



2023 Digital Delegate Package



October 17, 2023 | 10:00am

WELCOME!

Welcome from Meghan James , Chief Governing Officer of the OHTO Board of Directors

Welcome to our 2023 AGM!

Over the past year, the OHTO Board of Directors and Operational Team have continued their work and education towards becoming a responsible tourism destination. We have been challenged, enlightened, moved, and made to think deeper about how the tourism sector can make the greatest positive impact in our region. Not always easy, these conversations are invaluable in our continued commitment to a more sustainable future.

Working with some great mentors, we have learned how to embody inclusivity, community alignment and sustainability in everything we do.

We appreciate the support of the region and their contributions thus far and look forward to working together to wander more sustainably in the coming years, together.

Thanks,
Meghan James

Welcome from Nicole Whiting, Executive Director of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization

We are excited to once again welcome our regional tourism family to our annual AGM. In response to previous feedback, we are delivering this event virtually again this year; and promise to bring an informative and enjoyable experience to our attendees.

Building on the launch of our responsible tourism approach in 2021, we are proud to say we secured additional funding, strengthened relationships with key partners, expanded our industry communications approach, streamlined the delivery of our programming and successfully acquired credentials that demonstrate our commitment to strengthening our communities through responsible tourism. The journey we have begun is not easy, yet we are confident it will attract high-value guests in the years to come while enhancing the quality of life for residents of our communities.

Thank you for joining us today and for your curiosity and contributions towards making Ontario's Highlands a best-in-class responsible tourism destination.

Sincerely,
Nicole Whiting



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, October 17, 2023 | 10 AM to 12 PM

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 10:00 AM | Welcome Address from the Board of Directors and Land Acknowledgement |
| 10:05 AM | Annual General Meeting |
| 10:30 AM | GAME BREAK (5 minutes) |
| 10:35 AM | Executive Director Report |
| 11:00 AM | GAME BREAK (5 minutes) |
| 11:05 AM | Locally Inspired Fireside Chat on Sustainable Tourism, featuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kirstin Thompson, OWL Rafting on the Ottawa River• Tegan Legge, Haliburton Forest & Wild Life Reserve• Meghan James, Somewhere Inn Calabogie |
| 11:35 AM | Break-out Sessions - What ways are you planning to wander sustainability within your organization/business? |
| 11:55 AM | FINAL GAME BREAK (5 minutes) |
| 12:00 PM | Final Message From OHTO |



EVENT INFORMATION & DETAILS

EVENT ACCESS INFORMATION

The OHTO AGM is hosted using Zoom. Below is the meeting access information and you can use a desktop or laptop, smart device or tablet to download the Zoom app to log in to this event.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81495661420?pwd=Uk0wNDFnbnk4NSMHR5S0JYUGZMbVZldz09>

Meeting ID: 814 9566 1420 // Passcode: 832858

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/kcAtvFknuo>

Please note the event will open to participants starting at 9:55 a.m. on Tuesday, October 17 and the Annual General Meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. We kindly request that you log on early to ensure your Zoom app is running correctly, that you can successfully log in and your audio/video connections are performing correctly. If you have any issues with logging in, please contact Kasey Rogerson at 613-629-6486 x203.

Important

If you will be joining the meeting by phone, please send us your name and phone number in an email to kasey.rogerson@ohto.ca **as soon as possible**, so we can expect to let you into the Zoom meeting.

Disclaimer

The event will be recorded using Zoom for future marketing and promotional purposes, if you do not give permission to be recorded, both for video and audio purposes, please ensure you keep your microphone muted and your video stream offline, and remember to use the Chatbox to submit your questions and/or responses.

QUESTIONS DURING THE EVENT

If you have questions during the event, please submit them in the Chat box within the Zoom app. Staff will be monitoring the Chat for questions and will notify the speaker at the appropriate time. If you are phoning in to the event, please keep your phone muted until the appropriate time during the event when the speaker asks participants for questions.

