

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: JANUARY 26, 2012

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS KENNY
MERLINO
BENTLEY
CONOVER
DICKINSON
FRASIER

OTHERS PRESENT:

KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
TANYA BRAND, GROUP TOUR PROMOTER, TOURISM
MIKE SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
JOANN MCKINSTRY, ASSISTANT TO THE ADMINISTRATOR
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISOR MASON
SUPERVISOR McDEVITT
SUPERVISOR TAYLOR
SUPERVISOR WOOD
ROBERT BLAIS, MAYOR, VILLAGE OF LAKE GEORGE
PETER BAUER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE FUND FOR LAKE GEORGE
FRED AUSTIN, FORT WILLIAM HENRY
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
TONY HALL, *LAKE GEORGE MIRROR*
NICOLE LIVINGSTON, DEPUTY CLERK

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR WESTCOTT

Mr. Kenny called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 10:55 a.m.

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

Copies of the agenda packet were distributed to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda packet is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Kenny began by introducing the new Committee members that were present today, Mrs. Frasier and Mr. Dickinson, and he welcomed them to the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee.

Mr. Kenny directed the Committee members to Item III on the Agenda, the report on revenues from the County Treasurer and he requested Mike Swan, County Treasurer, to expound on the report.

Mr. Swan distributed the Warren County Occupancy Tax Revenues & Expenditures for the Period Ending December 31, 2011 through January 25, 2012 to the Committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes. He informed that there were two uncollected sources of revenue from June, July and August 2011. He noted he was working on those collections which would adjust the figures; however, he added, said amounts were undetermined at this time. Mr. Swan remarked there was an approximate occupancy tax fund balance of \$850,000, which was flexible pending the aforementioned uncollected sources, as well as the November, December and January figures, which were not available yet.

Mr. Merlino clarified that the reported occupancy tax balance of approximately \$850,000 was actually \$350,000 due to the \$500,000 Designated Reserve and Mr. Swan agreed. Discussion ensued relative to fourth quarter collections. Following discussion, Mr. Swan corrected his previous statement that the fourth quarter figures for 2011 would only include the month of December and January and February collections would be for 2012.

Mr. Kenny commenced the Action Agenda review and stated the only new matter was to discuss the proposal from Robert Blais, Mayor of the Village of Lake George, regarding the Big Apple Circus.

Mayor Blais recapped the discussion held at the Gaslight Village Ad Hoc Committee meeting on January 17, 2012 relative to the Big Apple Circus. He stated that he and Michael Consuelo, Special Events Coordinator, had traveled to New York City and met with the Board of Directors and Finance Officers for the Big Apple Circus. He announced that the Big Apple Circus was very interested in hosting their event at the Festival Space this year, and pending the success of the event, they would be interested in executing a multi-year contract for use of the Festival Space. Due to the fact that the Festival Space would not be fully developed this year, Mayor Blais continued, concerns had arisen with regard to items necessary for the event to occur on that site. He distributed an email received from Tom Larson, Vice President and General Manager of the Big Apple Circus, outlining their specific concerns to the Committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Mayor Blais referenced the items listed in the correspondence from Mr. Larson that were of concern to the Big Apple Circus because they were not currently available on the property, such as public restrooms, dumpsters, security fence rental, the handling of their gray water, the ring dirt hauling and removal, and lodging. Following review of the concerns, he said, it had been determined that all of the expenses that were listed could be covered at a much lower cost than Mr. Larson anticipated. Mayor Blais advised that Cook's Septic Service had the various items needed for the restroom concerns, storage tanks and hauling trucks and they had provided a quote of \$815 per day or \$12,225. He noted that Jeff Tennyson, Superintendent of Public Works, had informed him that the County had an arrangement for dumpsters and the pick-up of refuse and that service could be provided for an approximate cost of \$1,500. He added that lodging was being handled by the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Mayor Blais stated that the anticipation was to cover these extra expenses that the Circus would not ordinarily incur in order to get the event to the County, as a one time offer. He further reported that the Town and Village of Lake George had agreed to contribute \$8,000 from their occupancy tax funds to cover the fees associated with the use of the Festival Space, as set by the Gaslight Village Ad Hoc Committee. In conclusion, Mayor Blais requested the County to consider funding the Circus for the first year, in an amount not to exceed \$15,000 from the occupancy tax fund to bring the Big Apple Circus to Warren County. He mentioned that if the County did not have the funds available in July, the Village would forward the funding to the Circus and request reimbursement from the County at a later date.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the request for funding in the amount of \$15,000 to be appropriated from the occupancy tax fund, and to forward the same to the Finance Committee for approval.

As there was no further business to come before the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. Conover and seconded by Mr. Merlino, Mr. Kenny adjourned the meeting at 11:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk