

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: TOURISM

DATE: AUGUST 1, 2013

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: OTHERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS MERLINO
KENNY
STRAINER
CONOVER
WOOD
VANSELOW

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:
KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR
PETER GIRARD, CREATIVE DIRECTOR
TANYA BRAND, GROUP TOUR PROMOTER
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
AMANDA ALLEN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR DICKINSON

SUPERVISORS FRASIER
MONTESI
TAYLOR
WESTCOTT
MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER
TOM CONNORS, AD WORKSHOP, INC.
MICHAEL CONSUELO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
CHRISTINA CURLEY, SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR, LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
KEVIN MARKHAM, RAMADA INN
FRED AUSTIN, FORT WILLIAM HENRY
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

In the absence of the Committee Chairman, Mr. Kenny, the Vice Chairman, called the meeting of the Tourism Committee to order at 9:31 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mrs. Wood 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 Kate Johnson, Tourism Director, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the agenda review, Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Kenyon Press, Inc. to print 225,000 copies of the 2014 Warren County Travel Guide in an amount not to exceed \$52,648 for a term commencing September 27, 2013 and terminating October 31, 2013. She noted Kenyon Press, Inc. had been the lowest responsible bidder of the seven proposals received and the project would cost less than the amount budgeted.

Motion was made by Mr. Vanselow, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with Kenyon Press, 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 August 16, 2013 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Fort Orange Press to print 3,000 copies of the 2014 Group Travel Planner in an amount not to exceed \$3,825 for a term commencing August 18, 2013 and

terminating October 31, 2013. Of the six vendors that responded, she continued, Fort Orange Press had been the lowest responsible bidder of the six proposals received and the project would cost less than the amount budgeted.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with Fort Orange Press as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 16, 2013 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Benchmark Printing, Inc. to print 60,000 copies of the 2013/2014 Winter Brochure in an amount not to exceed \$3,833 for a term commencing August 19, 2013 and terminating September 30, 2013. She mentioned Benchmark Printing, Inc. had been the lowest responsible bidder and the project would cost less than the amount budgeted.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Vanselow and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with Benchmark Printing, 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 August 16, 2013 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Benchmark Printing, Inc. to print 10,000 copies of the "Towns" poster in an amount not to exceed \$1,333 for a term commencing August 19, 2013 and terminating September 30, 2013. She commented the Department would produce another promotional poster like the "Decks of Lake George" poster previously produced. She said the supply of posters received lasted approximately three years. She mentioned the poster would be the same size as the previous poster and the layout would be similar to the Town Posters on display in the Board of Supervisors hallway and at the Tourism Satellite Office. She noted Benchmark Printing, Inc. had been the lowest responsible bidder.

Motion was made by Mrs. Wood, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with Benchmark Printing, 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 August 16, 2013 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested authorization to submit a grant application to the New York State Department of Economic Development for the Matching Funds Grant for tourism promotion. She informed \$84,000 had been received last year for 2013 promotions.

Motion was made by Mrs. Wood, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to authorize submission of the grant application as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 16, 2013 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested a transfer of funds in the amount of \$2,172 from the Office Equipment code (A.6417 220) to the Postage code (A.6417 424) to cover the cost of postage in the future as no further equipment purchases were anticipated in 2013.

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

Ms. Johnson requested to amend Resolution No. 703 of 2012, which authorized attendance at 2013 In-State and Out-of-State and Canadian consumer shows by Tourism Department personnel and County Supervisors, in order to include two additional consumer shows. She explained the additions were the NYSTVA (New York State Travel & Vacation Association) Conference and New York State Fair on August 20-21, 2013 in Syracuse, New York; and the "I ♥ NY" Canada Road Show on September 30-October 2, 2013 in Montreal, Canada.

