tax figures) and
 20 collaborating with STPB colleagues on this important work, including addressing staffing issues and
 21 other ongoing challenges facing the tourism and hospitality sectors.

22
23 **Staff Report** – *Nick Helmholtz*

24 Nick shared that Deb Mohlenhoff has accepted a new position with the City of Ithaca and will no
 25 longer be serving as TC3 representative. Staff will work with TC3 to find her replacement. Sixteen
 26 full applications were received for 2023 Arts and Cultural Development Grants, with roughly
 27 \$433,000 in funding requested for about \$288,000 in grants available. The spring 2023 Community
 28 Celebrations and recently rebranded Tourism Advancement grants, the latter of which replaces

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29 the Tourism Marketing and Tourism Project grants and combines them into one category, is open
30 through Feb. 27. An in-person tourism grant workshop will be held at GIAC on Jan. 19 at 6:00pm.
31 Group spent a few minutes discussing short term rentals memo that was included in the agenda
32 packet and related issues, such as timeliness of data, municipal ordinances, and more.
33

34 **Report: Nominating and Electing 2022 Officers – Monika Roth, Nominating Committee**

35 Monika reported that Brett and Doug have agreed to serve as officers again. Elections will take
36 place at the January meeting.
37

38 **Update: Ithaca Downtown Conference Center (IDCC) – Craig Liston, ASM Global**

39 Suzanne Smith Jablonski introduced presenter Craig Liston from ASM Global, who joined the
40 meeting remotely from his office in Ohio. A premier venue and live experiences firm, ASM Global
41 is the operations arm of the IDCC, and Craig is regional vice president in charge of supporting
42 convention centers, conference centers, and other venues east of the Mississippi. Craig thanked
43 his IDCC colleagues as well as the STPB for its long-term support of the conference center project.
44 His presentation covered various topics, providing an overview of the leadership team at ASM
45 Global; the portfolio of venues it supports globally; and the numerous services it offers, including
46 operational, development planning, construction, and revenue maximization expertise, as well as
47 dedicated national sales and lead generation programs. He also shared information on global
48 tradeshow initiatives; ASM’s VenueShield Environmental Hygiene Program; a partnership with
49 Qualtrics to provide real-time metrics for events, including data related to event planning, contract
50 services, security, and food and beverage purchasing; ASM’s sustainability and diversity and
51 inclusion initiatives; scholarships offered through ASM Global Foundation; workforce recruitment;
52 and more. Next steps for the IDCC include hiring a general manager, sales manager, and executive
53 chef/director of food and beverage. Topics discussed during Q&A ranged from staffing challenges
54 and leveraging resources with other ASM-operated venues in the region, collaboration between
55 ASM and CVB sales teams, RfP process for event booking, capacity configurations, accessibility
56 measures such as assistive listening technologies, focus on conference center as community
57 economic development driver, current challenges faced by airline industry and its impact on local
58 airports like Ithaca’s, as well as the need to incorporate inter-city bus travel into strategic tourism
59 planning. Brett thanked Jennifer, Peggy, Gary, and Suzanne for providing these thoughtful, well-
60 informed updates every month.
61

62 **Member Announcements**

63 Members shared items of interest. These included upcoming deadlines for Community Arts
64 Partnership grants (funded from Tompkins County and New York State) , bluegrass concerts at the
65 State Theatre (Trampled by Turtles) and La Tourelle (Winter Village Music), and a three-part wine
66 and dinner pairing series at La Tourelle hosted by Experience the Finger Lakes. In addition, Laura
67 shared her plans to represent the Finger Lakes at the Fort Lauderdale Food & Wine Festival in
68 January, Megan brought up the Arts Vibrancy Index Report put out by Southern Methodist
69 University (she will share the link post-meeting), and Josh reported that the Planning & Evaluation
70 Committee will be looking into grant impact data in 2023.
71

72 **Adjournment** – Chair Brett Bossard adjourned the meeting at 4:34pm.