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS USING MENTIMETER

As part of the event, there is an exercise that will take place during the Break-Out sessions following the Fireside Chat. For this exercise you will need to have your web browser open to www.menti.com or have your cellphone available to scan the QR code for quick access. During the event, staff will post the code required to access the exercise page when the time comes.

AGENDA

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 10:00 AM | Call to Order, Land Acknowledgement and Welcoming Remarks |
| 10:10 AM | Adoption of Agenda |
| | Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes |
| | CGO's Report |
| | Presentation of Financial Statements & Appointment of Auditor |
| | Presentation of Slate of Nominees to Board of Directors |
| | BREAK |
| 10:30 AM | Executive Director Report |
| 11:00 AM | Adjournment |

MOTIONS

CALL TO ORDER

Adoption of Agenda

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

THAT the agenda be adopted as presented.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

THAT the minutes of the November 2, 2022 AGM be approved as presented.

CGO's Report

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

THAT the members of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization accept the CGO's report.

Presentation of Financial Statements

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

THAT the members of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization accept the 2022-2023 Financial Statements as presented.

MOTIONS

Appointment of Auditor

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

THAT Baker Tilley be appointed as Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization's 2023-2024 auditors.

Presentation of the Slate of Nominees to the Board of Directors

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

TO acclaim the Slate of Nominees to fill the vacancies on the Board of Directors of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization as presented.

Executive Director Report

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

THAT the members of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization accept the Executive Director's report.

ADJOURNMENT

2022 Minutes

Call to Order - CGO Melissa Marquart call the meeting to order 12:40 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

MOVED BY: Cindy Bonello SECONDED BY: Cindy Jamieson
THAT the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

MOVED BY: Shannon MacLaggan SECONDED BY: Meghan James
THAT the minutes of the October 20, 2021 AGM be approved as presented.

CARRIED

CGO's Report

MOVED BY: Jody Yantha SECONDED BY: Erin Norris
THAT the members of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization accept the CGO's report.

CARRIED

Presentation of Financial Statements

MOVED BY: Jody Yantha SECONDED BY: Erin Norris
THAT the members of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization accept the 2021-2022 Financial Statements as presented.

CARRIED

Appointment of Auditor

MOVED BY: Joanne Vanier SECONDED BY: Jody Yantha
THAT Baker Tilley be appointed as Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization's 2022-2023 auditors.

CARRIED

2022 Minutes

Presentation of the Slate of Nominees to the Board of Directors

MOVED BY: Jody Yantha SECONDED BY: Carly Wright

TO acclaim the Slate of Nominees to fill the vacancies on the Board of Directors of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization as presented.

CARRIED

Executive Director Report

MOVED BY: Kayla Newman SECONDED BY: Joanne Vanier

THAT the members of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization accept the Executive Director's report.

CARRIED

Adjournment - Vice CGO Karen Warner adjourned the meeting at 1:33pm

Financial Statements of

**ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS
TOURISM ORGANIZATION**

Year Ended March 31, 2023

Baker Tilly REO LLP

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (the organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2023, and the statements of changes in net assets, operations and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the organization as at March 31, 2023, and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO).

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the organization in accordance with ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Matter

The financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2022 were audited by another auditor who expressed an unmodified opinion on those financial statements on September 22, 2022.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with ASNPO, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

(continues)

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (*continued*)

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (*continued*)

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Baker Tilly REO LLP

Pembroke, Ontario
September 19, 2023

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS TOURISM ORGANIZATION
Statement of Financial Position
March 31, 2023

	2023	2022
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash (Note 3)	\$ 107,997	\$ 272,119
Investments (Note 4)	-	11,030
Accounts receivable	53,863	129,113
Harmonized sales tax recoverable	47,637	50,041
	<u>209,497</u>	<u>462,303</u>
LONG TERM INVESTMENTS (Note 4)	11,390	-
	<u>\$ 220,887</u>	<u>\$ 462,303</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	\$ 117,688	\$ 360,431
Payroll liabilities payable	10,725	9,530
	<u>128,413</u>	<u>369,961</u>
NET ASSETS		
Internally Restricted Reserve for Contingency	92,342	92,342
Unrestricted	132	-
	<u>92,474</u>	<u>92,342</u>
	<u>\$ 220,887</u>	<u>\$ 462,303</u>

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

Meghan James Director
Meghan James (Oct 3, 2023 11:18 EDT)

Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended March 31, 2023

	Internally Restricted Reserve for Contingency	Unrestricted	2023	2022
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 92,342	\$ -	\$ 92,342	\$ 124,190
Excess of revenue over expenses	-	132	132	(31,848)
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$ 92,342	\$ 132	\$ 92,474	\$ 92,342

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Statement of Operations
Year Ended March 31, 2023

	2023	2022
REVENUE		
Government contribution	\$ 4,436,426	\$ 1,534,035
Partner contributions	58,360	130,587
Other recoveries	27,129	679
Interest	519	104
	<u>4,522,434</u>	<u>1,665,405</u>
EXPENSES		
Salaries and benefits	420,584	324,825
General administration	60,228	55,944
Governance	9,879	9,724
Research - Responsible Tourism Strategy	29,331	48,665
Advertising	312,258	256,307
Digital asset development and content acquisitions	146,537	256,311
Workforce development	6,236	134,418
Product development	-	30,000
Partnerships	167,249	279,109
Grant projects	3,370,000	301,950
	<u>4,522,302</u>	<u>1,697,253</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR	\$ 132	\$ (31,848)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements
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ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Statement of Cash Flows

Year Ended March 31, 2023

	2023	2022
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash receipts from government and supporters	\$ 4,597,165	\$ 1,413,809
Cash paid to suppliers and employees	(4,763,429)	(2,106,226)
Interest received	162	104
Interest paid	(424)	(249)
Goods and services tax	2,404	(31,058)
	<u>(164,122)</u>	<u>(723,620)</u>
Cash flow used by operating activities		
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds on disposal of investments	11,052	10,943
Purchase of investments	(11,052)	(11,030)
	<u>-</u>	<u>(87)</u>
Cash flow from (used by) investing activities		
DECREASE IN CASH FLOW	(164,122)	(723,707)
CASH - BEGINNING OF YEAR	272,119	995,826
CASH - END OF YEAR (Note 3)	\$ 107,997	\$ 272,119

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2023

1. PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (the "organization") is a not-for-profit organization of Ontario. Management has determined that they are exempt from payment of income tax under Section 149(1) of the Income Tax Act.

The organization operates to coordinate the diverse interests of the tourism industry across the Ontario's Highlands region and to promote and support development of tourism experiences in this area.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of presentation

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO).

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash includes cash on hand and cash on deposit net of cheques issued and outstanding at the reporting date.

Revenue recognition

The organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions, which include donations and government grants.

The organization is funded by the Province of Ontario in accordance with budget arrangements established by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries. Grants from the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario are also received in accordance with budget agreements. These restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Grants approved but not received at the end of an accounting period are accrued. Where a portion of a grant relates to a future period, it is deferred and recognized in the subsequent period. These financial statements reflect agreed arrangements approved by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario with respect to the period ended March 31, 2023.

Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. Endowment contributions are recognized as direct increases in net assets.

Externally restricted contributions other than endowment contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are recognized. Contributions restricted for the purchase of capital assets are deferred and amortized into revenue at a rate corresponding with the amortization rate for the related capital assets.

(continues)

ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2023

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES *(continued)*

Revenues from fees, contracts and provision of services are recognized when the services are provided.

Accrual accounting

Revenue and expenditures are reported on the accrual basis of accounting.

Contributed services

The operations of the organization depend on both the contribution of time by volunteers and donated materials from various sources. The fair value of donated materials and services cannot be reasonably determined and are therefore not reflected in these financial statements.

Capital assets

Capital assets are stated at cost or deemed cost less accumulated amortization and are amortized over their estimated useful lives at the following rates and methods:

Leasehold improvements	20% straight-line method
Equipment	20% declining balance method

The organization regularly reviews its capital assets to eliminate obsolete items. Government grants are treated as a reduction of capital assets cost.