Motion was made by Mr. Vanselow, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 703 of 2012 as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 16, 2013 Board meeting.*

Peter Girard, Creative Director, displayed images from the Adirondack Challenge Festival and Ms. Johnson explained this was the kickoff to Governor Cuomo's commitment to promote Upstate New York tourism and the Adirondack Region. Ms. Johnson informed the event had been held on July 21-22, 2013 in Indian Lake and she had been on the planning committee for the event. She commented both days of the event included rafting on the Indian River and the first day of the event included a canoe race on Indian Lake. She mentioned there had been region-wide activities in several communities which had been tagged as Adirondack Challenge Festival events. Ms. Johnson informed that Assemblyman Stec and Senator Little had both raced rafts on the first day of the event. On the second day, she added, Supervisors Monroe and Vanselow participated in the rafting race. She pointed out there had been lots of press coverage of the event, including a four minute segment on the CBS Morning Show.

Ms. Johnson informed the PGA (Professional Golf Association) Tournament would be held in Rochester, New York on August 8-11, 2013. She said "I ♥ NY" would host a "Taste of New York" tent for food sampling and sales. She added videos, still photographs and brochures were submitted from local golf courses to be on display at the PGA Tournament.

Ms. Johnson apprised the Fall Events and Activities Brochure had been delivered on Monday, August 29, 2013; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes.* She noted a large quantity was delivered to the Tourism Department Office as well as drop ship locations throughout the primary marketing areas. Mr. Girard displayed a map identifying the brochure distribution locations to the Committee members; *a copy of the map is on file with the minutes.* Ms. Johnson informed the 2014 Travel Guide was in production and was on schedule with delivery anticipated for October 30, 2013. She reported there were 60 advertisers and the size of the Travel Guide had been reduced by four pages. As an incentive for completing the occupancy surveys, she continued, properties were offered a chance to win a free 1/3 page colored advertisement. She reported the winner had been The Lake George RV Park and since they normally purchased a full page advertisement, their cost was reduced by the cost for a 1/3 page advertisement.

Mr. Girard displayed various print ads and Ms. Johnson reviewed the list of magazine in which the ads were located. Ms. Johnson advised a Fall Events email blast would be released on August 15, 2013 and a link would be included to request a Fall Brochure. She added the third quarter Newsletter would also be emailed on August 15, 2013. She said Public Relations Reports for June and July 2013 were included in the agenda packet; *copies of same are on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Conover asked if there was a means of tracking the brochure distribution locations to determine which locations were successful and Ms. Johnson responded the Department kept track of which locations requested additional brochures. A brief discussion ensued pertaining to brochure distribution locations.

Ms. Johnson reported increased traffic at the Tourism Satellite Office in the Adirondack Outlet Mall. She said employees tracked the number of people who engaged in conversations or requested specific information. For the month of July, she stated, there had been in excess of 950 visitors to the Tourism Satellite Office. She informed that inquiries pertaining to whitewater rafting had dramatically increased following the Adirondack Challenge Festival. She informed of an interview on Channel 6 with Laura Cole, manager of the Adirondack Outlet Mall, in which she had mentioned the benefits of the Tourism Satellite Office. Ms. Johnson commented the Tourism Department would have literature and displays available at the Horicon Days Event on August 3, 2013.

Tanya Brand, Group Tour Promoter, distributed copies of her Group Tour Update to the Committee members and reviewed the document in detail; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes*. Ms. Brand circulated various materials to the Committee members representing advertisement placements, editorial coverage and incoming bus tour itineraries. Mr. Girard displayed the 2014 Group Travel Planner and Ms. Brand noted this was currently in production with a reduction in size by four pages. She informed the Group Travel Planner had six new advertisers including: Adirondack Pedal Cab; Adirondack Winery; Christie's on the Lake; SJ Garcia's Restaurant; Thurman Fall Farm Tour; and Toad Hill Maple Farm.

Mr. Girard displayed the August Edition of the Group Loop Newsletter and Ms. Brand said this edition would be emailed today. Ms. Brand reported the details of two FAM (familiarization) Tours in July with Franziska Frenslau of Canadvac Travel and Nick Calderazzo of Twin Travel Concepts and Mr. Girard displayed photos from the FAM Tours. Ms. Brand informed that she and Ms. Johnson had been working on a Travel Expo for 2014 and would partner with Destinations of New York State for the event. She informed the Travel Expo would include the Saratoga Springs area and the purpose was to highlight new Group Tour attractions and hotels. She anticipated the Travel Expo would include a three-day trade show and FAM Tours. She added they were in the process of finding a venue for the Travel Expo and to that end had viewed some properties.

