

HISTORIC HUDSON HOOSIC RIVERS PARTNERSHIP



DRAFT-BOARD MEETING MINUTES- DRAFT

August 26, 2024

Gateway Visitor Center

Schuylerville,
NY

MISSION STATEMENT

The Partnership's mission is to preserve, enhance and develop historic, agricultural, scenic, natural and recreational resources and the significant waterways within the Partnership Region. Through the tradition of municipal home rule, the Partnership will foster collaborative projects with pertinent non-profit and governmental entities with an emphasis on both agricultural and open space protection, economic and tourism development and interpretation of our natural and cultural heritage.

Board Members Attending:

Tom Richardson, City of Mechanicville
Joe Durkin, Rensselaer Land Trust/Plateau Alliance
Ed Kinowski, Town of Stillwater
Kay Tomasi, Senate Appointee
Ian Murray, Town of Saratoga
Julie Stokes, Governor Appointee

Also attending:

Andrew Alberti, Flatley Read, Partnership administration
Dave Roberts, GVC Project Coordinator/Contractor
Kate Morse, Hudson Crossing Park, GVC staffing administration

Chairman Tom Richardson called the Board meeting to order. A quorum was present.

Secretary's Report: Minutes prepared by Joe Durkin

- The minutes for the June Board Meeting was approved, motion by Ed Kinowski, second by Kay Tomasi all in favor.

Chairman's Report – Tom Richardson

- GVC as 250 Celebration headquarters/office – Tom R. highlighted that a main focus of the meeting would be approval of the Collaboration Agreement. Drafts of the proposed Collaboration Agreement were distributed to the Board as it was being developed with Saratoga County. Together with the County, we prepared the near final draft Collaboration Agreement distributed to the Board and it covered the topics that had been discussed at the April, May and June Board meetings. The final draft covers the County’s rights of occupancy of ground floor, use/access to main floor for exhibits, use of outdoor areas and collaboration on overall 250 Celebration and operations of the GVC. Tom R reported that the County would like to have a draft it could provide to several County Legislature committees with the possibility of approval by the full County Legislature by middle of September. Tom R noted that the County staff we have worked with (County Attorney office and Steve Bulger) are pleased with the current near final draft. Therefore, the action for the Board is to approve the current near final draft of the Collaboration Agreement with a delegation of authority to the Executive Committee to make modifications which do not change the substance of the Agreement.

Some further questions were raised. One was that given the uncertainty of funding for the Partnership, how is the Partnership going to cover the operational costs of the GVC? Joe D called attention to a provision within the draft Collaboration Agreement that states that in the event the Partnership is unable to cover the operational costs of the GVC, the County will take responsibility for such costs. Tom R mentioned that Carrie Woerner was going to try to align the Partnership funding closer to the Hudson Valley Greenway in the State budget to provide more certainty.

Another item that was identified in the messages to the Board with the recent draft of the Collaboration Agreement was the % of space to be assigned to the County in the Agreement. After discussion, it was agreed that we would specify 30% within the Agreement.

As part of the overall discussion regarding the Collaboration Agreement, especially sharing the space on the upper floor, Julie S noted that the Partnership has a responsibility in operating the GVC to keep in mind that it involves all three counties, not just Saratoga. This further evolved into a discussion about how the Partnership will manage the GVC and work with Saratoga. During this discussion it was pointed out that among the reasons the Agreement is characterized as a “collaboration” and includes provisions for the Partnership and the County to meet and coordinate their operations is that both parties will need to make adjustments over time to accommodate both the 250 Celebration as it evolves along with potential future requests for other regional initiatives and exhibits. It was recognized that the Partnership should have an internal group designated to make decisions related to these issues. The sub committee that Cindy Wian was coordinating for approval of exhibits and displays could be the starting point for this.

At the conclusion of the discussion about the Collaboration Agreement and the Partnership operations of the GVC a motion was made to authorize entering into the Agreement. **Motion 2024-9 made by Julie Stokes, seconded by Ed Knowski authorizing the Collaboration Agreement with delegation of authority to the Executive Committee to make modifications that do not change the substance of the agreement, unanimously approved.**

Management of GVC – Kate Morse

- Staffing, days open, events at GVC during August and July were summarized in the August Report included in the Meeting Agenda.

- In addition to the summary of recent events and staffing, the report included an outline of potential increasing open hours of operation (requested by Tom R). The report included a comparison of original/current staffing times with the possible increase both hours and cost. Tom R noted that he was thinking that this would be planning for next year to be included in the Partnership budget and Kate M and Drew A could coordinate on this item. Tom also mentioned possibly experimenting with some extended hours now and in the winter to see what happens. One specific times frame is later in the day when people may be more likely to be out and about or on the Champlain Trail. Matching the open hours with time of day when people are looking for recreation could increase visiting. Julie S mentioned that this relates to the Village/Town Trail Committee.

Also, operations of the GVC relating to the proposed Saratoga County Collaboration Agreement were part of the discussion of the Agreement. Kate noted that we need to start planning for the future operations especially with Saratoga County using the GVC for the 250 Celebration. Items such as snow plowing, garbage removal, janitorial service needed to be addressed. Ian M mentioned maybe he could talk to Dan Carpenter about the Town of Saratoga and the Village coordinating some of these services. Julie Stokes pointed out that there is already an agreement with the Village that was made as part of the Canal Trail Trailhead under which the Village took on responsibility for some maintenance tasks related to the parking area.

- It was agreed to proceed with the formerly proposed and discussed Interior display regarding indigenous people of the region stories, Champlain Canal-Battenkill – Todd Degarmo.
- It was agreed to proceed with the request by Lauren Roberts for the GVC to host October 15-28 as part of the 250 Celebration the traveling exhibit of several rollup banners "The American Revolution Experience" created by Daughters of the American Revolution and American Battlefield Trust.
- Kate called attention to the part of her report regarding the possible need for first aid resources. Her report noted that a group of cyclists had asked for help for one of them who was having a severe allergic reaction. This caused Kate to think that having First Aid Kit and Narcan Kit would be a good resource for the community. Following discussion of type of resources and training it was agreed that Kate should look into this. Tom R asked that HCP make the Partnership and 'additional insured' under HCP's liability insurance; Kate agreed to review and report back.
- Ian M mentioned that the Town may be able to do the lawn mowing.

GVC Projects Report – Dave Roberts, Kate Morse, Ian Murray

- Dave R stated that with the County now moving forward to occupy the lower floor, he does not have any projects underway. He did note that we should consider some type of reception desk on the upper floor, likely in the area where the furniture desk currently is. With a counter top style reception desk the area could also function as the on site office space for HCP.
- Tom Woods Memorial – Dave R and Ian M will work on memorial plaque to be placed on a small boulder; proposed wording will be prepared and circulated.

Financial Report – Ed Kinowski, Drew Alberti

- Drew made no updates Finance Summary included in the Meeting Agenda; he did note there were no pending invoices as of date of the Meeting. Drew confirmed that as of date of the Meeting the 2nd Reimbursement had not been submitted. He was preparing for submission the week of the Meeting and it was almost ready. Drew noted that after the 2nd Reimbursement there would be about \$30,000 remaining in the current grant. Drew also pointed out that the next grant would likely be backdated to April 2024 (similar to the first grant to April 2023). Drew noted the proposed Future Budget for operations in the Meeting Agenda.

Old Business

-It was decided to defer the next Membership Meeting until the Annual Membership meeting in November.

New Business

- None

Next Board Meeting will be in September. Being no further discussions, Tom Richardson closed the meeting.

Minutes Prepared By Joseph Durkin