



DRAFT - BOARD MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

January 27, 2025

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
Ed Kinowski, Town of Stillwater
Joe Durkin, Rensselaer Land Trust/Plateau Alliance
Julie Stokes, Governor Appointee
Kay Tomasi, Senate Appointee
Cindy Wian

Also attending:

Andrew Alberti, Flatley Read, Partnership administration
Kate Morse, Hudson Crossing Park, GVC staffing administration

A quorum was present.

Secretary's Report: Minutes prepared by Joe Durkin, Meeting December 2, 2024 Motion to approve by Tom R second by Ed K, approved unanimous.

Financial Report – Ed Kinowski, Drew Alberti

Ed K initiated an active discussion by highlighting the Cash Flow item under the Finance Summary included in the Meeting Agenda. The main point being that now with 2nd Reimbursement received, we could pay Flatley Read and HCP (together about \$30,400) which would leave about \$27,300 available for expenses until reimbursement received (3rd and final reimbursement from current grant). The discussion was, since reimbursement can take as long as 4 months, is approximately \$27,000 enough to cover

expenses until reimbursement received. Regular operational bills such as utilities are on average several hundred per month (January was \$407). There are no big expenses expected especially since the insurance bill for all of 2025 was paid in December. Drew A also said we could start paying HCP more quickly than in the past. This would essentially bring our payments more up to date and similarly have the timing of the ESD reimbursements match more closely to current expenses. Drew A noted that over the next 4 months we could pay these operational related expenses (utilities and HCP) of about \$12,000 and be ready to put in our first reimbursement request for the next ESD grant. Thus, the approximately \$27,000 after paying HCP and Flatley Read together about \$30,400 would be enough.

Drew brought up a matter that had been discussed in the past regarding GVC management. He would like to look into hiring a company for sidewalk snow removal, building cleaning services, lawn care and maintenance. This had been discussed in the past with different ideas, but Drew would like to combine all of these building maintenance/management items into one contract. This would eventually add to the overall operating expenses. Tom R mentioned that Ian M had indicated that the Town of Saratoga may help take care of the grounds.

- Board authorization of the 2025 ESD Grant Disbursement Agreement required to receive grant funds.
Motion 2025-1 made by Julie Stokes, seconded by Cindy Wian to authorize entering into the Grant Disbursement Agreement, motion approved unanimously.

Chairman's Report – Tom Richardson

- GVC as 250 Celebration headquarters/office – Tom R. reported that there was a meeting with County DPW staff along with Steve Bulger and Lauren Roberts at the GVC to go over build out planning. The original plans of the GVC by Saratoga Associates was shared with the County. The County is looking closely at restroom requirements and the connection staircase between the lower and upper floors.

- In addition to the buildout of the County's occupancy area, they are looking more closely to adding parking below the existing parking area and connecting with a staircase. Another item is a small outside storage shed.

- Kate M asked again about the possibility of a storage space above the current display area – the mezzanine. The County is looking into including a staircase up to the mezzanine since it could simply be a continuation of the staircase from the lower level up to the mezzanine. This was also part of original plans. One related matter noted was the esthetic effect of the mezzanine staircase would be an item of planning discussions. It was noted that the original Saratoga Associates plans are the starting point for the County.

- Tom R said that the County is enthusiastic about its involvement with the GVC, one item being holding outdoor events on the whole GVC property. Tom R also mentioned that Ian M is starting to coordinate with both the Village and the Town on using parts of the GVC property. Cindy Wian commented to make sure that someone coordinates with all of the involved municipalities. This prompted a discussion about the need for schedules for any and all of these possible out door use events and ideas. Kate M chimed in that she is starting to schedule events. Ed K mentioned that the 250 Celebration Commission (which Ed K serves on and includes Lauren Roberts and Steve Bulger) is overseeing much of this event planning. Joe D reminded everyone that the GVC Cooperative Agreement with the County provides and calls for coordination of use of the outdoor areas, including events, landscaping and parking and specifically calls

for quarterly meetings to go over all such matters. We need to start including scheduling in the various things being planned, even if they are only ideas at this time.

- Board authorization to renew the GVC Agreement with Hudson Crossing Park with delegation to Executive Committee to modify/update and to renew the Administration Agreement with Flatley Read with delegation to Executive Committee to modify/update. **Motion 2025-2 made by Julie Stokes, seconded by Kay Tomasi to authorize renewing both the HCP GVC Agreement and the Flatley Read Administration Agreement, motion approved unanimously.**

Operations of GVC – Kate Morse

- Staffing, days open, events at GVC during October were summarized in the January Report included in the Meeting Agenda. Kate gave a brief summary of her report highlighting the meeting to coordinate with Albany Symphony Orchestra for community concert July 6th. Kate is also looking into programming for the Tow Path. (Note that GVC operations and management items were discussed under both the Finance Report and Chairman's Report)

Regional Projects

– Meeting with Hoosic River Watershed Association (HoorWA) Joe D and Drew A had meeting with HoorWA to look into improving access with a series of kayak/canoe launch sites along the Hoosic River which would involve areas in both Washington and Rensselaer Counties. HoorWA, has attended many Partnership meetings over the years and has asked the Partnership to send letters of support for projects at Valley Falls. It was noted that HoorWA has looked at the availability of access to the Hoosic River and has a handout map/catalog. Part of the meeting was about the respective roles and what could Partnership and HoorWA each do as well as how to coordinate. Probably the first initiative would be to looking into having a study done of existing and possible sites and find a grant funding source. Tom R posed the question of how should we coordinate among the various Town Supervisors and how soon should we start getting the idea out.

- Champlain Canalway Trail working Group meeting including Julie S, Drew A and Kate M. The idea of using the GVC as the meeting place for meetings was suggested. Another suggestion that the Partnership could be the representative applicant for funding opportunities for such items as signs and way fining. Julie S pointed out that the Schuylerville Trail Town Committee could be another participant.

- During both discussions about the HoorWA and Canalway Trail meetings Tom R emphasized that we should use these as opportunities to start bring interested people into the room and to bring together more of the elected representatives of the area. Tom R repeatedly said we should bring people together.

Annual Membership Meeting

- Joe D said he intends for the Annual Meeting minutes to be distributed in February (and not wait for the next Annual Meeting) to all the membership as part of our effort to get and keep people interested in regional projects.

Being no further discussions, Tom Richardson closed the meeting.

Minutes Prepared By Joseph Durkin