Ms. Brand informed she was working with Sara Frankenfeld of Fountains Spatial, on updating the capabilities of the iPad presentation to include a GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping component which would allow layers of information to be shown on the screen at one time. She added the information would include mapping features, images, websites and links and would make presentations to Tour Operators easier and more inclusive.

Ms. Brand reported outreach efforts to The Adirondack Folk School to discuss Group Tour Marketing strategies and partnering opportunities; to Washington County Tourism Department to discuss new opportunities in promoting Agritourism and bicycling in both counties; and to North River Hobby Farm to discuss the potential for incoming group tours to the farm.

Ms. Brand informed the Committee members of the "What's New List" landing page on the www.visitlakegeorge.com website and said she added new lodging, dining and attraction properties to the list. She advised Silver Wheels Travel from Wayside, New Jersey would host a Group Tour for the Adirondack Balloon Festival on September 20-22, 2013 and would visit the Saratoga North Creek Railway (SNCR) and Prospect Mountain. She said the tour would also include a luncheon cruise, a dinner theater show and would lodge at the Fort William Henry Resort. She mentioned Van Galder Tours from Janesville, Wisconsin would host a Group Tour on October 12, 2013 which would include Prospect Mountain, the Gore Mountain Gondola, Barton Garnet Mine, the SNCR and a cruise on the Morgan and Saint Sacrament with lodging at the Hampton Inn and the Sagamore Resort. She added Yankee Trails would host three day trips to the area. She reported eleven buses from Swarthout Coach came to visit Six Flags Great Escape from a children's camp in New Hampshire.

Mr. Merlino entered the meeting at 9:55 a.m. and Chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Mr. Girard displayed the brochure he had assisted in creating for the Warren County Health Services Department. He added he had also assisted them in creating a logo which represented a house, heart and hands. He said the brochure was in the process of being developed and should be ready for distribution soon. He informed of assistance received from the Planning & Community Development Department in providing aerial images of golf courses. He added the Planning & Community Development Department also had the ability to export detailed maps of bicycle trails, train tracks, etc. to the Tourism Department as needed.

Mr. Girard informed the "Fish On" email blast had been released on June 6, 2013 to approximately 145,000 email subscribers. He said the "Canada Day" email blast was released on June 12, 2013 to a segmented list of 5,400 Canadian subscribers. He apprised the "Independence Day" email blast was released on June 19, 2013 to approximately 147,000 email subscribers. He noted the "Find Big Adventures in Small Towns" email blast was released on July 10, 2013 to approximately 151,000 email subscribers. Ms. Johnson commented the "Find Big Adventures in Small Towns" email blast had included County facilities such as the Warren County Fairgrounds, the Fish Hatchery and the Warren County Bike Trail.

Mr. Girard reported a new program had been initiated to include links to an events video on YouTube. He added about a dozen events had taken advantage of the program and he informed next year the Department would be able to embed the event videos directly on the website. In reference to the website, Mr. Girard said he had re-tooled the enhanced listings to improve the appearance and add new features. Mr. Girard displayed various images collected by the Department at local events throughout the year.

Tom Connors, of Ad Workshop, Inc., displayed a map of the markets for the summer and fall television commercials to the Committee members. He explained the markets were spread from Philadelphia through Montreal and included 7.5 million households. He advised the television commercials would air 8,200 times this summer and an additional 3,000 times this fall. Mr. Vanselow asked why the Boston area was not included in the markets and Mr. Connors replied the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council (ARTC) marketed to the Boston area for tourism in the Adirondacks. He noted the ARTC shared all leads received with the Warren County Tourism Department. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Connors displayed the various banner ads and noted they ran in the same markets as the television commercials. He advised the banner ads directed visitors to a new landing page at www.lakegeorgeny.com in order to track the number of visits which he noted had increased 20% year-to-date compared to 2012. He commented the Warren County Tourism Department email subscriber list was in excess of 150,000 subscribers which was the largest in New York State. He reported 4,000 Facebook visits from Montreal to the shopping landing page on www.visitlakegeorge.com. He advised the Lake Region Fishing Show would shoot another segment on Lake George in September.

