

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: JUNE 5, 2012

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS KENNY
MERLINO
CONOVER
DICKINSON
FRASIER

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS BENTLEY
WESTCOTT

OTHERS PRESENT:

MICHAEL SWAN, TREASURER
KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK, TOURISM
DANIEL G. STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS WOOD
TAYLOR
GIRARD
MCDEVITT
THOMAS
DAN HALL, GLENS FALLS COMMON COUNCIL
CHRIS LAWRENCE, GLENS FALLS CIVIC CENTER
LLOYD MOTT, WARREN COUNTY SAFE & QUALITY BICYCLING COMMITTEE
FRED AUSTIN, FORT WILLIAM HENRY
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
JOANNE COLLINS, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Kenny called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 11:25 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Conover 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 Michael Swan, Treasurer, who distributed copies of a report reflecting Occupancy Tax Revenues through May 24, 2012 and the same period in 2011, Fund Balance figures as of December 31, 2011, and Reserve balances from 2004 through 2010; a copy of the report is on file with the minutes. Mr. Swan reported a 3% increase in collections from the prior year and he advised the new reporting format had not yet been fully implemented. He noted that the data would be available online when completed.

Mr. Swan informed of his review of County Tourism records and the list of businesses which offered accommodations, in order to confirm that businesses were registered to collect Occupancy Tax. He reported that 30 properties were offering accommodations, but were not registered and he would perform further review to determine which businesses may be operating under different names or corporations. Mr. Swan stated the new reporting format would incorporate tax map numbers into the software package which would enable property record comparisons.

Supervisor Dickinson entered the meeting at 11:27 a.m.

Mr. Swan said he met with the County Attorney regarding the list of businesses paying Occupancy Tax and once finalized, he would send a letter to unregistered businesses requesting completion of the registration form. Some businesses, he said, had claimed an exemption for occupancy tax collections due to the occupancy of Social Services recipients staying at the facilities. The latter, he noted, raised another issue pertaining to the reconciliation of total exemptions and DSS records for

each business. He added the new software would be operational within the next month.

This concluded the Treasurer's report, and Mr. Kenny advised of the need to reallocate \$4,500 in Occupancy Tax Funds awarded to the Reinke Group for the Lake George Half Marathon, which would not be held due to the lack of necessary insurance.

Mr. Kenny noted that applications for funding included the Sunkiss Balloon Festival, the Lake George Antique & Classic Boat Show, and the Warren County Safe & Quality Bicycling Organization (WCSQBO).

Privilege of the floor was extended to Lloyd Mott, WCSQBO, who stated the organization began two and one half years ago and their accomplishments and advancements had become evident recently. He informed that funding assistance was needed for the printing of a map brochure and booklet which were ready for publication. He said the WCSQBO partnered with the Adirondack Glens Falls Transportation Council (AGFTC), to improve and further develop their plan for bike trails, and the plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors on April 20, 2012. Subsequently, he said, the organization would produce a collection of fifteen high quality County maps which included details such as elevations that he would like to have printed for the Centurion Cycling event. Mr. Mott said the materials which included road routes, and mountain trails, would be distributed throughout the County, available on the County website, and used at expositions and in response to information requests.

Mr. Dickinson commended Mr. Mott for the impressive work carried out by the WCSQBO and noted the organization had requested \$3,300.

Mr. Kenny suggested an award of \$2,500 to the WCSQBO and \$1,000 each to the Sunkiss Balloon Festival and Antique & Classic Boat Show.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 719 of 2011, to authorize the re-allocation of Occupancy Tax Funds in the amount of \$4,500 as listed below, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 15, 2012 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Reinke Group, Lake George Half Marathon	<u>-\$4,500</u>
Warren County Safe & Quality Bicycling Organization	<u>\$2,500</u>
Sunkiss Balloon Festival (Warren County Airport July 6 - 8)	<u>\$1,000</u>
Adirondack Chapter, Antique & Classic Boat Society	<u>\$1,000</u>
(39 th Annual Lake George Rendezvous Vintage Boat Show August 24 - 25)	

With regard to the need for a new basketball court at the Glens Falls Civic Center (GFCC), Mr. Kenny extended privilege of the floor to Dan Hall, City of Glens Falls Councilman at-large, who distributed copies of a floor diagram to the Committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Hall former said he had been involved in local government as well as organizing basketball tournaments which included the State High School Athletic Association Tournaments held in Glens Falls for over twenty years. He said tournament organizers / competitors viewed the floor as a deterrent when seeking a location for their tournaments, and he noted the floor was purchased 35 to 40 years ago. Mr. Hall informed the floor had been resurfaced and painted but could not be restored to a reasonable condition. He said the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournament was underway and Chris Lawrence, Manager of the Civic Center, received a call

informing of eight floors used by the NCAA and offered to various venues, with an option to purchase. Mr. Hall stated there was one floor left at a reduced cost and if purchased, would be resurfaced prior to shipping to Glens Falls for layout and installation.

In terms of funding, Mr. Hall said that the return of unused award funds was reported at a recent meeting of the Glens Falls Industrial Development Agency and Local Development Corporation (LDC) and he requested the Civic Center be considered for allocation of a portion of the returned funds. He noted the total cost of the floor was \$86,000 and the intent was to partner with the County for the purchase of the basketball floor.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Lawrence, who said he had been with the GFCC for two years and he thanked the Committee for their time. He acknowledged fiscal challenges and the climate of limited funding for programs. He explained that wear and tear on the 40 year-old floor had caused thinning, chipping and dead spots which compromised the integrity of the court in terms of both regular use and safety. He said a collaborative effort with the County could produce a customized floor.

Mr. Hall stated that other benefits of the new floor included picture and logo applications which were advertising opportunities and he noted many games were telecast throughout the State. In terms of fund-raising, Mr. Hall said the logo spaces on the new floor, as well as 4' x 8' sheets of the old floor could be sold to raise money, noting there was a market for the old floor segments which included schools, restaurants, sports bars and other businesses who often created wall displays.

Chairman Stec asked the life expectancy for this type of floor and Mr. Hall stated approximately 40 years. Mr. Kenny noted the GFCC was also host to wrestling and girls volleyball tournaments. To kick-off the use of the new floor, Mr. Hall said he would like to hold athletic events for all Warren County schools. Mr. Taylor expressed his support for the new floor which he felt was a great investment for both the County and the City of Glens Falls and would boost business overall. Mr. Kenny reported the Occupancy Tax Reserve balance of \$748,113. He suggested a 50% split with the City of Glens Falls to fund the new floor.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously authorizing the appropriation of \$43,000 in Occupancy Tax Reserve Funds, to Budget Code A.6417 470 - Tourism - Occupancy - Contract, to partner with the City of Glens Falls for the purchase of a basketball court for the GFCC and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request for a Transfer of Funds is on file with the minutes.*

As there was no further business to come before the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. Dickinson and seconded by Mr. Conover, Mr. Kenny adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Collins, Legislative Office Specialist