Capital assets acquired during the year but not placed into use are not amortized until they are placed into use.

Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recorded at fair value when acquired or issued. In subsequent periods, financial assets with actively traded markets are reported at fair value, with any unrealized gains and losses reported in income. All other financial instruments are reported at amortized cost, and tested for impairment at each reporting date. Transaction costs on the acquisition, sale, or issue of financial instruments are expensed when incurred.

Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the period. Management uses estimates to determine valuation allowances for accounts receivable and accrued liabilities. Such estimates are periodically reviewed and any adjustments necessary are reported in earnings in the period in which they become known. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS TOURISM ORGANIZATION**Notes to Financial Statements****Year Ended March 31, 2023**

3. CASH

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Cash on deposit	\$ 234,761	\$ 350,329
Cash on hand	175	175
Outstanding cheques	<u>(126,939)</u>	<u>(78,385)</u>
	<u>\$ 107,997</u>	<u>\$ 272,119</u>

4. INVESTMENTS

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Long term investments	\$ 11,390	\$ -
Current investments	<u>-</u>	<u>11,030</u>
	<u>\$ 11,390</u>	<u>\$ 11,030</u>

During the year ended March 31, 2023, a Guaranteed Investment Certificate ("GIC") earning interest at an annual rate of 0.2% matured supplying the organization with cash of \$11,052 which included interest income of \$22 (2022 - \$Nil). These funds were deposited into a new GIC earning interest at an annual rate of 3.3% with a maturity date of October 28, 2024. During the year ended March 31, 2023, this GIC earned the organization \$338 (2022 - \$Nil) which has been included in Interest income in the statement of operations.

5. INTERNALLY RESTRICTED RESERVES

	<u>2023</u>
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 92,342
Change in year	<u>-</u>
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 92,342</u>

An internally restricted reserve for contingency has been established to provide for extraordinary circumstances. Contributions and usages are made from time to time and are at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

6. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The organization is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments and has a comprehensive risk management framework to monitor, evaluate and manage these risks. The following analysis provides information about the organization's risk exposure and concentration as of March 31, 2023.

(continues)

ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2023

6. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS *(continued)*

Credit risk

Credit risk arises from the potential that a counter party will fail to perform its obligations. The organization is exposed to credit risk from customers. In order to reduce its credit risk, the organization conducts regular reviews of its existing customers' credit performance. An allowance for doubtful accounts is established based upon factors surrounding the credit risk of specific accounts, historical trends and other information. The organization has a significant number of customers which minimizes concentration of credit risk.

Industry risk

The organization operates in the tourism industry and is affected by general economic trends. A decline in economic conditions, consumer spending levels, or other adverse conditions could lead to reduced revenue.

Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant other price risks arising from these financial instruments.

7. CAPITAL DISCLOSURES

The organization's capital is made up of net assets. The Organization's capital management objectives consist in ensuring that it continues as a going concern in order to fulfil its mission. The organization manages its capital structure by preparing and monitoring its annual budgets to maintain a satisfactory level of capital.

8. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

The prior year comparative figures were audited by another firm of Chartered Professional Accountants.

Some of the comparative figures have been reclassified to conform to the current year's presentation.

ONTARIO'S HIGHLANDS TOURISM ORGANIZATION
Schedule of Operations by Program (Schedule 1)
Year Ended March 31, 2023

	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries	Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	2023
REVENUE			
Government contribution	\$ 766,426	\$ 3,670,000	\$ 4,436,426
Partner contributions	58,360	-	58,360
Other recoveries	27,131	-	27,131
Interest	519	-	519
	<u>852,436</u>	<u>3,670,000</u>	<u>4,522,436</u>
EXPENSES			
Salaries and benefits	227,085	193,499	420,584
General administration	39,292	20,936	60,228
Governance	9,879	-	9,879
Research - Responsible Tourism Strategy	29,331	-	29,331
Advertising	226,693	85,565	312,258
Digital asset development and content acquisitions	146,537	-	146,537
Workforce development	6,236	-	6,236
Partnerships	167,251	-	167,251
Grant projects	-	3,370,000	3,370,000
	<u>852,304</u>	<u>3,670,000</u>	<u>4,522,304</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ 132	\$ -	\$ 132

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

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MEET YOUR 2022-23 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEGHAN JAMES | Chief Governing Officer (Somewhere Inn Calabogie)

After nearly a decade spent working in tourism, including nine years at the Pembroke Best Western, Meghan James has taken on virtually every job on the books. From restaurant manager to sales, marketing, events, community outreach, and public relations, Meghan has literally learned the industry from the ground up and continues to enjoy working in tourism as General Manager at Somewhere Inn Calabogie.

Combining a love for the outdoors with a love for community, Meghan has been set for success in the Ontario's Highlands' tourism scene and sees collaboration as pivotal to tourism growth and sustainability across the region.



CINDY JAMIESON | Vice Chief Governing Officer (Whitewater Inn, Valley Cycle Tours, Jamieson Travel & Tours)

Cindy is an entrepreneur who has worked in travel and tourism her entire life. From Beachburg, Ontario, she became a raft guide/whitewater kayaker in her teens working for one of the local rafting companies. She has travelled to many countries chasing whitewater and cultural experiences. She has two degrees from Ottawa University in Women's Studies and Religious Studies. In 1999 she started organizing group travel and started Jamieson Travel and Tours.

In 2019 she purchased a small boutique Inn in Beachburg and is now focusing on inbound travel and experiences for her guests who stay at the Whitewater Inn. A cycling enthusiast, mother of two and proud promoter of the region, Cindy loves travel and unique experiences



MELISSA MARQUARDT | Secretary (Ottawa Valley Tourist Association)

Melissa began her career in the tourism industry in 1996 working with Destination Canada's US Leisure Market program and then in 2000, joined the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) where she was responsible for membership and event logistics for some of the industry's prominent tourism events, including the National Tourism Summit, Rendez-Vous Canada and GoMedia Canada Marketplace.

In 2004, Melissa moved to the Ottawa Valley with her husband to manage the family-owned fishing campground on Muskrat Lake. It was in 2006 when Melissa joined the County of Renfrew as Tourism Communications Coordinator for the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association, and in 2022, she became Manager of Economic Development for the County of Renfrew, overseeing management of the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association and Enterprise Renfrew County.

Melissa is a former board member of the Round Lake Property Owners' Association and Renfrew County ATV Club, as well as served as director and past Chief Governing Officer with the OHTO board of directors from 2010 to 2020. In 2021, Melissa was re-elected to the board and appointed as Chief Governing Officer. When not promoting tourism, she can usually be found wandering the backcountry of Ontario with her husband and dog.

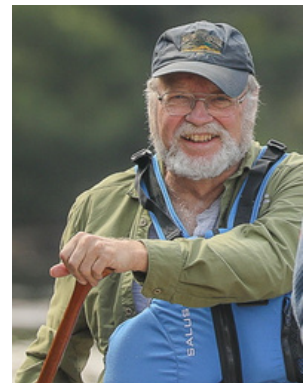


BARRIE MARTIN | Experience Broker (Founder and Manager of Yours Outdoors)

Experience Broker, Barrie Martin, was the founder and manager of Yours Outdoors, an award-winning company, now a division of Haliburton Forest tourism. Specializing in experiential and responsible tourism, Yours Outdoors offers creative learning and recreation experiences and outdoor adventures that explore and celebrate the art, nature, and heritage of the Haliburton Highlands in all seasons.

Through his work, Barrie was awarded Tourism Champion of the Year (TIAO) in 2016 and received the Sustainable Tourism (TIAO) award in 2017. Although he is now retired from Yours Outdoors, Barrie continues to be active in tourism and community development.

Barrie was also founder and co-chair of the Haliburton Highlands Tourism Stakeholders Group, Past Chair of Adventure Haliburton, an active member of the OHTO Travel Trade Partnership, Vice-president of the Haliburton County Community Cooperative, Past President and current Marketing Coordinator of the Haliburton County Folk Society, past project manager for the Hike Haliburton Festival, and past founder and president of the Haliburton Highlands Trails and Tours Network.



SHANNON MCLAGGAN | (Anupaya Cabin Co.)

Shannon MacLaggan is Co-Founder and Creative Director of Anupaya Cabin Co, a boutique beachfront wilderness resort in Deep River, designed to help guests slow down and settle into nature's pace. Along with her husband Pete, Shan is also Co-Founder of Anupaya Quality Goods, a lifestyle and home decor company that cleans up a pound of waste for every product sold through their 'One Pound Promise' initiative.

She also co-directs Anupaya Adventure, a thoughtful, off-the-beaten-path travel company offering authentic, culturally diverse experiences, while giving back to the communities they visit and hosting cleanups along the way. As an avid paddler, gardener and nature lover, with deep affection and affinity for this community, Shan is wholeheartedly committed to preserving these wild landscapes and passionate about helping more folks get outside to experience the rest and respite these pristine places offer us.



JEFF JACKSON | (Algonquin Fly Fishing Premium Guide Service, Professor & Coordinator at Algonquin College)

Jeff Jackson is a Professor and Coordinator of Algonquin College's Outdoor Adventure guide training diploma program at the Pembroke Waterfront Campus. He has a Ph.D. in organizational behaviour and safety management, and is considered Canada's leading expert on outdoor and adventure tourism risk management. As a consultant he has worked with the New Brunswick Ministry of Heritage and Tourism to establish their outdoor tourism accreditation standards and the Indigenous Tourism Association's operator risk management planning criteria.

He has also worked with the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario on their trail tourism policy development, and sat on the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnerships outdoor committee.

In the summer, Jeff is the owner/operator of Algonquin Fly Fishing Premium Guide Service, hosting Canadian and international fly anglers in Algonquin Park and the Ottawa Valley. Jeff was raised on a farm in the Ottawa Valley, and after a decade of adventure guiding around the world resettled here with his family for the outdoor lifestyle, tourism opportunity, and quality of living.



GREG RODGERS | (Rockhill B&B)

Greg Rodgers is a newcomer to tourism but has already jumped into the industry feet first, taking over a bed and breakfast in Sharbot Lake, bolstering the local tourism community and joining OHTO's board of directors in 2020. Greg and his wife are living examples of how tourism works hand in hand with economic development to grow communities.

The couple travelled throughout the Frontenac region before they decided to buy a bed and breakfast that is beautifully perched on a cliff overlooking Sharbot Lake. When they went looking for a property to purchase, they looked at Sharbot Lake with new eyes and saw the potential there. Over the years, Greg has become immersed in the community life of Central Frontenac. He currently serves as director in the Sharbot Lake Business Group, is a member of the Frontenac Heritage Days Festival planning committee, and a member of the Frontenac County Community Economic Development Advisory Committee.



CHRIS HINSPERGER | (Bonnechere Caves)

It is an understatement to say that Chris Hinsperger is passionate about tourism. For Chris, tourism is not only something that involves his business and professional life, it's a key component to sharing cultural stories and histories, to bring people together. It's that passion that Chris brings to his business, Bonnechere Caves, and what he brings to the volunteer work he does within the community.

Chris was one of the original founding Board members of OHTO and stepped away when he became chair of the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA). A desire to be part of growing tourism in Ontario is a big part of the attraction for Chris, but in his own words, he enjoys being around like-minded people and being on the board gives him inspiration and a source of energy that he really enjoys – which drew him back to the OHTO Board two years back.



RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING DIRECTORS

On behalf of the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization Board of Directors, staff and members, we offer a heartfelt thank you to our outgoing directors who have graciously served with the board and have continuously offered valuable input into the strategic direction of the organization. We thank you for your time and wish you the best in your future endeavours.



CORINA MANSFIELD

Deep Roots Adventure
(Past Secretary)



KAREN WARNER

Gaia's Den



TRACIE BERTRAND

County of Haliburton

MEET THE NOMINEES FOR 2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BARBARA KRAUS | (TAMARACK LODGE COTTAGE RESORT)

After 25 years of living in Europe and another 20 years in Toronto, Barbara Kraus decided it was time to reconnect with her love of nature and the outdoors. She and her husband, Reiner Arnold, bought Tamarack Lodge, a cottage resort located on motorless Tamarack Lake in the Haliburton Highlands and have spent the last 12 years developing the Lodge into a small-group retreat space and a peaceful place to enjoy nature. Barbara believes connecting with the outdoors is an important part of our general health and wellbeing.

Living in the Haliburton Highlands has allowed her to do this on a daily basis and to share it with others by working in tourism. Barbara continues to be fascinated by the seemingly endless splendour and beauty of the Ontario Highlands, of which the Haliburton Highlands are a part.

Her past professional endeavours have taught her that collaboration and communication are the cornerstones of successful businesses. Barbara has been a member of OHTO since joining this community and is proud to be taking it one step further by joining OHTO's board.



MIKE HAGE | (MYERS COVE RESORT)

Mike Hage is a professional Civil Engineer who worked in Lebanon, UAE and BC. In November 2020 Mike found himself in Cloyne, ON when he purchased Myers Cave Resort under Nordic Resorts Inc., in which he is the President and CEO and part of a group of investors. Together with his wife, they reside permanently at the resort and take care of management.

Since moving to the area, Mike has become heavily involved in the community by engaging in several Township and County initiatives, participating in focus groups and attending business events. He also serves as an Executive Board member of the Land O'Lakes Lions Club in Northbrook, and has been involved in many service and community organizations worldwide over the years.

Recently, Mike was selected to serve a four-year term as a Board member of the Frontenac County Planning and Economic Development Committee.



VANESSA DOW | (LANARK COUNTY TOURISM)

Vanessa Dow's enthusiasm for promoting Lanark County region is not just professional; it's personal. After moving to Smiths Falls nearly two decades ago, she has always looked to this area with the energy and excitement of a visitor. Vanessa loves to travel locally, discovering hidden and new gems in the across region.

Previously, Vanessa worked with the Smiths Falls & District Chamber of Commerce managing the Victoria Park Marina & Visitor Centre and then implementing a small business development grant. Now she brings that knowledge of visitor experience and business growth to her work as the Tourism Coordinator for Lanark County.



MEET THE STAFF AT OHTO

NICOLE WHITING | Executive Director

Nicole has always had a deep appreciation for the value travel experiences bring to people's lives and communities. Her diverse background as a competitive whitewater kayaker, event manager and entrepreneur, afforded her opportunities to visit, live and work in popular tourism destinations all over the world before settling down in the Ottawa Valley over 20 years ago.

Over the past 13 years as Executive Director of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO), Nicole has had the privilege of working with a fantastic team of staff, Board members and tourism champions to develop partnerships and innovative tourism strategies that seek to inspire visitors to enjoy the many uniquely rural tourism experiences available in the region.

NICOLE.WHITING@OHTO.CA // 613-629-6486 X 201



LUISA SORRENTINO | Marketing Director

Meet Luisa, a dynamic individual with a flair for adventure and a passion for making a difference. Born and raised in Italy, Luisa has always been an explorer at heart. Armed with a master's degree in international politics and the ability to converse in four languages, Luisa's journey took an exciting turn when she decided to make Canada her new home, where she has lived for over 15 years.

With her innate sense of discovery and fresh perspective, she set her sights on the world of rural tourism. As a Marketing and Economic Development professional, Luisa has become a guiding force in steering communities towards success.

Her innovative marketing campaigns and profound understanding of the diverse tapestry of Canadian and international visitors' behaviors have made her a well-respected name in the field.

LUISA.SORRENTINO@OHTO.CA // 613-629-6486 X 202



KASEY ROGERSON | Director of Industry Development

If there is one thing Kasey Rogerson is passionate about, it's tourism. As the Director of Industry Development, Kasey works directly with communities and businesses to foster communications between OHTO and the industry, developing partnerships and programming, and building capacity for tourism success.

Before joining the OHTO team, Kasey dedicated the past 12+ years to working in economic development and tourism, and supporting stakeholders with community development. She also served on OHTO's Board of Directors since 2013 where she held various positions, including Chief Governing Officer, before she stepped down from the board in 2021 to enter her new staff role with OHTO.

Born and raised in the Ottawa Valley, Kasey has a strong connection to the region and is big on outdoor and edible travel experiences (and not necessarily in that order). When she's not helping operators and communities, Kasey is often still immersed in tourism while staycationing in Ontario's Highlands with her husband, two daughters and their family dog, Dawkins.

KASEY.ROGERSON@OHTO.CA // 613-629-6486 X 203



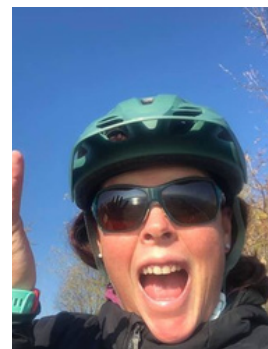
LOCALLY INSPIRED FIRESIDE CHAT PANELISTS

KIRSTIN THOMPSON | GENERAL MANAGER (OWL RAFTING)

Kirstin plays a key role within the company's newly formed executive team; however, she still strives to spend many summer days guiding and teaching on the water. Kirstin is no stranger to the Outdoor Adventure Tourism world, having guided and instructed internationally for over two decades. Despite this, Kirstin has always found that her true passion lies within the banks of the Ottawa River.

The GM position at OWL has allowed Kirstin to grow both personally and professionally. Among the many achievements from this past season, Kirstin played an important role in OWL Rafting receiving GreenStep certification as a Sustainable Tourism operator and becoming a Rainbow Registered business.

Although Kirstin's current focus is directed towards the 'behind-the-scenes' of OWL Rafting, her passion for the water continues to ensure the magic of the Ottawa River is shared with employees and guests alike.



TEGAN LEGGE | GENERAL MANAGER (FOREST EXPERIENCES AT HALIBURTON FOREST)

For over 14 years, Tegan Legge has been both working at and exploring Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve Ltd. and is grateful to call this incredible region of Ontario's Highlands her home for even longer!

Tegan started at Haliburton Forest in April 2009 as an Outdoor Facilitator/Office Staff. Through the years, she has held numerous positions, joining the Haliburton Forest management team as General Manager for Forest Experiences in April 2017. In addition to her work at Haliburton Forest, Tegan has served on the Board of Directors for the Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (Regional Tourism Organization 11).

Through Tegan's career and alongside an incredible team, they have brought Haliburton Forest to the forefront of sustainable tourism through inclusivity, partnership, allyship and building foundations for strong community relations. Together they continue to learn and grow as they work their way through the phases of PAR - Progressive Aboriginal Relations through the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, as well as the Rainbow Registered Program through CGLCC - Canada's 2SLGBTQIA+ Chamber of Commerce.



LOCALLY INSPIRED FIRESIDE CHAT PANELISTS

MEGHAN JAMES | GENERAL MANAGER (SOMEWHERE INN CALABOGIE)

Meghan has always had a passion for creating a more sustainable industry and a more inclusive and sustainable team. Being a part of the Somewhere Inn Calabogie team has allowed her to make her passion and vision for the best workplace to become a reality.

Meghan joined Team Somewhere two years ago, and since then they have made numerous accomplishments, from becoming Rainbow Registered to achieving Sustainable Tourism certification with GreenStep Solutions, becoming an Eco-Fund participant, enhancing the workplace with Not 9-to-5 certified mental health training, and becoming an Ontario Living Wage certified employer. Meghan has actively taken the initiative to become a sought-after employer. Recently, Somewhere Inn Calabogie won two sustainable tourism awards from the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) and the Ottawa Valley Tourists Association (OVTA).

To say she is proud of her team's accomplishments is an understatement. Together they have curated an amazing team, who feel valued and appreciated, as well as fostered relationships within their community to advocate for positive change in the tourism industry. Meghan looks forward to continuing her work for a better and brighter future at the Inn, as well as continuing as a member of the OHTO Board of Directors.

