

## Tracy Delaney

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**From:** Rich Volo  
**Sent:** Friday, January 11, 2019 10:00 AM  
**To:** Tracy Delaney  
**Cc:** Kimberly Goetz; Cherri Hirsch; Chuck Rosenthal; Jamie Smith Quinn; Jeffrey Hunt; Ellen Thurston; Kristen Keck; Tandra Dillon; Ted Gramkow  
**Subject:** November 2018 Tourism Board Minutes  
**Attachments:** Tourism Council RFP 102818.pdf

November 27, 5:30pm

Chamber of Commerce - 2nd Floor

Present: Rich Volo, Jamie Smith Quinn, Tandra Dillon, Ellen Thurston, Kirsten Keck, Jeff Hunt, Chuck Rosenthal

1. Confirmations that RFP was sent and received. See attached doc 2. Review of questions received. RV to respond to Adworkshop 3. Review of expense requirements from Treasurer's office. Bills to be forwarded to Tracy Delaney and Andy Howard. Contracts require resolution to Council 4. All 2019 meetings to be held at Chamber - 2nd floor. 4th Tuesday. 5:30pm 5. December meeting to be cancelled.

Rich Volo  
Alderman  
Fourth Ward, City of Hudson

rich.volo@cityofhudson.org  
518-309-2528

[www.FourthWardHudson.com](http://www.FourthWardHudson.com)

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**From:** Rich Volo  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 10, 2019 12:51:09 PM  
**To:** Chuck Rosenthal; Jamie Smith Quinn; Jeffrey Hunt; Ellen Thurston; Kristen Keck; Tandra Dillon; Ted Gramkow  
**Subject:** Fw: Tourism RFP

Here is the RFP for reference.

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Thanks

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## City of Hudson Tourism Board RFP: Branding and Marketing Strategy

### I. Introduction

The City of Hudson, New York and its Tourism Board (“the Board”) is seeking a qualified professional consultant (“Consultant”) to submit a written proposal to assist the Board in developing a tourism branding and marketing strategy that encompasses strategic research and analysis, development of a competitive identity, brand strategy and marketing strategy.

### II. Background

#### A. A Regional Treasure

Hudson NY is located in the bucolic Hudson River Valley on the eastern shore of the river for which it is named. Hudson is strategically located. It is an easy two hour trip by car or train from New York City, 2½ hours from Boston, and 45 minutes from the Albany International Airport. It is home to the third busiest Amtrak station in the State of New York, attesting to its draw for visitors and second home owners. It has convenient access to both the New York State Thruway and the Taconic State Parkway.

While Hudson’s population of approximately 6,400 is equivalent to many small towns, Hudson is - and behaves much more like - a city, with an historical richness and contemporary vibrancy far bigger than its size would suggest.

Hudson welcomes visitors throughout the year from every corner of the globe. Its compact urban core makes it an eminently walkable city. The fact that it is situated at the heart of an agricultural district makes it a recognized leader in the farm-to-table movement. The region is also the birthplace of the Hudson River School, the first truly American art movement. Contemporary artist Kiki Smith said that the “Hudson/Catskill neighborhood was like 'Soho' in the 70s'...With galleries, production studios, and performance venues part of every community's landscape, art is alive and well - and increasingly visible.”

Within the city, there are architectural examples from nearly every major American period, from 18th-Century Nantucket townhouses, to solid Federal-style buildings, to rambling Victorians and early 20th Century Arts and Crafts structures. Housed inside many of these architectural treasures are over 200 locally-owned shops, eating and drinking establishments, cultural venues and quaint B&B’s to contemporary inns and hotels. Hudson is also home to FASNY, the largest firefighting museum in the world.

This mix—history, farming, art, culture—makes Hudson an extraordinary city to visit, offering magnificent scenic views and historic sites with stories to tell and great food, shopping and entertainment throughout the city.

#### B. The Tourism Economy

Columbia County, of which Hudson is the county seat, is experiencing dramatic growth in its tourism industry, largely fueled by Hudson’s popularity as a tourist destination. According to a 2016 New

York State survey of the economic impact of tourism, visitors spent over \$140 million in Columbia County that year, and **tax revenues** generated by tourists grew by 8.2 percent.

Columbia County saw a 7.7 percent increase in **traveler spending**, the largest increase of any of the six counties in the Hudson Valley Region. By comparison, New York as a whole saw 2.7 percent growth in traveler spending.

Of the six counties in Hudson Valley Region, Columbia County's employment is the most dependent upon tourism. In 2017, 8.5% of all **labor income** was generated by visitors.

### C. Hudson's Lodging Tax

On June 1, 2017, Hudson enacted a 4% Lodging Tax. The tax is intended to create a new revenue stream for the city that has been traditionally dependent on property owners and their tenants. The new tax provides additional funds for services and programs that benefit all residents and takes advantage of the importance of tourism to the city's economy and culture. A portion of the 4% tax will launch the Board's tourism and marketing initiative.

## III. Project Overview

The Board's mission is to "establish the City of Hudson as a preferred destination in the Hudson Valley, while embracing smart growth and enhancing the economy and the quality of life for all Hudson residents." The Board is interested in creating a tourism branding and marketing strategy establishing a clear identity that resonates in the community as a pleasant place to live, work and play. The resulting brand messaging should have particular emphasis on the following:

- Attract, retain and grow a diverse, stable economic base that supports the city's revenues, goods and services;
- Make Hudson a preferred destination point for residents, businesses and visitors.

The tourism brand and marketing strategy must communicate the city's identity in a clear and effective message used with residents, businesses, and visitors. Additionally, it should identify short term and long term strategies to effectively deliver the message.

The Board will make available relevant planning studies, a compendium of Hudson's existing businesses, a SWOT analysis recently undertaken by the Board and any other reports or studies that will aid in the completion and implementation of the tourism branding and marketing strategy.

## IV. Scope of Services

### A. Strategic Research and Analysis

The Consultant will perform research and identify the perception of Hudson from a resident, business and visitor standpoint. Focus groups, interviews, surveys and other research methodologies should be used as appropriate. Data should be collected from residents, businesses, visitors, stakeholders, members of the Board, potential regional partners and any other identified key groups to ensure the success of all tasks. At the end of the research and analysis, the Consultant should identify Hudson's key distinctive competencies and clearly communicate the city's value proposition.

The following questions should be answered:

1. What does Hudson want to be known for?
2. What thoughts and feelings does the city want to evoke when people are exposed to its name?
3. How can Hudson stand out from the crowd and become more competitive in the regional tourism market?

Deliverables:

- Research Summary and
- Brand Positioning Statement

#### B. Development of a Competitive Identity

Compile findings and develop a succinct message that highlights Hudson's distinctive competencies and communicates the city's desired identity. The message should communicate the city's vision and identity in a believable, relevant and simple format for the target audience. The message should be capable of being used across a variety of city departments, programs, and services. The Consultant will develop promotional materials that aid in communicating the city's competitive identity. The Consultant should develop an advertising strategy that leverages the city's identity in multiple mediums including print, outdoor, internet and direct mail.

Deliverables:

- Create a believable, relevant and simple message that communicates Hudson's identity;
- Conduct market research to help enhance and professionalize promotional materials and identify markets; and
- Develop a marketing and PR strategy that leverages Hudson's identity in multiple mediums including print, outdoor, internet and direct mail.

#### C. Brand Strategy

Identify the long term strategy the Board should adopt to ensure the city's new brand identity is sustainable in attracting visitors, and is effective for retaining and expanding businesses throughout the city. The Consultant should outline guidelines for the Board to ensure Hudson's promise to residents, businesses and visitors is consistently delivered.

Deliverables:

- Identify the three to five year brand strategy; and
- Outline long term recommendations with corresponding timeline to implement a sustainable brand identity. Identify how it will aide in attracting, retaining and expanding tourism.

#### D. Marketing Strategy

Identify the short term strategy the Board should adopt to communicate and deliver the value proposition for its residents, businesses and visitors. It should identify the set of marketing tactics and tools to shift the perception of residents, businesses and visitors to reflect the adopted brand identity. The marketing tools should create a positive image that will reside in the target audience's mind.

The following questions should be answered:

- a. How will we communicate and deliver the newly adopted identity?
- b. How will we measure the effectiveness of the communication and delivery (including print, digital, social, et. al.)?
- c. How will the marketing tactics and tools aide in attracting, retaining and expanding tourism?

Deliverables:

- Develop an integrated strategic marketing plan designed to increase awareness of city programs, activities, events, and amenities;
- Develop sample marketing tools including brochures, visitor guides, and any other informational literature to support city programs, activities, events and amenities; and
- Obtain price estimate to print marketing tools as requested by the Board.

#### V. Final Report and Presentation

The Consultant will deliver one (1) printed unbound copy, one (1) printed bound copy and one (1) electronic copy of their final report to the Board. All marketing materials shall be in an electronic form commonly used by most computer software (PDF preferred). In addition, the Consultant will be required to make a final formal presentation to the Board.

#### VI. Consultant's Responsibilities

At the start of the project, the Consultant will meet with the Board and selected individuals to discuss the approach and expectations.

The Consultant will be in contact with a designated member of the Board on a regular basis to review the progress of the work and to discuss any changes in direction or needed details.

#### VII. Submittal Content

The following minimum information should be provided in each proposal and will be utilized in evaluating each proposal submitted. To expedite the evaluation of proposals, submittals should be no more than thirty (30) pages in length.

##### 1. Cover Letter

The cover letter should indicate the full name and address of the consulting firm that will perform the services described in the RFP. The Consultant should include the name and contact

information for the individual who will serve as project manager as well as the firm's qualifications.

**2. Consultant's Prior Experience and Qualifications**

Provide examples of the last three (3) completed projects demonstrating the Consultant's current branding and marketing experience preferably working with municipalities or other public agencies similar in size, scope and purpose.

**3. References**

Provide three (3) client references applicable to the scope of services. Include contact names, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.

**4. Organizational Chart**

Identify all team members and their titles and responsibilities for the project.

**5. Team Member Resumes**

Provide resumes for all team members.

**6. Management Overview and Approach**

Explain the proposed methodology that will be used and clearly demonstrate understanding of the objectives the project is intended to complete. The Consultant should provide a work plan and timeline indicating how each task under the Scope of Services will be accomplished.

**7. Fee Proposal**

As part of the cost and price proposal, the Consultant(s) shall submit proposed pricing to provide the services for each work task proposed in response to the Scope of Services.

**8. Exceptions/Deviations**

State any exceptions to or deviations from the requirements of this RFP, segregating "technical" exceptions from "contractual" exceptions. Where Consultant(s) wishes to propose alternative approaches to meeting the technical or contractual requirements outlined in this RFP, these should be thoroughly explained. If no contractual exceptions are noted, Consultant(s) will be deemed to have accepted the contract requirements as set forth.

**VIII. Evaluation and Selection Process**

All proposals submitted will be reviewed and evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Consultant's qualifications and experience;
- Consultant's knowledge of best practices in branding and marketing municipalities;
- Consultant's experience in completing projects similar in size, scope and purpose;

- Consultant's understanding of the Scope of Services;
- Consultant's work plan to complete services;
- Qualifications and experience of team members;
- Overall quality of response to the RFP; and
- Consultant's fee proposal.

During the evaluation period, the Board may interview some or all of the proposing firms. The Board will establish a specific date to conduct interviews, and all prospective Consultant(s) will be asked to keep this date available. No other interview dates will be provided, therefore, if a Consultant(s) is unable to attend the interview on this date, its proposal may be eliminated from further discussion. The interview will likely consist of a short presentation by the Consultant(s) after which the Board will ask questions related to the firm's proposal and qualifications.

#### VIII. Professional Services Agreement

The selected consultant will be required to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with the City of Hudson which includes the city's standard Terms and Conditions including insurance requirements.

#### IX. Submission of Proposals

One (1) bound printed copy, one (1) unbound printed copy and one (1) electronic copy of all proposals must be received by January 15, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. It is the responsibility of the Consultant to see that any proposal sent through mail, or any other delivery method, should have sufficient time to be received by the proposal due date and time. Late proposals will not be accepted. Proposals should be clearly marked and submitted to:

Rich Volo, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman and Tourism Board Chairman  
520 Warren Street  
Hudson, NY 12534

All inquiries to this proposal should be submitted via mail or e-mail to:

Rich Volo, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman and Tourism Board Chairman  
520 Warren Street  
Hudson, NY 12534  
917.470.0495  
rich.volo@cityofhudson.org

Only questions that have been resolved in writing will be binding. Oral and other interpretations or clarifications will be without legal or contractual effect.

#### X. Award of Contract

The City of Hudson will receive competitive proposals from agencies having specific experience and qualifications in the areas identified in this solicitation. Under competitive negotiation procedures, the terms of the service contract, the price of the service, the method of service

delivery, and the conditions of performance are all negotiable. A negotiated contract will be awarded to the firm that best meets the proposed needs at a reasonable price, not necessarily at the lowest price.

## XI. Conflict of Interest

Consultant(s) must disclose to the Hudson Tourism Board the existence of any conflicts of interests, whether existing or potential. If none exist, state so. Proposals shall disclose:

1. Any material financial relationships that the Proposer or any employee of the Consultant has that may create a conflict of interest in acting as a contractor to the Hudson Tourism Board.
2. Any family relationship that the or any employee of the Proposer has with any the Hudson Tourism Board members that may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest acting as a contractor to the Hudson Tourism Board .
3. Any other matter that the Proposer believes may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest acting as a contractor to the Hudson Tourism Board .

## XII. New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL)

All submissions for consideration to the Hudson Tourism Board will be held in confidence pending final execution of the contract(s). However, fully executed contracts may be subject to federal Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). Therefore, if a Consultant believes that any information in its submission constitutes a trade secret or is otherwise information which, if disclosed would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the Consultant's enterprise, and the Consultant wishes such information to be withheld if requested pursuant to FOIL, the Consultant shall submit with their proposal a separate letter addressed to the primary contact referenced in this RFP, specifically identifying the page number(s), line(s) or other appropriate designation(s) of the proposal containing such information, explaining in detail why such information is a trade secret or is other information which if disclosed would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the Consultant's enterprise, and formally requesting that such information be kept confidential. Failure by a Consultant to submit such a letter with its submission will constitute a waiver by the Consultant of any interest in seeking exemption of this information relating to protection of trade secrets. The proprietary nature of the information designated confidential by the Consultant may be subject to disclosure if it is requested and the Hudson Tourism Board deems it subject to disclosure or if ordered by the United States Department of Homeland Security (US DHS). A request that an entire proposal be kept confidential may not be considered reasonable since a submission cannot reasonably consist of all data exempt from FOIL.