



**Tourism and Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee**  
**Warren County Tourism Department**  
**AGENDA**  
**February 22, 2021**

Committee Members: GERAGHTY, Merlino, Braymer, Wild, Hogan, Beaty, Strough

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- I. Committee meeting called to order by Chairman Geraghty
  - II. Motion to approve minutes of January 25, 2021 Tourism and Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee Meeting.
  - III. Action Agenda/New Business Items:
    - a. **\*Resolution request:** To authorize an agreement the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council to continue the contractual relationship for regional marketing services including digital and social media, website, email marketing and mobile tracking.  
  
**Rationale:** Annual support of this regional tourism organization. Funding request up to but not to exceed \$10,000. In the past funding has been supported by NYS Matching Funds, which is not available in 2021. (Previously, Warren County has contributed approx. \$70,000. In 2020 Warren County contributed \$6,738.)
  - IV. Discussion Items:
    - a. Report on revenues by Treasurer, Mike Swan
    - b. Americade, Christian Dutcher
    - c. Hospitality Task Force RFP
    - d. County Occupancy Tax Funding Application
    - e. Tourism Development and Events Coordinator
  - V. Referrals/Pending Items:
    - 1) Ms. Conley to report on the figures regarding short term room rentals once they were received from the new vendor. (01.25.21)
    - 2) Mr. Geraghty informed a decision on the \$3,500 study requested by Mr. Wild would be made at the February Committee meeting. (01.25.21)
  - VI. Privilege of the floor and public comment  
(Please allow for 15-second delay on live stream meetings).
  - VII. Motion to adjourn
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**Attachments :** a. Resolution Request Form No. 20 to authorize an agreement with the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council.

# RESOLUTION REQUEST FORM NO. 20

## MISCELLANEOUS

*\*Please List All Other Requests Not Covered by Previous Resolution Request Forms Here.  
Please attach any backup information available and be as detailed as possible.*

DEPARTMENT NAME: Tourism

DATE: 2/22/21

- (a) Purpose of Request: to continue the contractual relationship with the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council, Inc. for regional marketing services.

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- (b) Details: Funding supports a Regional Marketing program that includes digital and social media, website, email marketing, and mobile tracking. In the past funding has been supported by Matching Funds from NYS; these are not available in 2021.
- (c) Previous Resolution Number: Res# 126 of 2020
- (d) Where are the Funds (if required)? List Budget Code, Object Code, Full Title\* and Amount: A.6417.0001 470 - Tourism-Contract Business Promotion up to \$10,000

**Sample: A.8021 470 Planning & Community Development – Contract**

\* as listed in budget and LOGOS



The Adirondack Regional Tourism Council is a consortium of seven counties that share resources to promote economic development through destination marketing. With funding provided by the member counties of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Lewis, St. Lawrence, and Warren, and without the benefit of the ILNY Matching Funds program in 2021, the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council (ARTC) will promote the Adirondack Region of New York State as a year-round vacation destination.

The ARTC will enter 2021 with a new website, refreshed logo, and a unifying brand mark, that will help to strengthen the awareness of the region as a top destination for outdoor enthusiasts, adventure travelers, history buffs, and cultural and culinary aficionados.

The plan will focus on attracting new visitors to the Visit Adirondacks website, SEO, email marketing, and Social Media. The new website has been designed to more accurately track the flow of users, with the goal of linking them directly to their area of interest, both geographically to the respective county partner, and by desired activity.

#### **Adirondack Regional Tourism Council Officers and Board Members**

President	Joanne Conley	Warren
Vice President	Kristen Aueter	Lewis
Secretary	Kristy Kennedy	Clinton
Treasurer	Mary Jane Lawrence	Essex
Board Member	Jeremy Evans	Franklin
Board Member	Brook Rouse	St. Lawrence
Board member	Michelle Clement	Hamilton

### Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The ARTC will contract with Workshop to coordinate SEO. The team will coordinate content development to ensure that the content is optimized, while also focusing on the site goals of attracting first time visitors and sending users to the appropriate county sites. (June-December.) **\$14,000**

### Social Media

In lieu of a contracted service with Workshop, each county will be responsible for posting on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, on a weekly rotating basis. Engagement on all platforms remained high in 2020. Facebook, 110,612 followers; Instagram, 65,800 followers; Twitter, 15,500 followers. **\$0**

### Email Marketing

The ARTC will work with Board members and the ROOST team to create our monthly **Email Marketing** newsletter. A mailing schedule, with associated themes, will be developed with by the Board, and will focus on outdoor recreation, and seasonal activities. **\$0**

### Content Creation

ARTC will contract with Workshop to provide new content creation and visual content. As our brand new site will launch in spring 2021, content needs should be minimal this year. **\$3,000**

### Website Updates

ARTC will contract with Workshop to provide any new or additional functional elements for Website updates. While the site is new, and should not require any updates, some new features may be requested, and it would be prudent to budget the expense, even if not used. **\$3,000**

### Hosting, domain renewals

ARTC will contract with Workshop to cover various Hosting and Domain renewal fees. **\$4,680**

### Accounting and Audit

ARTC will retain the services of Meister Accounting to provide monthly financials and compile quarterly Regional Matching Funds reports. **\$15,000**

ARTC will also retain the services of an independent Auditor to perform the annual audit. **\$5,250**

### Simpleview

A Simpleview feed from I Love NY to [www.VisitAdirondacks.com](http://www.VisitAdirondacks.com) populates website listings. **\$3,960**

### Administration

ARTC oversight is provided by the Board of Directors, one from each participating County. **\$0**

Miscellaneous **\$1,000**

**TOTAL \$49,890**

Warren County's share is 20% = **\$9,978**

## DRAFT FOR REVIEW

### Proposed Outline for Request for Proposals

#### Introduction

The Warren County/Lake George area of the Southern Adirondacks has been a popular tourist destination for more than a century, but the industry remains largely seasonal with strong summer and fall business and moderate, weather-dependent winter business. Warren County and hospitality industry representatives are interested in fostering a year-round tourism season countywide and, in the immediate future, stronger tourism at those times of year when growth would be helpful.

The collective goal is to cultivate and sustain increased private investment, generate strong returns for owners, expand employment opportunities, and provide a greater tax revenues to local governments. The purpose of this Request for Proposals is to generate relevant and reliable data to help inform the joint development of a strategy to support year-round tourism. We envision using the data produced in this report as a foundation to build a much larger data set over time to inform future decisions about investments in hotels and amenities, development of events and attractions, and marketing.

Specifically, the hospitality leaders and the county jointly seek proposals for a fact-finding study that would: (1) identify the best practices of the most successful tourism destinations with which the Warren County/Lake George area competes, with a special emphasis on those destinations that have developed year-round tourism economies; (2) recommend specific benchmarks by which Warren County could on an ongoing basis measure its performance against the competitive venues.

In the spring, summer and fall, Warren County hoteliers who survey their customers report that they compete with the following vacation destinations:

Essex County/Lake Placid, N.Y.  
Saratoga Springs, N.Y.  
Albany, N.Y.  
Seneca, Cayuga and Yates Counties, NY (Finger Lakes)  
Hershey, Pa.  
Cape Cod  
Hampton Beach  
Atlantic City

For winter business, the hoteliers report they compete with the following destinations:

Lake Placid  
Saratoga Springs

Albany, N.Y.  
Watertown, N.Y.  
Grafton County, NH (Woodstock)  
Stowe, Vt.  
Rutland, Vt. (Killington, Pico)  
Daytona, Fla.

Specifically, we seek data in response to the following:

1. In each seasonal group of destinations set forth above, which have shown the greatest growth over the last five years? Growth should be measured by total visitor spending, numbers of room nights booked, increase in occupancy tax or other relevant measures.
2. What are the top 10 fastest-growing summer destinations by visitor spending in the Northeast and New England?
3. What best practices have these destinations followed to cultivate growth that is faster than their competitors'?
4. For Warren County and for our competitive destinations, who are the emerging visitor populations (by ethnicity, zip code and demographics).
5. What are Warren County's top five competitor destinations spending on marketing and advertising? How are they investing marketing dollars (to reach group travel vs. leisure?)

Respondents are invited to collaborate on proposals and to submit proposals responsive to all or to a limited number of questions where they have special expertise. The sponsors of the RFP are seeking data and information, not strategy recommendations. Respondents are asked to describe how they will collect the requested information. Respondents are invited to share recommendations to improve the RFP questions so that the findings are actionable and deliver meaningful data that allow Warren County to look at trends over time. Respondents are asked to provide a timeline for deliverables.



## APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDING

Please check those municipalities listed below you will be applying to or have already applied to for funding this event or tourism-related initiative (attach copy if applied for):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bolton                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Lake Luzerne        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chester                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Queensbury          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hague                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Stony Creek         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Horicon                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Thurman             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Johnsburg                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Warrensburg         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Town of Lake George               | <input type="checkbox"/> City of Glens Falls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Village of Lake George            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Town/Village of Lake George |  |

### I. ORGANIZATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal name of entity: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal place of business: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone number (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the above name the only name under which you conduct business or fundraising activities?

Yes  No If No, please provide all other names you use for business and fund raising purposes.

\_\_\_\_\_

## II. EVENT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Type of Event: Not for Profit  For Profit  Individual
2. One time event: Yes  No
3. Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Location of Event: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Dates of Event: \_\_\_\_\_
6. How did you choose these dates? \_\_\_\_\_
7. General description of event: \_\_\_\_\_

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(Include a list of activities during the event, if possible)

8. Amount of Occupancy Tax requested: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Anticipated cost of event (attach budget showing anticipated income and expenditures; indicate the items in your budget for which you are seeking funding ): \_\_\_\_\_
10. Anticipated amount to be contributed by applicant toward cost of event: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Is this a new event? Yes  No  If not, please provide details.
  - A. Date started: \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. Number of years in existence: \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Where located: \_\_\_\_\_
  - D. If multi-year event, new marketing or activity(ies) to be added this year: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Previously funded with Occupancy Tax? Yes  No 
  - A. If yes, by whom \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. Amount: \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. For how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Will proceeds benefit any other organizations? Yes  No
- If yes, who? \_\_\_\_\_
14. A. Estimated number of attendees \_\_\_\_\_
- B. How did you determine this number of attendees? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Percentage of day trippers: \_\_\_\_\_
- D. How did you determine this percentage? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Percentage of overnight guests: \_\_\_\_\_
- E. How did you determine this percentage? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
15. A. Estimated number of rooms used for overnight accommodations \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Length of stay per party \_\_\_\_\_
- C. How did you determine this number of rooms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### III. MARKETING

1. Please attach your marketing plan showing how you intend to market your event, i.e. print, electronic, social media, television, radio, public relations or:

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Anticipated reach of your marketing \_\_\_\_\_  
(Specify local, regional, state, national)

3. What demographic or audience are you trying to reach? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. SAFETY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

1. Have you consulted with the appropriate agencies regarding the potential public safety impacts of your event (e.g. police, fire, EMS, Warren County DPW, Warren County Office of Emergency Services)?

Yes

No

2. Do you need assistance with this?

Yes

No

#### V. COMMUNITY AWARENESS

1. Are there any other major events that you are aware of on your selected dates?  Yes  No

List: \_\_\_\_\_

*If awarded funding, we reserve the right to request a modification of the date should there be a conflict with other events that were scheduled prior to your event.*

#### VI. AFFIRMATION

I have read the "Application Helpful Hints" and agree to abide by them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Funding application 2/16/21Ing

## Helpful hints on filling out your Occupancy Tax Funding Application

### What is Occupancy Tax?

Occupancy Tax is a 4% tax on room rentals of hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, inns, housekeeping cottages with four or more units and tourism facilities (ie. campgrounds with onsite RV rentals) as well as vacation rentals. It is used to fund the Warren County Tourism Department as well as promoting the County and Towns “through the promotion of tourist activities, conventions, trade shows, special events and other directly related and supporting activities” as stated in Local Law No. 6 of 2015. See Occupancy Tax Law under Occupancy Tax Information and Forms at <https://warrencountyny.gov/treasurer>.

