

**Cortland County Convention & Visitors Bureau
May 28, 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
In-Person Meeting at 42 Main Street, Cortland**

<u>Directors Present:</u>	Ilya Shmulenson, Tabitha Scoville, Kim Thayer, Chris Merkley, Savannah Hempstead, Tammy Timmerman. Molly Reagan, Carly Dougherty
<u>Directors Excused:</u>	Ty Marshal, Dianne Galutz
<u>Directors Absent:</u>	Eric Mulvihill, Shine Taylor, Sam Ferro
<u>Advisory Members Present:</u>	Keith VanGorder
<u>Advisory Members Excused:</u>	
<u>Staff Present:</u>	Michelle Enright, Candace Rozansky
<u>Guests:</u>	None

President I. Shmulenson called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Meeting Minutes:

The March Board Meeting minutes were reviewed and accepted.

Financials:

T. Timmerman reported on the financials. Nothing outstanding to report. Advertising revenue was from 2026 Travel Guide sales. M. Enright noted that still waiting on payment from three vendors. Also noted that money was transferred into the Tourism Marketing Grant account to cover vouchers that have begun to come in.

M. Enright reported there have been additional advertising opportunities that have come up, specifically within streaming, that may have me moving dollars originally budgets under Special Projects to Advertising.

President's Report:

President I. Shmulenson reported that went to special legislative meeting regarding the occupancy tax along with Cindy Stoker of CNY Living History Center. Roots and Rhythm went very well.

Executive Director's Report:

M. Enright reported on the activities of the CVB since the last Board meeting. Q1 report was presented to the County Finance & Administration Committee and shared with the Board. An update was provided on the occupancy tax bill, which was introduced to the Ways and Means Committee; letters were sent to Assemblymember Kelles, the committee members, and Senator Webb, and Board members were encouraged to submit letters as well. Staff are looking into several marketing initiatives, including Centro bus promotion for the Ice Cream Trail, an Advanced Media sponsored content series for summer/fall, continued blog content for the Cortland Standard, and a Travel Guide pickup event at BRU64. The CVB also prepared 100 giveaway bags for the Cortland County Planning Department to distribute at the CNY Maple Festival. Roots & Rhythm was a success, selling out at 100 tickets and raising at least \$1,000 for the Seven Valleys Health Coalition, with \$1,900 secured in sponsorships. Thanked Ty and the Cortland Country Music Park staff for hosting the event. The Ice Cream Trail launched Memorial Day weekend, with 1,000 maps distributed the first weekend and another 4,000 printed. Staff also met with the Cortland County

Planning Department to discuss a partnership with Way2Go Cortland Mobility Management to help promote the trail through public transportation access. The CVB is also planning to apply for the CNY Community Foundation Community Grants Fund in Fall 2026 under Economic Development and is exploring an Appalachian Regional Commission Area Development Program application to support development of a Cortland County Tourism Strategic Plan. Staff outreach in May included tabling at a Syracuse Crunch game, attending the Dream Destinations Travel Show in Springfield, Massachusetts, and tabling at the SUNY Cortland Open House.

Digital Marketing Manager Report:

C. Rozansky reported new bike shop opened in downtown Cortland. Finger Lakes Favorites voting ends tomorrow so please vote if you haven't. Showed a reel developed for the SUNY Cortland First Friday event to highlight the music history of the school.

Old Business:

STR numbers have increased month-over-month consistent with the increase of sports tournaments. April results were also higher than April 2025 and include Hope Lake Lodge data. Board members requested additional context on vacancy and occupancy rates as the County considers future hotel development, including what occupancy levels typically support a new hotel project and how demand is being measured.

New Business:

Media Hits: Go Finger Lakes continues to expand its coverage in Cortland County, with Taylor Valley State Forest selected as one of three featured locations in 2026.

Around the Table:

K. VanGorder: No updates.

S. Hempstead: Pumpkinfest planning is underway, including the T-shirt concert at the end of the month, sponsorships are still being accepted and bands can submit through the end of the month. July 4 vendor applications are open through May, and that local historians are planning programming through their respective municipalities.

T. Timmerman: Golf season is in full swing. Two new restaurants have opened on Main Street (Rizz Eats and Nanu Chicken). Congratulated CVB staff on the success of Roots & Rhythm.

I. Shmulenson: Seasonal operations are in full swing, including mowing and trail work. Trail for All rededication ceremony is scheduled for Friday, May 29. Four Wonder Water field trips have taken place. Provided update on marketing planning, including a call with an NBC3 sales affiliate to explore streaming ad options and use of Tourism Marketing Grant funds.

C. Merkley: Airbnb at 28 Main Street has been performing well, especially with graduation-related groups, and hiring is underway at SunDog. Main Street Music series has begun announcing shows and is returning to its original location near BRU64.

T. Scoville: The Historical Society has had successful spring fundraising efforts, including the Kentucky Derby event, Mother's Day Brunch, From Ages Past concert series at Grace, and the Timeless Treasures sale. There will be coverage in Life in the Finger Lakes. Shared upcoming America250 programming dates including Jake Edwards on June 17, George Cummings on June 30, and Perry Ground on July 1.

K. Thayer: Spring and summer operations are ramping up, with mountain biking and camping underway, season rentals opening, disc golf tournaments scheduled, weekly programming in place (Burgers, Brews and Views on Tuesdays and Sunday Brunch at Trax). Princess Breakfast on May 31 sold out at 185 attendees with plans to repeat.

C. Dougherty: May was a busy month. There will be a feature on Food & Ferments in the Cortland Standard developed with TC3. Cortland Wellness Studio is planning a new studio and looks to have Food & Ferments product for sale. Reported continued business growth, including a 60% increase in web sales and ongoing work on website upgrades.

M. Reagan: The reception for Imagination Celebration is at the Dowd Gallery for this evening (May 28). Porchfest planning is underway with permits in place. A new mural project is planned at Suggett Park at the Rotary Shelter.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Enright
Executive Director