

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: TOURISM

DATE: DECEMBER 3, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS TESSIER
 BELDEN
 KENNY
 SHEEHAN
 MERLINO
 SIMMES
 STRAINER

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:
 LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK
 PETER GIRARD, CREATIVE DIRECTOR
SUSAN STRATTON, STRATTON PARTNERS ADVERTISING
FREDERICK MONROE, CHAIRMAN
HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL
 SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
LEN FOSBROOK, PRESIDENT OF THE WARREN COUNTY
 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ALICE GREYER, DIRECTOR OF TOURISM, CITY OF GLENS
 FALLS
LUIA CRAIGE-SHERMAN, WARREN COUNTY COUNCIL OF
 CHAMBERS
DAVID KING, LAKE GEORGE RV PARK
TOM RANDALL, *THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Tessier called the meeting of the Tourism Committee to order at 9:35 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mrs. Simmes and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Leisa Grant, Principal Account Clerk, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Grant requested to amend the 2008 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$10, to reflect revenue received from the 2008 Consumer Show brochure distribution.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to amend the 2008 County budget, as outlined above and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Grant requested a transfer of funds in the amount of \$2,105 from the Salaries/Part Time Code (A.6417 130) with \$1,326 being allocated to the Salaries/Regular Code (A.6417 110) and \$779 being allocated to the Postage Code (A.6417 424) to cover shortfalls. She explained that the Salaries/Regular Code had a shortfall due to the

retirement settlement of the previous Principal Account Clerk.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the request for a transfer of funds, as outlined above and to refer the same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request for Transfer of Funds is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Grant requested authorization to extend the current contract with Creative Minds Photography for digital photography services, commencing January 1, 2009 and terminating December 31, 2009, for a total amount not to exceed \$20,000.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to extend the current contract with Creative Minds Photography, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 19, 2008 Board meeting.*

Ms. Grant requested authorization for the following:

- ▶ attendance at the 2009 in-State and out-of-State consumer shows by Tourism Department personnel and County Supervisors;
- ▶ attendance at the 2009 in-State, out-of-State and Canada Motorcoach Trade Shows/Sales Blitz/Marketplaces by Tourism Department personnel and County Supervisors; and
- ▶ contracts for 2009 brochure distribution with Getaways on Display, Inc. (\$3,295); The Lake Placid Chamber of Commerce, Inc. (\$650); Henry Hudson Tours, Inc. (\$5,495) and HA-PE-DE, Inc. (1,550), commencing January 1, 2009 and terminating December 31, 2009, for a total amount not to exceed \$10,990.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to authorize the 2009 travel and the contracts for 2009 brochure distribution, as outlined above. *Copies of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes and the necessary resolutions were authorized for the December 19, 2008 Board meeting.*

Ms. Grant requested authorization for the Director of Tourism to utilize models for photography and video with a fifty dollar stipend to each model for services, commencing January 1, 2009 and terminating December 31, 2009, for a total amount not to exceed \$750 (15 models). She noted that only one model had been used in 2008.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mrs. Simmes and carried unanimously to authorize the Director of Tourism to utilize models, as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 19, 2008 Board meeting.*

Ms. Grant requested authorization to extend the existing contract with Smith Travel Research, Inc. to provide hotel occupancy and rate data, commencing January 1, 2009 and terminating December 31, 2009 for a lump sum amount not to exceed \$3,300. She noted that there had been a \$300 increase in the cost as compared to 2008.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to extend the existing contract with Smith Travel Research, Inc., as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 19, 2008 Board meeting.*

Peter Girard, Creative Director of the Tourism Department, stated that the next item on the agenda was an update on the winter television campaign. He said that some of last years footage had been used with updated dates and contests. He explained that the commercials were being aired with the VOD (Video On Demand) feature in place, which allowed the Department to receive statistics on the location of people viewing the commercials.

Susan Stratton, of Stratton Partners Advertising, distributed a handout that highlighted the winter television commercial broadcast schedule; a copy of which is on file with the minutes. Ms. Stratton stated that they were continuing to utilize the RFI (Request For Information) and VOD services from Time Warner Cable. She explained that with RFI and VOD an information bar appeared on the bottom of the viewers screen which directed the viewer to press the 'A' button on the remote control to receive information or the 'B' button to watch a video and receive information. She added that names and addresses were then sent to the Tourism Department who sent out a catalog to the viewers. She explained that the broadcast schedule ran from December 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008.

Mr. Girard gave a brief presentation on his accomplishments since the last Committee meeting. He said that they had been aggressive in pursuing group tours and meetings and conventions.

Mr. Girard stated that the advertisements were built on the following simple principals:

- ▶ show the area and let the area sell itself;
- ▶ write something positive about the area;
- ▶ show the logo and the website; and
- ▶ add an extension number to the phone number.

Mr. Girard explained that by adding an extension number to the phone number in each advertisement, the Department was able to track which advertisements were working in which publications. He apprised that the tagline 'If you want a lot more' had been included in the advertisements to entice repeat visits as well as first time visitors. He said that the tagline informed people who had already visited the area, that the area was continuing to grow and adding more attractions, lodging and restaurants.

Mr. Girard noted that the most recent email blast had been sent to 96,400 recipients. He added that the email blast had promoted the Warren County Tourism website, as well as the Getaway Deals website that was featured through the I Love NY website. He said that there were 25 vacation package deals available on the Getaway Deals website. He added that the Tourism Department intended to have one email blast per month. He advised that of the 96,400 recipients of the email blasts, only 400 had clicked the unsubscribe option on the email, which allowed their email address to be removed from the list.

Mr. Girard advised that the Whitewater Brochure had been completed and was currently at the printer. He stated that he had contacted some of the photographers and vendors that had provided creative materials to the Tourism Department in the past, in order to obtain copies of those materials to be maintained in-house. He added that the contracts had also been reviewed in order to determine what the Department was entitled to from each vendor.

Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services, noted that the Tourism Department had been utilizing County employees as models for photo shoots. Mr. Belden asked Mr. Girard if he had a chance to attend any of the Warren County Council of Chambers meetings and Mr. Girard responded that he had not attended a meeting yet but he planned to in the near future.

Alice Grether, Director of Tourism for the City of Glens Falls, welcomed Mr. Girard to Warren County. She said she was interested in seeing the Whitewater brochure and asked if there would be other brochures which would also be 'stand alone' pieces. Mr. Girard responded that the Tourism Department currently had a rigid program as to which publications were done each year; however, he added, once he became more familiar with the process he would like to make suggestions for additional publications. Ms. Grether stated that she would like to see a brochure that highlighted the arts (museums, galleries, theaters, etc.) which were available in Warren County, particularly the City of Glens Falls. Mr. Girard said that he would make the recommendation to Kate Johnson, Director of Tourism.

Luisa Craige-Sherman, Warren County Council of Chambers, stated that the last meeting of the Council of Chambers had been held in October at the Stony Creek Inn. She added that Supervisors Thomas and Merlino had attended. She said that the speaker had been from the New York State Department of Energy, who discussed the topic of reducing energy costs. She advised that in November the Chamber had conducted a County-wide survey, which included well over 1,000 businesses in Warren County. She said the survey had been online, as well as mailed and added that they would finalize the summary of the results which she would present next month. She said the Chamber would host a one day hospitality seminar in June, the title of which would be 'Total Customer Service in the Lake George/Adirondack Region'. She said the next Chamber meeting would be held in the Town of Lake George on December 8, 2008 and would be a holiday meeting with no specific speaker.

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism Committee, on motion made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Belden, Mr. Tessier adjourned the meeting at 10:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist