



CALLICOON BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

2022 Monthly Member Meeting | 10.26.22 MINUTES

Meeting date | time 10/26/2022 | 5:40 pm | Meeting location Western Hotel + Zoom

Meeting called by:	Nicole Vallance, President	Timekeeper:	n/a
Facilitator:	Nicole Vallance, President	Call to Order	5:40 pm by Nicole Vallance
Note taker:	Lily Smith, Secretary	Adjourned	6:30 pm by Nicole Vallance

Attendance: Officers: Nicole Vallance, *President*; Rosie DeCristofaro, *Vice President*; Tanya Vannatta, *Co-treasurer*; Tom Dent, *Co-treasurer*; Lily Smith, *Secretary*. **Guests:** Lourdesa Hunt, Isabel Braverman, Michael Levine, Barbara Donatelli, Irene Nickolai, Monica Weir, Genia Brodyn **Zoom:** Laura Moran, Roy Harris

Agenda topic President's Report | Presenter Nicole Vallance

Welcome and introduction of guest speakers from the Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association.

Agenda topic Special Guests | Presenters Lourdesa Hunt & Isabel Braverman from SCVA (Sullivan Catskills)

Lourdesa is new to the Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association and is heading membership outreach. The Association is focused on promoting tourism in the area, this includes print, wide digital distribution (travel plazas, across country, and up/down thruway). They also have a website and social media platforms, which have a following of 65K visitors. Advertisers reach an entire network of social followers when they add their events to the Association calendar and newsletters reach 30K+ people. All online tools are free with membership.

Isabel Braverman: The Association has a wonderful video podcast where followers talk about businesses, and promote their events. For example, a video podcast was produced for a Bold Gold 1 minute radio spot, which aired in three Sullivan Stations. Membership costs less than \$150 a year. The Association's Mobile App is a passport program with a mobile app, which, for example, is being used to promote Restaurant Week.

Isabel is a social media maven. Her influencer program started this year with a team that brings high quality engagement. Influencers go to Inns, lodging (come for 2-night stay / 3 days), restaurants, and check out community activities (i.e., rafting, alpacas, etc.) The folder she provided includes a social media cheat sheet. Members are encouraged to tag and share their posts with the Association to benefit from its substantial network. This is important for events, which can be seen on the events calendar and the website. Additionally, ads are displayed in Liberty and outside Liberty. As part of membership, members can submit their events to be published in the Association events calendar, which are then pulled into weekly eBlasts every Wednesday, and posted on Facebook and Instagram. A concerted effort is also made to make sure all members know how to use the Associations digital tools. Reach out for details on this training.

Q from Tom D: "Do CBA Member benefits extend to all individual CBA members?"

A: The CBA can list the Association's Events and some events for its members, but individual business promotion and portal requires that member to also be a member.

Agenda topic Secretary's Report | Presenter Lily Smith

Since Board didn't have enough time to review last month's meeting minutes, **motion was made (TV) to move meeting minutes to next meeting 2nd (TD). All approved.**

Agenda topic Treasurer's Report | Presenter Tom Dent

At the present time, the association is solvent. September's efforts and activities resulted in a net income of zero. That is to say, the CBA has money in the bank, but at this point it's even with where we were last year. That is likely to change with Purse Bingo – coming up in November – which is usually a big fundraiser for the CBA.

We have \$11K in the bank, which is allocated for reserved funds; and the general fund has a balance of approximately \$7K. All bills have been paid and revenues banked to-date. (with the exception of some small Artwalk bills still coming in)
Motion to approve treasurer's report(TV), 2nd by Lily. All approved.

Agenda topic Events Committee | Presenter *Tanyia Vannatta*

ArtWalk: Art Walk 2022 was a success. Many artists, musicians and dance companies performed, and over 65 artists displayed their work. A huge thank you to all sponsors and business partners in town. Profit from the event was \$290, which is normal as it usually breaks even. Remember that the objective of the event is not focused on profit so much as generating visitor traffic for members.

Purse Bingo is taking place November 19th from 2-5pm at Delaware Youth Center.

Callicoon Holiday Tree Lighting: This year's tree lighting will take place Saturday, November 26th, starting at 5:00 pm

- We're looking for approximately 10 volunteers for the tree lighting and Dickens events. Please contact Zach Scheitlin for more info, at: zach@grizzlybagels.com
- NV: Seminary Hill Cidery has been approached to have a booth for cider. Zach is arranging for a Hot Cocoa Bar, Nicole will make and donate the events s'mores packages. Tom D. will handle bonfire. We're also asking for donations for a coat drive; that is, coats for any age up to adult. CBA will do a raffle in conjunction with drive to enter into the raffle. Giving back to community and giving xmas cheer to those who need it.

Hamlet Decorating We're also looking for volunteers to help with town decorations on November 12th & 20th, possibly into a 3rd day. This will include hanging wreaths, bows on balconies, new commercial Depot lights. Any volunteers would be much appreciated. Roy and Genia volunteered. Roy generously donated little lighting units that light up red/green at night to Callicoon.

In terms of decorating: We were thinking about setting up a smaller tree at Railroad station if there is enough interest. Ideas: Asking people to bring outdoor decorations to put on the tree to make it more personal, etc. NV will reach out to Roy to arrange the pick up of lights.

