

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: TOURISM

DATE: JUNE 9, 2020

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS MERLINO
DICKINSON
FRASIER
DIAMOND
DRISCOLL
HOGAN
WILD

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

JOANNE CONLEY, DIRECTOR
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK

REPRESENTING THE HOSPITALITY COMMUNICATIONS GROUP:

MARK BEHAN, BEHAN COMMUNICATIONS
FRANK THOMAS, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
RYAN DICKEY, SECOND ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER

SUPERVISORS BEATY
BRAYMER
BRUNO
LEGGETT
SEEBER
STROUGH

TAMMIE DELORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
DON LEHMAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
JEREMY SCRIME, SENIOR COMPUTER SYSTEMS ANALYST/PROGRAMMER
MIKE SWAN, WARREN COUNTY TREASURER
KRISTEN HANIFAN, SPECIAL EVENTS & CONVENTION SALES DIRECTOR -
LAKE GEORGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & CVB
SCOTT HAYDEN, ADIRONDACK FOLK SCHOOL

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the June 9, 2020 meeting of the Tourism Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <https://www.warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2020/tourism/>

Note: As per Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1: "Article 7 of the Public Officers Law, to the extent necessary to permit any public body to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings and authorizing such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed". All committee members and attendees participated by video or teleconference, aside from Committee Chair Merlino and Supervisor Diamond who were physically present.

Mr. Merlino called the meeting of the Tourism Committee to order at 10:01 a.m.

Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed to those in attendance, those participating virtually accessed the meeting agenda via the Warren County website. A copy of the agenda is on file with the meeting minutes.

Motion was made by Mr. Wild, seconded by Mr. Driscoll 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 Joanne Conley, *Director of Tourism*, who commenced her agenda review by presenting a request to authorize an agreement with Lake Placid Advertiser's Workshop, Inc. in the amount of \$20,000 to host the Tourism website and perform updates over the term of August 22, 2020 - April 30, 2021. She

indicated she did not want to go out to bid for a new contract during a health crisis, adding Lake Placid Advertiser's Workshop had built in COVID-19 specific applications into their website. She stated after speaking to her colleagues the decision was made to have a short term agreement not to exceed \$20,000 for website maintenance. Mr. Dickinson praised Ms. Conley for handling advertising the way she was during the current crisis.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Wild and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 19th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Regarding Agenda Item 4, Ms. Conley presented a Power Point Presentation entitled "Reopening Plan" during which she answered question posed by the Committee; *a copy of the presentation is on file with the meeting minutes.*

Mr. Dickinson suggested spending half the amount budgeted for advertising. Mr. Wild spoke regarding protecting employees and those visiting from the current pandemic. Ryan Moore, *County Administrator*, informed the State required a written Safety Plan and an affirmation to re-open the County. Mr. Beaty inquired what percentage of tourism was Canadian and Ms. Conley replied ten percent. He then asked what amount was spent on advertising in Canada and Ms. Conley answered advertising in Montreal, Quebec was included in a package, but she did not have an exact amount. Ms. Hogan inquired how much of the \$1 million budgeted had been used thus far in 2020 and Ms. Conley replied \$100,000. Mr. Merlino advised the purpose was to make individuals feel safe when they visited Warren County.

Mr. Merlino offered privilege of the floor to Mark Behan, *Behan Communications*, who represented the Hospitality Communications Group. Mr. Behan apprised their approach was safety first and along with assistance of the Warren County Lodging Association they had developed the standards for sanitation and hygiene that were being applied to hospitality organizations. He said individuals would travel, but in smaller numbers; he added in order to protect occupancy and sales tax they needed a re-opening plan that was both safe and effective. He expressed the fear among the Hospitality Communications Group was that occupancy rate would decrease by 50% which meant the same would occur to occupancy and sales tax collections. He indicated the County should spend a significant amount of money on advertising now, adding to prevent from losing business to other areas that were reopening soon. He said it was important to remind people that Lake George was here, open and had taken every possible precautions to ensure the safety of visitors, the community and employees.

Mr. Merlino suggested they begin preparing for the fourth of July weekend. Mr. Diamond inquired what amount of advertising dollars Mr. Behan was referring to and Mr. Behan replied \$250,000 to \$500,000. He remarked they had not had the opportunity to speak to Lake Placid Advertiser's Workshop, indicating he would try to set up an appointment with them next week. He advised it was in the County's best interest to make an investment in raising visibility before other points of interest reopened. He remarked there was an advantage of being the first location to reopen. Mr. Diamond inquired if Ms. Conley had a marketing plan for the \$200,000 and Ms. Conley replied she had the presentation from Lake Placid Advertiser's Workshop, but she and Peter Girard, *Creative Director*, did not agree with all of their tactics and further discussions were necessary to come to an agreement on how provide the best advertising. Mr. Merlino advised they should decided on a plan as soon as possible to prepare for the fourth of July. He indicated there would be discussions next week and a plan would be agreed upon.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Merlino declared the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Ganotes-Gleason, Legislative Office Specialist