A project which only incidentally furthers tourism and primarily benefits residents is not eligible for occupancy tax funding.

### 1. Who is eligible

An applicant can be an individual, a not-for-profit organization, or a for-profit business. An applicant may consist of a multi-day event or a tourism-related initiative. The applicant’s operations may also be performed outside of the County if there is a major impact on County revenue. The County seeks to sponsor new events/initiatives to attract new visitors to the area. Please note that awards are given on a reimbursement basis.

### 2. What to do

A. Complete the application, including your proposed budget and marketing plan. Include post-event documents if previously funded, including a history of hotel usage, broken down by property name and number of rooms attributed to your event. Send application to [grantl@warrencountyny.gov](mailto:grantl@warrencountyny.gov).

B. If awarded funding, provide us with a General Liability insurance certificate naming the County as an additional insured (90) days before the contract date. The wording on the certificate should read as follows:

Warren County, its Board, Officers and employees are named as additional insured on a primary, non-contributory basis.

The limit of liability should be at least \$1,000,000/\$2,000,000.

If applicable, provide us with a disability certificate (DB 120.1) and Workers Compensation certificate (C105.2) as well.

### 3. Preparing for your event

A. An active marketing campaign for events should begin more than 90 days before the event.

B. The County logo should appear on all printed materials and on all social media, online or television advertising. Tag us on Facebook @thelakegeorgearea and on Instagram and Twitter @lakegeorgearea when possible. Hyperlink your online advertising to the URL [www.visitlakegeorge.com](http://www.visitlakegeorge.com).

- C. Radio advertisements should mention the County's sponsorship.
- D. Provide us with one (1) full page of advertising in your primary program, directory, magazine or publication used during your event.
- E. Contact local hotels. Ask them to collect number of rooms attributable to your event, party size and where the attendees are coming from.

4. During the event

Endeavor to collect zip codes from the attendees along with party size.

5. After the event

- A. We will mail or email you a voucher and event questionnaires to complete.
- B. Analyze your zip code list to see where the attendees came from. Indicate by percentages those attending from the local area versus those coming from two hours away requiring accommodations. Include party size and indicate out-of-state travelers. Do not submit raw data.
- C. Analyze hotel information. See 3E above.
- D. Within 90 days submit paid receipts to the County along with copies of your bank statement or credit card statement showing payment for the items (Block your account number on the statements). In the case of an event you should include copies of print advertisements/items showing the County's logo, radio ads (send electronic copies) mentioning the County's sponsorship, a final income statement for the event as well as the zip code analysis. Complete the event questionnaires and explain your successes and challenges in putting on the event.

From time to time you may be asked to attend in person or virtually a Tourism and Occupancy Tax Coordination Meeting to present and/or report on your event. If this is necessary we will reach out to coordinate this with you.

## **TOURISM DEVELOPMENT & EVENTS COORDINATOR**

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:** An incumbent in this class is responsible for planning, developing and coordinating a regional tourism event strategy with a goal toward expanded promotional opportunities and enhancement of the tourism economies of Warren County. Duties include the development and coordination of a goal supporting event and public relations strategy as well as evaluation/analysis of occupancy tax guidelines for maximum utilization of taxpayer dollars within the County. The position requires the employee to work extensively and cooperatively with the County Administrator's office and multiple other departments, municipalities, partners and stakeholders regarding a broad variety of County government related matters. The work is performed under the general direction of the Director of Tourism with wide latitude allowed for the exercise of independent judgment in carrying out the requirements of the position. Supervision is not generally a requirement of the position. Does related work as required.

**TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:** (Illustrative only)

- Assists the Director of Tourism generally in creating and promoting programs, services and public events designed to promote the tourism economies of Warren County;
- Plans, develops and coordinates a regional tourism event strategy in cooperation with colleagues in the Warren County Tourism Department, County Administrator's office, local municipalities, tourism officials, other partners and stakeholders;
- Creates, implements and coordinates a regional tourism events public relations strategy in cooperation with colleagues in the Warren County Tourism Department, County Administrator's office, local municipalities, tourism officials, other partners and stakeholders;
- Develops and manages work plans for specific event projects to ensure successful execution of requirements and protocols;
- Reviews/evaluates occupancy tax funding applications and offers guidance/ recommendations to Director and Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee regarding value/validity of current/future occupancy tax grant requests;
- Collects, tabulates and conducts complex analysis of data on occupancy tax grant applications necessary to develop credible and reliable economic impact reports for presentation to Director and Occupancy Tax Committee;
- Develops and maintains communications channels with local municipalities and businesses, in general, and specific to event coordination;
- Develops and maintains strong working relationships with colleagues, local municipal officials, partners and stakeholders specific to event coordination;
- Acts as liaison and/or works in conjunction with the County Administrator's office and other Warren County Departments as necessary to ensure that all public health, safety and other compliance protocols and requirements are met by event managers;
- Prepares and presents periodic reports and updates to the Director and Tourism and Occupancy Tax Committee;
- Represents the Department at various meetings, conferences and other tourism promotion and community events.

**FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE,SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

Thorough knowledge of the principles, practices and techniques of marketing, advertising, promotion and public relations as relates to the tourism industry;

Thorough knowledge of event planning and program management;

Good knowledge of government organization and operations;

Good knowledge of current methods of collecting, analyzing and interpreting statistical data;

Good knowledge of current research techniques involved in the analysis of forecasting trends as relates to revenue and other fiscal projections of occupancy tax related matters;

Ability to communicate effectively in writing, verbally and using multiple media sources;

Ability to effectively plan, oversee and/or coordinate tourism events and promotions;

Ability to develop complex work plans to accomplish multifaceted project goals;

Ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with colleagues, government staff, public officials, businesses, organizations and other partners and stakeholders;

Ability to prepare concise, well-constructed reports relating to occupancy tax related events including financial reports and analyses;

Ability to deal with tight deadlines and competing requests;

Ability to exercise discretion and sound judgment;

Ability to effectively use computer applications or other automated systems such as spreadsheets, word processing, graphics and other database software in performing work assignments;

Initiative, resourcefulness, tact and good judgment.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a bachelor's degree or higher in travel/tourism, marketing, hospitality, public relations or related field and \_\_\_\_ years of experience in a position dealing with public relations, publicity, tourism promotion, hotel management, restaurant management or related field.

# ***RESOLUTION REQUEST FORM NO. 11***

## ***Request to Create New Position***

**DEPARTMENT NAME:** TOURISM

**DATE:** February 22, 2021

- (a) Title of Requested Position: **Tourism Development & Events Coordinator**
- (b) Annual **Base** Salary (and Grade if Applicable): **\$61,855, out of unit Grade 14**
- (c) Effective Date for New Position:\* **April 1, 2021**  
\*Please do not backdate unless the purpose is to correct an error.
- (d) List Any Position in the Department's Table of Organization Being Deleted as a Result of this Request: (Include annual salary and grade if applicable):  
**none**
- (e) Where are Funds in the Budget for this Position? List Budget Code, Object Code, Full Title and Amount:  
**TBD**
- (f) Has Personnel Officer Reviewed and Approved of the New Position Title? (This is necessary **BEFORE** bringing the request to committees.)  
**Yes**
- (g) Is this a mandated position? If so, please explain:  
**No**
- (h) Is there expected revenue from this position? If so, please explain:  
**No**

# WARREN COUNTY TREASURER

MICHAEL R. SWAN  
*County Treasurer*

ROBERT V. LYNCH II  
*Deputy Treasurer*

## OCCUPANCY TAX REPORT

Monday February 22, 2021

Revenue Collected Through 12/31/2020 (as of 2-17-21)	\$ 4,174,846.65
Revenue Collected Through 12/31/2019 (as of 2-17-21)	\$ <u>4,816,812.40</u>
Increase/Decrease	\$ (641,965.75)
Percent Change	- 15.38%

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