



## Work Group Meeting Notes

Work Group Name: Tourism/Marketing the Region  
 Work Group Chair: Jennifer Parker  
 Meeting Date: September 13, 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
	Howard Zemsky WNY Regional Council Co-Chair		
	Paul Dyster Regional Council Member; Mayor, Niagara Falls	(716) 286-4310	paul.dyster@niagarafallsny.gov
X	Duncan Ross 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
	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
X	Eddie Friel Expert in Residence, Niagara University	(716) 940-4136	efriel@niagara.edu
	Dottie Gallagher-Cohen Visit Buffalo Niagara	(716) 961-0200	gallaghercohen@visitbuffaloniagara.com
	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	Thomas Herrera-Mishler Buffalo Olmsted Parks	(716) 838-1249	thmishler@bfloparks.org
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
	Warde Manuel U/B Athletic Director	(716) 645-3454	wmanuel@buffalo.edu
X	Brian McFadden Ellicottville Chamber of Commerce	(716)-699-5046	brian@ellicottvilleny.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
X	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
<b>State Agency Reps</b>			
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
<b>Staffing</b>			
	Christina Orsi ESD WNY, Regional Director	(716) 846-8227	corsi@empire.state.ny.us
	Diego Sirianni ESD WNY	(716) 846-8240	dsirianni@empire.state.ny.us



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Member	Agency/Entity	phone number	email
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
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
	Megan Stadler	Facilitator/NCCC	
X	Laura Quebral Fulton	Writer/UB Regional Institute	(716) 878-2440 lquebral@buffalo.edu

### Overall Meeting Description

This was the second meeting of the WNY Regional Council's Working Group on Tourism/Marketing the Region. Discussion items included the creation of strategy statements based on the first meeting's Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats, and Opportunities (SWOT) Assessment.

### Summary of Meeting

J. Parker, Chair of the Work Group called the meeting to order at 9:10am. Committee members and staff introduced themselves.

A. Nixon presented a promotional video of Chautauqua County and briefly discussed the "Learning Vacation" concept behind the County's marketing campaign.

J. Parker gave an overview of the Meeting 1 report-out that was presented at the Regional Council meeting on September 6, 2011. She began with an image of Disney World and discussed how the region can use the same philosophy as Disney to cross-sell and cross-promote attractions to raise the tourism experience as a whole in Western New York. She then presented the slides that were used at the Regional Council Meeting covering the content of Meeting 1.

C. Coyle began the facilitated portion of the meeting by explaining the process of problem solving using facilitation as well as psychometric attributes that affect how different people approach problem solving. Diversity of the work group provides the opportunity to be innovative.

C. Coyle led a warm-up exercise to introduce the method for creating strategy statements: "Achieve X by doing Y."

Groups were asked to break-out into four small groups:

- Weaknesses/Threats
- Economic Drivers



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- Critical Issues and Barriers & Challenges
- Opportunities

D. Ross pointed out that there needs to be more private sector participation. Additionally, meetings need to get on track more quickly; if everyone prepares in advance, the group can begin work immediately.

B. McFadden suggested that public meetings are another forum for the private sector to be involved.

E. Friel pointed out that the real issue at hand is to achieve public/private partnership to create wealth and jobs.

Participants broke into small groups and developed strategy statements.

### Report-out:

- John Percy presented Threats and Weaknesses
  - Achieve a vision that tourism is a critical business/economic development priority and opportunity by increasing realistic understanding of our outstanding regional assets (Public/private partnerships, multi-sector, bi-national)
  - Build consensus in the region that we are a great place to visit and invest by creating/funding a comprehensive marketing program (internal/external)
  - Generate a focus on regional development by identifying the opportunities to develop tourism products and businesses
  - Reverse negative self-image by creating programs for community/business buy-in (financial, business ambassador, community-based)
  - Generate a truly inter/multi-national, global orientation to foster tourism/economic development initiatives and growth
  - Achieve/Find commonalities or common threads among multiple agencies for economic development/tourism by streamlining programs, processes and regulations
  - Cultivate creativity as a key form of innovation in the region to advance tourism/development opportunities by prioritizing/tapping into diverse array of creative resources (Chautauqua, universities, schools, medical facilities, life sciences)
  - Provide the ultimate “visitor” (internal, external, leisure/business) experience by establishing thresholds/standards for excellence and opportunities to learn and practice them. (And provide necessary tools and funding)



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- Achieve recognition as the US/Canada bi-national “capital” by profiling/investing in policy, business, cultural/heritage resources
- Improve accessibility, visibility, and connectivity to/of region’s assets by increasing ease of transportation and improved signage
  
- Eddie Friel presented Economic Drivers
  - Attract more tourists to region and extend length of stay by making it as easy as possible for the customer to find, understand, and purchase the product
  - Maximize the attraction of all Western New York by converting Niagara Falls from an attraction to a destination
  - Increase international direct travel by developing Niagara Falls Airport as a long haul airport
  - Attract discretionary business travel by developing the urban infrastructure including events, convention center and upscale retailing
  - Maximize economic impact by increasing cross border tourism (portal, info when buying, visas, etc.; international marketing; excessive import fees in Canada for wine, culinary)
  
- Randall Kramer presented Critical Issues and Barriers & Challenges
  - Branding WNY as a tourism destination by identifying assets by category
  - Support new/upgraded tourism product, generate customers and economic impact by creating a targeted, focused public investment process for existing/new regional assets
  - Achieve single market regionally by utilizing a properly funded I love NY
  - Bolster corporate knowledge and foster attractiveness of the region as a business development tool
  - Achieving more balanced visitation and enhanced public image by embracing the positive attributes of the four seasons.
  - Achieve greater awareness and visitation by the resident population by marketing directly to them
  
- Daniel Hamister presented Opportunities
  - Create an easier visitor experience using a central website
  - Capture and retain visitors by organizing and promoting attractions by theme (ex. Architecture, sports, agritourism, culinary assets, natural assets, etc.)
  - Capture international and domestic markets by utilizing collaborative marketing tactics. (ex. National television ads, targeted marketing to sectors, use brown sign program for attractions)
  - Assure attraction quality by creating a set of measurable standards



### **Work Group Meeting Notes**

- Attract visitors by developing sustainable profitable new and/or expanded attractions
- Increase visitors by pooling marketing money to reach a broader target market
- Satisfy visitors' needs by having enough quality hotel supply
- Increase number of visitors by presenting a consistent message to a broader market

J. Parker asked the group to agree to a longer meeting time (3 hours) for the next meeting. There was no objection.

H. Ortman asked participants to invite private-sector guests to the next meeting for tactics development. She also asked participants to continue sending best practices examples and case studies along with an explanation of why those studies/examples are exemplary and how they might apply to the WNY region.

D. Ross asked for materials to be sent out early and for participants to be prepared for future meetings in advance.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 28, 2011 at Holiday Valley in Cattaraugus County.

The meeting concluded at 11:30 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