



Work Group Meeting Notes

Work Group Name: Tourism/Marketing the Region
 Work Group Chair: Jennifer Parker
 Meeting Date: August 30, 2011

X = present for this meeting

Member	Agency/Entity	phone number	email
X Jennifer Parker	Work Group Chair; Regional Council Member; Jackson Parker Communications	(716) 881-6066	jparker@jparkerpr.com
X Howard Zemsky	WNY Regional Council Co-Chair		
X Paul Dyster	Regional Council Member; Mayor, Niagara Falls	(716) 286-4310	paul.dyster@niagarafallsny.gov
	Regional Council Member; Arrowhead Spring Vineyards	(716) 434-8030	Duncan@ArrowheadSpringVineyards.com
X Cindy Abbott-Letro	Buffalo Niagara Film Commission	(716) 852-1234	Caletro@letrolaw.com
X Crystal Abers	CATT Co. Dept. of Development/Agriculture	(716) 938-9111	cabers@cattco.org
	Donald Boswell	WNY Pub. Broadcasting Assn.	(716) 845-7001 dboswell@wned.org
X Bill Daly	Chautauqua IDA	(716) 661-8903	dalyw@co.chautauqua.ny.us
X Sam Ferraro	NCDED and NCIDA	(716) 278-8750	sam.ferraro@niagaracounty.com
	Eddie Friel	Expert in Residence, Niagara University	(716) 940-4136 efriel@niagara.edu
X Dottie Gallagher-Cohen	Visit Buffalo Niagara	(716) 961-0200	gallaghercohen@visitbuffaloniagara.com
X Chris Glynn	Maid of the Mist	(716) 284-8897	cglynn@maidofthemist.com
X Daniel Hamister	Hamister Group	(716) 839-4000	dmh@hamistergroup.com
	Ed Healy	Visit Buffalo Niagara	(716) 852-0511 healey@visitbuffaloniagara.com
X Jennifer Kavanaugh	Buffalo Niagara Enterprise	(716) 541-1750	jkavanaugh@buffaloniagara.org
	Kevin Kelly	Delaware North	(716) 858-5417 kkelly@dncinc.com
	Richard Lipsitz	WNY Area Labor Federation	(716) 913-2210 rjl92002@yahoo.com
X Warde Manuel	U/B Athletic Director	(716) 645-3454	wmanuel@buffalo.edu
	Brian McFadden	Ellicottville Chamber of Commerce	(716)-699-5046 brian@ellicottvilleney.com
X Kerry Mitchell	Canadian Consulate	(716) 858-9581	kerry.mitchell@international.gc.ca
X Andrew Nixon	Chautauqua County CVB	(716) 357-4569	nixon@tourchautauqua.com
	John Percy	Niagara Tourism & Convention Corp.	(716) 282-8992 Jpercy@niagara-usa.com
X Mary Roberts	Martin House Restoration Corp	(716) 440-6250	mroberts@darwinmartinhouse.org
State Agency Reps			
X Mark Thomas	NYS Parks – Western Region	(716) 278-1702	mark.thomas@oprhp.state.ny.us
	Lou Paonessa	New York Power Authority	(716) 286-6651 louis.paonessa@nypa.gov
Staffing			
X Christina Orsi	ESD WNY, Regional Director	(716) 846-8227	corsi@empire.state.ny.us
X Diego Sirianni	ESD WNY	(716) 846-8240	dsirianni@empire.state.ny.us
X Chris Schoepflin	USA Niagara Dev Corp./ESD	(716) 284-2556	cschoepflin@empire.state.ny.us
X Paul Tronolone	USA Niagara Dev Corp./ESD	(716) 284-2556	ptronolone@empire.state.ny.us



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Member	Agency/Entity	phone number	email
X Holly Ortman	USA Niagara Dev Corp./ESD	(716) 284-2556	hortman@empire.state.ny.us
X Christina Coyle	Lead Facilitator	(716) 628-2500	christinamcoyle@gmail.com
X Megan Stadler	Facilitator/NCCC		
X Laura Quebral Fulton	Writer/UB Regional Institute	(716) 878-2440	lquebral@buffalo.edu

Overall Meeting Description

This was the first meeting of the WNY Regional Council's Working Group on Tourism/Marketing the Region. Discussion items organization/orientation items, and overview of the State's Regional Council process, and an initial Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats, and Opportunities (SWOT) Assessment.

Summary of Meeting:

J. Parker, Chair of the Work Group called the meeting to order. J. Parker and H. Zemsky, Co-Chair of the WNY Regional Council welcomed participants and thanked them for their participation.

Committee members and staff introduced themselves.

C. Orsi presented an overview of the Regional Councils and the tasks of the Work Groups.

C. Coyle began the SWOT process by explaining what a SWOT analysis is and what how the group should consider each part of the exercise.

C. Coyle led a warm-up SWOT exercise.

C. Coyle asked the group to help clarify the scope of "Tourism/Marketing the Region" for the purposes of the SWOT analysis.

- Tourism as an economic driver – jobs, jobs, jobs.
- Tourism as an export industry – infrastructure, product, marketing.
- Tourism as a way of marketing the larger economy – image and branding.
- Image and marketing the region to all sectors – visitors, residents, business.

Participants performed SWOT exercise.

Report-out:

K. Mitchell presented Strengths/Economic Drivers:

- Infrastructure/Geography
 - Location in relation to international border
 - Affordability of the region in terms of land costs/costs of living
 - Transportation infrastructure
- High/Low Culture



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- Arts/culture/architecture
- History
- Food: agritourism, chicken wings, wine and beer
- Environment/Nature
 - Niagara Falls/fresh water
 - Fishing/hunting/rich in parkland
 - Diversity over four seasons

A. Nixon presented Critical Issues – Internal

- Marketing
- Self-Image
- Partner Problems
- Funding for Marketing and Development
- Product Development
- Infrastructure
- Collaborate and Cooperate

M. Roberts presented Weaknesses

- Improved visitor readiness
- Need for uniform bi-national and cross-regional marketing and promotion
- Lack of uniform community vision
- Increased/sustained economic investment
- Best practices

W. Manuel presented Opportunities

- Funding/Money
 - Growth of the local economy through this industry
 - Growth of population/jobs
- Branding opportunities/identity/attitude
 - Create identity and tell the story
 - What that identity might be about
 - Attracting new visitor markets through branding
 - Developing product that supports branding efforts
- Policy Related issues – expedite, remove government barriers, provide infrastructure

J. Kavanaugh presented Issues/Barriers - External

- Funding and Planning



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- Need for a cohesive regional plan
- Need for financial and policy commitment to tourism as an industry
- Image
 - Lack of a positive regional brand
 - Internal (local) negative attitude
- Collaboration
 - Need to transcend politics, turf wars, and bureaucracy
- Product/Policy
 - Need to develop tourism product
 - Need to address policy barriers (power, available sites)

D. Gallagher-Cohen presented Threats

- Negative think and talk
- “Get ‘er done!” – efficiency and drive, bringing projects to completion
- Improving the visitor experience
- Disunity – need for political support and collaboration
- Canadian-American issues – border crossing and Homeland Security

C. Schoepflin presented potential dates for the remaining meetings: September 13, September 28, October 11, October 25 are tentative dates.

J. Parker and H. Zemsky made closing remarks and wrapped up the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 10:20 am.

These minutes represent the author’s understanding of the discussion that occurred at the referenced meeting. If your understanding of the meeting is misrepresented or not included in these minutes please notify the undersigned in writing within 10 business days in order to issue revised meeting minutes.

Prepared by: Holly Ortman