Dickens on the Delaware: Zach and Tanyia would like to taking a step back and work with an events chair and we are looking for volunteers to chair the event. Dickens date is set to take place December 10th. (until then the events committee will continue planning) It will comprise the usual program, that is: horse and buggy, fire logs, caroling, etc. We have contacted Sullivan west HS Choir, Job Corps, so far and are working on Logs and Horse & buggy. Seminary Hill will have a cider pop up at the depo during the event.

Event planning meetings are usually bi-weekly on Tuesdays at 5pm at Callicoon Pantry. However, since there's only 5 weeks left to Dickens, we'll meet every week starting Nov 8th.

Irene: with regards to art walk – thank you – you did a great job. There was a lot of foot traffic. However, it wasn't promoted well in terms of marketing. There were no post cards, no flyers and nothing on the CBA website. This really impacts restauranteurs when patrons aren't made aware of events.

TV: we generated promotion using Mail Chimp and Instagram, which vendors can utilize to promote event themselves.

Irene: We promote events, but, for example, one of the photographers that ordinarily would have covered the event didn't cover the event because of the lack of promotion. (need a reference) If you can't promote an event, hold off and don't do it until it can be properly promoted. This community is Facebook oriented, older people are not on Instagram. The marketing chair hasn't done anything. No one on CBA board has asked us (members). "How are things going. How did you survive COVID." None of the members have come in and say "how are you doing?"

Lily: Irene, we don't disagree, and acknowledge the disconnect. In fact, we were just discussing these very issues in the executive meeting. We will be addressing this, but people would be better able to hear your good points if they weren't made with an accusatory tone. You have to remember – and you know as a former board member – that this is a volunteer organization. We have limited capacity.

Irene: this needs to be brought out, there are community members here who also noticed things missing. The marketing Chair should be doing this. She didn't do her job.

NV: We agree that the Marketing has not been what it should be. Tanyia, Zach and myself routinely fill in to set up posts and promote but capacity and participation, as always has been an issue. Please remember that we're a small team of volunteers who have jobs, businesses to run and families, and we are doing the best we can with a small number of volunteers. Last year the facebook's VisitCalicoon was reassigned to the then Marketing Chairs (Irene and Claire) as Admins, and this year NV tried for several months to have FB:Visit Callicocon reassigned with board members as admins.

Irene: you just realized you don't have admin access?

NV: First off, it is the Marketing Chair and SM Consultant's role to admin these accounts, not mine. I reached out to Jessica and Claire dozens of times over the first 3 months of the new board to try to have it changed. I left it with them as its Marketing's role to be listed as the admin. I have been doing most of the posts on the Instagram posts this year, but I can't push all posts to Facebook or connect the accounts. This was something I was doing to help as Im not on the marketing committee. I did followed for 3 months. I do not know why, the account couldn't be assigned at any point thus far. Claire is not here and I can't speak for her. I would ask you to understand that the volunteers in front of you have taken on a huge task and are doing great work considering the lack of participation from membership. We only hear the complaints, which is very disheartening. I would ask that you check the tone you are adopting, however.

TV: As far as marketing the events, we have done radio ads, yard signs, brochures/maps, flyers, posters, Democrat & River Reporter ads, & Instagram pushes. There hasn't been any Facebook marketing as Irene has been the only admin for the VisitCallicocon's page.

NV: Art Walk, usually relies on the DVAA grant, which we didn't get it this year. We started out with a zero budget. Also, remember that the event is done for the community; it's not a fundraising event. To make up for the lack of start up funding Tanyia was able to get business sponsorships for all events this year, and it was this funding that provided the start up budgets for all events – including the entire budget for Artwalk. Tanyia should be congratulated for the incredible work she did.

Q: Genia: Why not announce the event in the Democrat newspaper?

A: TV: All events are announced in the paper, starting three weeks before the event.

Q: Genia: Also, some people don't have internet. Can we do postcards in the mail, and post notices / posters on Depot?

A: Lily: It would be good if we had more volunteers to help with these good ideas.

Q: Monica: where are the other business members? Why aren't they here to see what is going on?

Irene: Personal contact is missing from this board. I haven't seen you at my restaurant to ask me how I am doing all year. When I was president, I made phone calls to members to get them to come with meetings.

NV: Capacity is always an issue. Board members can't always be patrons of every business or call all members each month to remind them to attend. We have regularly scheduled monthly meetings, we send out eBlasts announcements & reminders, and its on Facebook. We do our best to reach out and connect given the limited capacity. The most important way for members to get involved is to attend meetings where we can discuss things as a group and for them to try to participate. We have had a year of successful meetings that have helped confidence, come up with new ideas and had respectful dialogue. In general, the feedback has been good. Attendance has fallen off these last few months –summer is always difficult as everyone is very busy running their business. However, member participation is necessary to have

voices heard and be a part of solutions. It is very discouraging when volunteers only hear the complaints, particularly when folks don't show up to help all year. We're a volunteer organization with limited time.

Discussion ends at an impasse.

NEXT MEETING - November 30, 2022

MEETING CLOSING - Move to Adjourn (NV) at 6:50pm, 2nd (TD). Approved Unanimously.