Mr. Connors displayed the ARTC website (www.visitadironacks.com) for the Committee members and played the Adirondack Region commercial and camping commercial videos which were embedded on the site. He noted the ARTC website had been reformatted in May and so far this year there had been 502,000 visits to the site, 30% of which were from mobile devices. He explained the new ARTC website was an adaptive website which meant the site automatically adapted to the type of device being used to access it (personal computer, tablet, cell phone, etc.). Mr. Connor stated

17,000 people had viewed the video embedded on the First Time Visitors landing page of the ARTC website. He mentioned the Home Page contained highlighted information related to Hudson River whitewater rafting and the Georgia O'Keeffe Exhibit at The Hyde Collection. He added the Home Page also contained links to a landing page for each of the seven regions in the Adirondacks and he displayed the landing page for the Lake George Region. He noted there had been 8,301 visits to the Lake George Region landing page since May 7, 2013 and 5,200 people had clicked on the link to the www.visitlakegeorge.com website from the landing page. He added an additional 2,300 people had clicked links to private sector businesses within the Lake George Region. He commented the ARTC had sent two press releases pertaining to the Georgia O'Keeffe Exhibit at The Hyde Collection on April 9, 2013 and May 6, 2013. He said in June an Adirondacks Arts email blast had been released to 123,000 subscribers and highlighted the Warren County Bicentennial.

Mr. Montesi asked the cost involved for participation on the ARTC website and Ms. Johnson replied the cost was covered by the Matching Funds Grant. She explained \$84,000 was received from the Matching Funds Grant in 2012 and approximately 50% was allocated to the ARTC for tourism promotion. She noted all seven regions of the Adirondacks contributed funds and she pointed out the ARTC website was the number one referring site to Warren County Tourism.

Christina Curley, Special Events Coordinator for the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), distributed copies of her July 2013 Monthly Report to the Committee members and reviewed the Report in detail; *a copy of the Report is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Curley informed she had received a request for specific information for the Georgia O'Keeffe Exhibit at The Hyde Collection from a group she had been working with for over a year which would be staying at the Queensbury Hotel on August 2-4, 2013. She reported her attendance at the ESSAE (Empire State Society of Association Executives) Expo on May 30, 2013 where the Lake George Region's booth had been voted Best Block/Destination. She informed the Lake George Region had assembled a Grand Prize Basket which had been won by the Deputy Director of Professional Insurance Agents of Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey and New York. She said they were hoping to track the usage of the gift certificates and tickets included in the Basket.

Ms. Curley reported the Lake George Fire Department would host the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Annual Convention in June of 2015, 2016 and 2017. She informed she had contacted the New York State Girls Softball Championships regarding their need for group hotel room rates for June 13-14, 2014. She apprised she had been contacted by the Education & Events Director of NYSHTA (New York State Hospitality & Tourism Association regarding a lack of response for their Request for Proposal for their 2015 Annual Conference. She added the CVB had contacted each of the five properties originally solicited and had received four proposals in response.

Ms. Curley informed of her attendance at the Upstate New York and New Jersey Chapter of the Women in Lodging Event at the Saratoga Arms in Saratoga Springs, She said she attended the event along with three women from three Warren County lodging properties and she would join as a member of the Chapter.

Ms. Curley apprised she had contacted the Director of Tourism for the City of Glens Falls, in response to an article regarding their bid for the Special Olympics New York 2016 through 2018 Winter Games, in order to offer the assistance of the CVB. She stated she had received a request from the Special Olympics New York to join the Bid/Games Organization Committee which she had gladly accepted.

Mr. Strainer commented the New York State Girls Softball Championships competed with Americade for the availability of hotel rooms. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Merlino commented that Ms. Johnson did a great job for the County at the Adirondack Challenge Festival. He said Ms. Johnson had spoken to Governor Cuomo and requested his support of Americade.

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Merlino adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist