



## Board of Directors Meeting – Tuesday, April 12, 2022 (Via Zoom)

The meeting was broadcasted to the public via Zoom

Attending: Nancy Archer, Lance Clark, Chris Mallon, Sandy Morhouse, Pam Nolan, Peter Reale, Mark Wright

Absent: Scott Hearburg, Pat Ida, Bobby Porter

1. Introduction – Chris Maron, Executive Director, Champlain Area Trails, Westport. Non-Profit that “curates” mostly private land to create well-maintained trails throughout the area. Currently have 67 miles of trails in Southern Champlain Valley. Want to expand more trails in the Ticonderoga Area and town-to-town trails to hook all our communities on trails around Lake Champlain, including the Vermont side. They will market it as Hike the Lake (sort of like The Way) where people would come from all over to hike-the-lake as a mission, or hike it in sections.

How can we advance each other’s missions? Connected Chris with Morhouse, Reale, and others to see if we can link Ticonderoga trails from Mt. Defiance to Record Mountain in Putnam. Sandy recommended Chris contact LGLC as well. Getting in touch with Dr. Kristin Mack would be a good idea too.

Westport has added an economic development committee to their community in addition to their Chamber. Figuring out how they work together focused on a regional approach to economic development.

**ACTION: Donna** to provide Chris Maron with contacts.

**ACTION: Chris** will keep his eyes open for people that might be interested in guiding hikes in our area.

2. Approval of minutes of previous meeting. Moved: Peter Reale, Second: Sandy Morhouse. Carried.

3. Financial Report – Donna presented for Pat Ida
  - \$240,000 cash on hand, \$190,000 unrestricted funds, \$20,000 in Entrepreneurs Fund, \$21,000 in Scholarship Fund (\$15,000 earmarked for Endowment Fund), \$35,000 in Essex County escrow account for Hacker Building, \$2.8M out to Ticonderoga Golf Club and expecting to begin to see return on that in 2023. Our 2021 Audit is complete with no red flags from the auditors (our first year ever!).

**ACTION: Sandy** needs to redo the amortization schedule for Trek to update after COVID.

Approval of Financial report - Moved: Sandy Morhouse, Second: Lance Clark. Carried.

4. Board Business
  - ABO filings are all updated and current until March 2023.
  - Communications Update:
    - i. 100 people increase in our followers on social media, now over 850, mostly local residents added
    - ii. Engagement continues to grow – click throughs and reactions are up 87% over last quarter which was up 25% from the quarter before.
    - iii. Return visitors are up 76%, which means they are looking to our website for information and updates.
    - iv. Most popular pages are Home Page, Opportunity Page, Dental Practice for Sale, Challenge of Childcare, and 92 Montcalm.
  - Looking for help for housing project – survey and grant work. Will contact Alan Hipps.
  - Adirondack Foundation at next meeting with Cali Brooks, Lori Bellingham, and the Impact Investors on Childcare and Housing. Currently interested in helping us put together a coalition of funders to help fund our childcare center construction – the area that we are having funding challenges. More to come on this.

5. Invitation to meet with the Essex County Board of Supervisors Recruitment and Retention Committee on Monday – on childcare and workforce development.
  - **UPDATE:** We had a very productive meeting with EC Recruitment and Retention Committee and talked extensively about workforce development and childcare. They are going to put their HR people in touch with us to port some of our school programs to Elizabethtown and promote these programs to other Essex County communities. They were also thinking about seeing if they can create a childcare center in Elizabethtown in a former school building. They will follow along closely as we try to do that here (they are about 6 months behind us in planning).
  
6. Committee Reports:
  - Development Committee
    - i. Grants & Funding
      - Adirondack Foundation \$20,000 (awarded for operational funding to help us increase capacity in workforce development, workforce housing, downtown development, and childcare)
      - Cloudsplitter \$10,000 (UPDATE: Awarded for operational funding to help increase capacity in workforce housing and childcare development)
      - Private funder \$10,000 (pending – To Be Announced soon)
      - Singer Family \$100,000 (To start the George C. Singer Scholarship Endowment Fund. An additional \$10,000 will be added from the fall 2021 donation by the Stuart Family Foundation, and \$5,000 from the fall donation of the Rowan Family Foundation).
      - Upcoming grant potentials – Stewarts Shops, Hudson Headwaters, GFN, Community Bank, Sylvamo, additional funds being sought to support childcare effort.
    - ii. Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant Effort – Mark and Donna are participating with PRIDE, TACC, TMSP, and some private citizens-at-large in a committee that is preparing a Ticonderoga Town bid for the \$10,000,000 NY State DRI Grant. The town appropriated funding (through PRIDE) to hire Elan Consulting, an experience DRI preparation firm, to assist us in community outreach and input, and application preparation. Weekly meetings are helping us move through the planning process and we will begin public engagement in the next few weeks. Applications are likely due in July or August, with announcements by the end of the year.
  - Entrepreneur Committee
    - i. Loan #1 - \$10,000 loan to the Burleigh Luncheonette for new seating and fixtures for their expansion. 3-5 years at 1.5%.
    - ii. Loan #2 – The Stuart Family Loan of \$10,000 to the new Silver Bay General Store Loan. Short term for seasonal inventory. No interest for 90 days, 1.5% after that. Expecting to be repaid within 6 months.
    - iii. Potential to extend some support for next tenant at 92 Montcalm. Donna and Claire have been doing additional direct email and phone outreach to individual businesses in the region that might be interested in expanding to Ti. Getting some good response with people visiting Ti to see the lay of the land and talk with us. Also working with regional culinary schools to reach out to their alumni lists.
    - iv. Inquiry from Mark Jacoby at Brookwood RV Resort. **UPDATE:** Donna went out to tour Brookwood that has greatly expanded over the past few years. They have a big new pool and deck, a barn for events, some additional out-buildings, and recreational areas. Much more interesting operation than anyone really knows about. Mark will create a proposal for us, likely for deck furniture and some other things that would help them get fully set for this season. We will convene the committee when that proposal is received.
  
7. Program Updates
  - Trade Education (Donna)
    - i. Spring Programs – Students in the Field has wrapped for the season having done 10 visits including Sylvamo, Fort Ti Research Team, Amanda Franco Large Animal Vet, and others.

Our annual student Job Fair is Thursday, April 28. We have amped it up this year by creating a catalog of available jobs, students are able to schedule interviews in advance and they will interview during the fair with their selected employers. We expect even more successful pairings than last year.

We took Ti-Alliance Scholar Michael O'Donnell to NYC for a trip to the major museums. The trip was an unqualified success with Michael having many life-changing moments – first time on a train, first time to NYC, first time navigating the subway, first time to major museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Museum at the Fashion Institute. He came back a highly motivated student, ravenous for new challenges, occupied with creative visions for new projects and a career path in the fashion arts. We changed a life.

We have a new season of Scholarships coming up. Michael will be receiving his second year scholarship of \$7,000. Brandon Provoncha is finishing up his welding program, David Bechard will be continuing his electrical lineman program, Brett Moore is finishing his 3<sup>rd</sup> year toward his forestry degree (not on scholarship next year), and Shannon Jordon did not complete her first-year studies. We look forward to a couple of new applicants from the class of 2022.

- Derelict Buildings – Phase 2 of the project wraps up at the end of this month. \$5,000 of the funding went to HAPEC to reach out to people that are having trouble paying their mortgages, especially due to COVID. \$5,000 went to Ti-Alliance to pay for Lance's time to do 8 review papers of the work that the project has done. Restrictions on Matt Fuller's time prevented some of the asbestos surveys from being implemented and remedied.

One of the most successful parts of the project is the mowing and trash removal process that is now successfully established in the code enforcement office. They have the ability to identify, notify, and enforce clean-up of properties, and good incentives for served homeowners to remedy on their own when their alternative is to have the town do it at a much higher cost to them.

We're hoping that this 3 years of work will eventually end up as a component of a larger housing program that might include partnership with the code office, an Essex County Land Bank (currently under consideration by the county) and some private renovators to fulfill our vision of taking the most distressed abandoned properties into a renovation process that returns them to the active tax rolls.

**ACTION: LANCE** to review his reports to see if there is some interesting material that might make a good blog about Derelict Buildings. We would do a post about it and put it at the Derelict Buildings program page of our website.

- Housing – To be discussed in Executive Session to protect confidential individual investor information.

**ACTION: Donna** to follow up on potential partnership with future Essex County Land Bank.

- Childcare: Cynthia Ford-Johnston and I are moving along on a plan to create public Childcare for Ticonderoga. It's a very complicated and costly thing to retrofit an existing building to meet the incredibly difficult regulations of the Office of Child and Family Services, even in the environment of an existing operating school like our Elementary School. Many obstacles exist in the physical requirements of the building that are driving the costs close to \$1M and requiring major retrofit. We have explored a number of other possible buildings but none of them have been feasible for a variety of reasons, so we are concentrating on the school building, which is the best prospect for us at this time.

Our Childcare Survey provided an amazing set of data that demonstrates an urgent need throughout our community, and almost 90 children that would use the services of the childcare facility 4-5 days/week IF it existed. They represent an even distribution across all age groups (infant-18 months, 19 months-3 years, and 3-5 years), and additional data about how much our workforce and employers are being impacted due to the lack of childcare in our community.

We have the pledged support from HHHN, Sylvamo, the School Board, other smaller employers. Healthy Kids, the largest childcare provider in NY State outside of NYC, has committed to being the operator of the facility. We have at least 5 licensed or formerly licensed home-based childcare providers that are willing to work for the facility.

We had some discussion about how we could possibly get this facility out of the jurisdiction of OCFS by making it free. If we don't charge for childcare, do we need to be regulated. Could we do it with private money donated through Ti-Alliance, some paid and some volunteer providers? Would have to be well-insured. Worth exploring

**UPDATE: Cynthia and I** met with Dan Stec, Matt Simpson, and their staff leads about this on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Both were shocked at our situation and the requirements from OCFS and are going to try to help us elevate this project within the agencies to see if we can get some variances to make this more practical. They will also be helping us source funding that could apply to the construction (not provided by the new Federal and State Childcare Desert Grants). If we can figure out how to do this in Ticonderoga, Elizabethtown and other communities could do it as well. We have their attention.

8. New Business/Old Business

- Board Resolution authorizing the Executive Director and Ti-Alliance to engage in Grant Writing activities supporting the DRI Initiative, opportunities in the Consolidated Funding Application cycle, on behalf of Drew Metzler for a National Grid Main Street Grant, renovation funding for the Hacker Building, and other grant requirements in 2022.

Resolution – Moved: Sandy Morhouse, Second: Lance Clark, Carried Unanimously.

- Sandy Morhouse took a minute to acknowledge Claire Burns, our Communications Specialist, as a great addition to our team. She's incredibly pleasant, good at her work, and a great asset to the Alliance.
- Board Resolution to create an investment fund for the George C. Singer Scholarship Endowment Fund in the initial amount of \$115,000, to be added to with other donations. Further resolution to create an investment committee consisting of Karl Johnston, Mike Huffman, and Ken Parlin to create the structure and investment guidelines of the fund and to direct those investments.

Resolution - Moved: Peter Reale, Second: Sandy Morhouse, Carried Unanimously.

**UPDATE:** The investment committee has been meeting to create our investment guidelines and strategy. We expect to have those guidelines available for Board review by May 1 and will call a special meeting of the board to review, make any additional recommendations, and adopt. Mike Huffman's firm Rock Point Advisors (Burlington, VT) will create a non-profit Schwab account and handle any trades. More to come.

9. Move to Executive Session for purpose of individual business

10. Out from Executive Session Motion: Sandy Morhouse, Second: Pam Nolan, Carried

11. Motion to Adjourn: Sandy Morhouse, Second: Peter Reale, Carried

Next Scheduled Meeting: Tuesday, June 14, 2022, 3 PM EST, Community Center & Virtual
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