



Board of Directors Meeting Notes
Tuesday, December 8, 2020, 3 pm
Conducted via Zoom Meeting

- Financial Report – Donna Wotton for Pat Ida
 - Financial Report – Current checking account = \$273,376, Total assets = \$2,341,858. The most significant increase is the \$1,722,445 note receivable to the Ti Golf Club. Other contributions to date include some to Entrepreneurs Fund, Hacker Building Project, Scholarship Fund, + \$129K unrestricted contribution dollars in 2020 and revenues from other grant administration funds. We go into 2021 with a healthy balance sheet to build upon.
- Board Business – Donna
 - Claire Burns is expected to arrive in Ticonderoga shortly after the first of the year. She will be residing with the Ida's and working full time at Ti-Alliance. She manage Ti-Works, our communications program, web development, and participating in various projects after quarantine.
 - 2021 Board Meeting Schedule – Provided to all board members prior to meeting.

ACTION: All board members are requested to put these meetings on your calendar now to avoid conflicts on those meeting dates.

- 2020 Board Evals – 2020 Board Evaluations were distributed with the meeting agenda.

ACTION: All board members are requested to fill them out and return to Donna by 12/18/20. Donna will tabulate and distribute the results to the board members.

- Progress on the TREK/Hacker Building (Sandy Morhouse) – There is provisioning in the agreement with Trek Tours that Ti-Alliance has full right to periodically examine the income and expenses of Trek to determine positive cash flow (Pat Ida is the arbitrator). Ti-Alliance will set up a monthly process of reporting with Trek.
 - i. Since the 12/2/20 Special Meeting, Sandy has discussed tax relief with James Cawley, and petitioned Joe Giordano to support some relief for Trek until the building is renovated. Giordano indicated that neither he nor the town board has any jurisdiction over the assessment either by the assessor or school board (affirmed by the town attorney). *An LDC does not have the ability* (contrary to our previous understanding, and confirmed by Harris Beach) to hold the property and provide tax abatement for the prospective owner. Sandy had a subsequent discussion with James where he agreed to go ahead with the sale and that we would continue to pursue tax relief with the assessor.

UPDATE: Donna spoke with Patty Osier, the assessor. Joe had spoken with her about this property and she had advised him that she is obligated to assess the building at the market price (currently assessed at \$170,300). After additional discussions Patty was very open minded and agreed to reach out to the President of the Assessors Association and colleagues in other towns to see if their policies in their municipalities that offer tax relief to renovators of downtown and other derelict buildings through the reconstruction phases. She is open to doing something similar in Ti. The town board is supportive of pursuing some policies that would be supportive of investors that want to restore buildings around downtown (including water and sewer) and ultimately bring more money to the town through redeveloped, productive buildings.

ACTION: Lance will ask LISC if they know of other towns that might have similar policies Ti could leverage.

UPDATE: Both documents, from Essex County to Ti-Alliance, and Ti-Alliance to Trek Tours have subsequently been executed and money transferred to escrow with the county.

We have the opportunity to potentially submit a NY Main Street Grant by January 15 for support for the construction costs to renovate the building and Donna will be working with James on this possibility. It is extremely important that we keep the process moving with the county as the title would have to be cleared to Ti-Alliance and conveyed to Trek Tours by the time NY Main Street is ready to provide grant decisions in March.

- Committee Reports:

- Governance Committee (Lance/Donna) – The following board members’ terms expire on 12/31/20. All have agreed to serve another 3 year term. They include Scott Hearburg, Pat Ida, Peter Reale, Nancy Archer, and Lance Clark. The town board passed a resolution to reappoint these board members on December 10, 2020. Ti-Alliance resolution will be circulated for signatures by the board members.

ACTION: Board members to circulate and sign the resolution. Each board member should sign and send to the next person on the list (electronic signatures are adequate for this document). Peter Reale should forward the fully signed document back to Donna.

- Development Committee (Donna) – We have raised the majority of our operating capital for next year including the revenue needed for salaries for Donna and a full-time additional person. We will continue fund-raising in earnest through the remainder of the year to get to our full funding and have opportunities for administrative money from grants throughout the year to round out our programming \$\$\$.
 - i. Year-End Fundraising – Donna will provide sample email appeals for short emails to assigned contacts, and a list of accomplishments in 2020 that can be used for any discussions. The personal outreach will be supported with a social media program on Facebook and Instagram that will reach a slightly younger audience.
 - ii. Upcoming grant push – we will be looking to submit a number of grants in Q1 2021 to support downtown development and the Trade Education Access Program
 - NY State
 - a. NY Main Street for Hacker – NYMS has just announced that they have some funds for downtown development in 2021. Application deadline is January 15 and we will explore submitting an application for development of the Hacker Building. This is a reimbursement program, but the grants can potentially cover up to 75% of construction costs. PRIDE is also working on an anchor grant for Cunningham’s.
 - b. Without the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant (DRI) from the state this year, we do not have the opportunity to put multiple buildings into the same grant request. It would be desirable to also get some money for the Cobbler’s Bench, Burleigh House, Reale’s building and Rathbun buildings for interior renovations. Donna will explore other resources through ESD.
 - Federal - Funding for federal economic development grants reflects March 31, 2021 application deadlines, with awards announced in July, and contracts executed in August. These are reimbursement programs.
 - a. RBDG – We will submit a grant for renewal of the Trade Ed Access Program with some expansion in their level of funding and some other potential project support TBD.

- b. NBRC – Northern Border Regional Commission is interested in partnering with us on some of our initiatives. They are assisting us in exploring which of our programs might fit into their funding goals and help us structure an application for March deadlines. Programs could include:
 - i. Middle income housing tied into derelict building project
 - ii. Projects that materialize out of the Opportunities Page
 - iii. Workforce development program via our Trade Ed Access Program including more \$\$ for school, scholarships, \$\$ for internships.
 - iv. Fostering capacity for economic development (operational funds for T-A) and business development revolving loan fund for fostering outdoor recreation businesses (guide training, possible equipment, business expansion dollars)
- c. Northern Forest Center – NFC has some funding available for programs that seek to entice people to move to the North Country. We will explore how our efforts can some funding toward that goal.

UPDATE: Donna spoke with Steve Hunt at Empire State Development about where there might be funds available for downtown development. At this time there are no grant funds at all available through ESD and he does not have visibility or access to funding by the individual state agencies without the CFA process. But he is very excited about the progress we are making in downtown and will forward any leads about grant funds that he hears about.

UPDATE: Chris reports that there is no additional information about the Ti Mill other than that IP will retain a 20% ownership in the new company, the Ti Mill will be a part of that company. There are 8 mills in the group being spun off. Two are in the US, three in Brazil, one in France, one in Russia, and one in Poland making this an offshore play, and the Ti Mill is a very small mill for IP, though it has been highly profitable. If IP doesn't want it someone else probably will, even potentially someone locally like Mohawk. Letters of support to IP could help keep the new company involved in this community.

ACTION: Donna will communicate with the town board about the tax policy and letters of support for a grant.

Program Updates

- Trade Education (Donna) – The counselors have told us that this year's graduating class will be just 50 students. Only ½ of them are expecting to apply to college. This will be a very important year for development of skilled careers with this class.
 - i. Ti-Alliance will partner with Brilliant Pathways (College for Every Student) to enhance both of our programs encouraging trade career pathways in the school. Donna will report in the coming weeks about what we will be doing together.
 - ii. No College visits and Contractors in the Classroom is on hold
 - iii. We are updating the Skilled Careers Quick Reference Guide brochure with new programs at schools throughout the region and will be making it available online to the school, students, and parents. We will also work with Brilliant Pathways to bring the online version to other school systems in the area. They will help promote it to counseling offices.
 - iv. In the Meantime:
 - The Technology class at Ti High has been hindered in what activities they can do with students due to COVID. One of the more popular activities is welding. Ti-Alliance will be purchasing 60 pairs of welding gloves so that they can begin using that equipment again (students can't share gloves).

- We have a volunteer that is going to help us organize some **field trips to job sites** in lieu of the Contractors in the Classroom activity. John Donohue has indicated that field trips with up to 8 students would be do-able and he loves the idea. We hope to begin field trips in late January. Our volunteer is Melinda Wilson Fuller (4th generation Heart Bay summer resident that lives in Saratoga).
- We hope to **renew and expand our previous internship program** – this year will provide a lot of opportunity for us to support graduating seniors by connecting them with area employers. We just connected David Bechard, one of our scholarship students at Hudson Valley, with Capital Power for an internship of weekend and summer work to complement his electrical studies, and a number of other employers have spoken to me about their willingness and desire to take interns. With the remote school schedules and more time off this year due to COVID, some of those seniors could begin working on weekends and potentially have full time jobs upon graduation. Claire and Melinda will help work with the counselors to begin identifying students that want to work and employers that want to help them (contractors include CVHP, Brian Merfeld Electric, and Walt Waters Excavating).
- Derelict Buildings (Lance) – Code Enforcement Office now has 2 ½ people in it. Dave Burrows is the full time replacement to Bill Ball who is ½ time and Rhiannon is also training to be certified inspector as well which will increase capacity. Phase I of the project is done. We’re working with HAPEC to locate some funding for mortgage relief which would be highly needed as the CARES Act mortgage deferrals end in January. Community Development Block Grant for COVID may have some funds that could be available around March/April 2021. We have also submitted a proposal to LISC for Phase 2 of the Derelict Building program that will provide funding including resources for asbestos surveys for at least 3 properties, further legal actions by Matt Fuller, and some improved software for the Code Enforcement Office, and about \$5,000 for Ti-alliance’s support. High potential for funding that will run until October 2021. Should hear by the end of the year on the LISC Phase 2 funding. There may also be some potential help from NBRC in revolving loan fund support for remediation and restoring derelict housing to productivity.
- Ti-Works (Donna) – Claire will be managing Ti-Works in 2021 and occupy a desk after quarantining. We currently have one contract user (from Brant Lake) and will have another contract user (real estate agent from Vermont) that will start beginning in January. Several other occasional users are now coming when they are in the area for extended visits with family and we expect a number of those people to be using Ti-Works again during the holidays.
- Tourism Enhancement – The Chamber has not used the material that we created for the new tourism website to date and has not indicated when they plan to begin work on that project. If anyone has any ideas on how we can encourage them to get that project done in time to support our businesses through the winter, please call or email Donna.
- Business Incubation & Downtown Development
 - i. Donna has met twice with an individual that owns an outdoor guide company in the Adirondacks interested in expanding their business from 3-5 day private guiding to something that might be based in Ti and supporting the tourism market year round. Might be a business that could go into the Burleigh House or Sears Building – both good locations with access to areas that could be utilized for lessons and outings. Might also be an opportunity to do our first microloan from the Entrepreneurs Fund.

- ii. Opportunities Page – Donna shared the draft of the Opportunity Page with the Board. www.ticonderoga-alliance.com/opportunity. The 4 pages will be rolled out over a month's time to allow multiple contacts with the audience. The Ti Alumni Association will partner with us to promote the launch of these 4 pages over the course of a month to allow us to have 4 separate contacts with the alumni on a weekly basis for a month beginning January 21. The four sections of the website will be:
 - Operating businesses for sale
 - Businesses to start & partner (private investment partners)
 - Professional jobs
 - Affordable Housing \$130,000-250,000 range
- iii. New Businesses
 - WesWorld – Wes Lorenzini is a new technologist living in town that has an idea for a “technology arcade” in downtown to get area students and adults exposed to technology. He owns lots of arcade games, 3-D printers, a music recording studio and other technology that people could learn to use, as well as potentially giving classes in the building of drones (and hosting drone racing meets) & battle bots (with a competition arena), and creating gadget inventions with Raspberry Pi computer components. He is currently doing private tech tutoring of home-schooling families in the area and has a full time job working remotely for a tech company.
 - Daycare – Wes’s wife Amber Lorenzini is investigating getting licensed for daycare, since she is a teacher by trade and we have a shortage of daycare in our area. The location would be next door or part of the tech arcade so that people could also leave children in the daycare while they take classes or play in the arcade. They are very interested in creating either free or very affordable daycare for low-income families.
- New Business/Old Business
 - Working with Hudson Headwaters on Vitalist Program – educating medical home workers, IT people, social workers helping to connect people with health services & insurance exchange, telemedicine, developing broadband.
 - Question was asked about the possibility of the paddle courts moving to the Golf Club property. At this time it is unlikely that they will move. The Golf Club would need to find a place for them, probably acquire additional property and that could take a couple of years. It’s more likely that they will stay at Eddie’s and add an additional court.

Next Scheduled Meeting: February 9, 2021, 3 PM EST, via Zoom
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