

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**COMMITTEE: TOURISM & OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION**

**DATE: MARCH 22, 2021**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS GERAGHTY  
MERLINO  
BRAYMER  
WILD  
BEATY  
STROUGH

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

JOANNE CONLEY, DIRECTOR OF TOURISM  
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK, TOURISM  
MICHAEL R. SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER  
RACHEL E. SEEBER, CHAIRWOMAN OF THE BOARD  
RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
MARY ELIZABETH KISSANE, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER

**COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:**

SUPERVISOR HOGAN

SUPERVISORS DRISCOLL

FRASIER  
LEGGETT  
MAGOWAN  
SMITH

DON LEHMAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
TAMMIEE DELORENZO ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
TOSHA BROWNELL, COMPUTER HELP DESK TECHNICIAN  
CHRISTIAN DUTCHER, AMERICADE INC.  
MOLLY GANOTES-GLEASON, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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*Please note, the following contains a summarization of the March 22, 2021 meeting of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <https://warrencountyny.gov/mma>*

*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 of the Committee members in attendance participated via video or teleconference except for Supervisors Geraghty and Merlino who were physically present.*

Mr. Geraghty called the meeting of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 10:31 a.m.

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

Mr. Geraghty commenced review of the agenda with a request to authorize the agreement with Lake Placid Advertiser's Workshop, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$19,999 to host the Tourism website and perform updates over the term of May 1, 2021 - August 31, 2021. He explained the responses to the RFP (*Request for Proposals*) were inadequate and the RFP would be re-released and in the meantime they would extend the agreement with Lake Placid Advertiser's Workshop.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Wild and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on*

*file with the minutes.*

Next, Mr. Geraghty presented a request to amend the contract with ARTC (*Adirondack Regional Tourism Council*) to provide marketing services, not to exceed \$10,000, which included mobile data tracking provided by Rove Tourism Marketing Re-Imagined facilitated through ARTC. He informed this contract was done annually, conveying this year the contract had to be modified. Joanne Conley, *Director of Tourism*, explained her intention was to contract with Rove Tourism Marketing Re-Imagined to provide tracking data; however, she said, when it was time to pay the invoice the County Attorney recommended that she should tie it in with the ARTC contract because they were coordinating the agreement with seven other counties. Mr. Wild inquired what the cost was for that portion of the agreement and Ms. Conley replied \$2,200 which equated to \$16,000 divided by seven counties.

Motion was made by Mr. Wild, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Privilege of the floor was presented to Michael R. Swan, *County Treasurer*, who spoke regarding occupancy tax collections, informing his office was trying to close the 2020 books and at that point the occupancy tax was down 6% but this percentage would improve once the 2020 books were closed. He apprised all the other counties were in the same position. He indicated they were currently in negotiations with Airbnb. Mr Wild opined he was surprised Airbnb were reluctant to show their data. Mr. Swan remarked many municipalities were suing Airbnb because of the way they collected occupancy tax. Mr. Beaty conveyed that thirty counties did not get a breakdown of Airbnb's data.

Mr. Geraghty spoke regarding the Winterfest event that was held during the month of February, informing it was a successful event. He notified Winterfest documentation was provided by Christian Dutcher, *Americade Inc.*, who was in attendance to provided an update on event. Mr. Dutcher explained that 44% of the attendees were new to the County. He said they had made changes throughout the month to keep the event going. Mr. Geraghty apprised the towns worked in collaboration for a successful event. Mr. Wild inquired how much funding the County would have to provide the event next year and Mr. Dutcher replied the total investment could be less in the future. Mr. Dutcher said people wanted to escape from COVID-19, informing the event could continue throughout the months of December, January and, February. He expressed the event was low risk and could be expanded next year.

Regarding the Occupancy Tax Spending Plan, Mr. Geraghty reported it would be worked on after the 2020 books were closed. He informed that there were occupancy tax applications on the County website. Mr. Wild suggested creating a reserve for those that submit an application after the spending plan was completed.

Regarding the Pending Items, Mr. Geraghty advised they were already addressed by Mr. Swan.

Mr. Geraghty asked if there were any public comments and Don Lehman, *Director of Public Affairs*, replied in the negative.

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. Beaty, seconded by Mr. Merlino, and carried unanimously, Mr. Geraghty adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Molly Ganotes-Gleason, Legislative Office Specialist