

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: NOVEMBER 20, 2023

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: MERLINO
WILD
GERACI
STROUGH
RUNYON
DIAMOND

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR: DICKINSON

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:
HEATHER BAGSHAW, DIRECTOR
PAUL TACKETT, TOURISM COORDINATOR
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK
MICHAEL R. SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
JOHN TAFLAN, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
LARRY ELMEN, COUNTY ATTORNEY
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISOR MAGOWAN
TAMMIE DeLORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MARK BRENNEISEN, ADIRONDACK WEDDINGS/TOTAL ENTERTAINMENT, INC
REPRESENTING THE SEMBRICH:
GINNY BRITT
CALEB EICK
TIM LaSARSO, GREATER GLENS FALLS AMATEUR ATHLETIC CHAMPIONSHIP
ASSOCIATION
JOHN LEFNER, THE HYDE COLLECTION
GEORGE NORMANDIN, EASTERN NEW YORK MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION
REPRESENTING WARREN COUNTY COALITION:
VINNIE CROCITTO JR
VINNIE CROCITTO III
SAM LUCIANO
KATHY MUNCIL
LESLIE LOVELACE, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD
*SEE SIGN IN SHEET FOR ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the November 20, 2023 meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed using the following links:

Warren County website - <https://warrencountyny.gov/mma>

Warren County's YouTube Channel - <https://youtu.be/qqTGyrnYOak>

In the absence of Mr. Dickinson, Vice-Chair Merlino called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 11:06 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Diamond, seconded by Mr. Wild and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Dickinson absent*) to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Magowan who spoke with regard to sales tax for short term rentals and occupancy tax as a revenue source.

The meeting commenced with a review of the Action Agenda/New Business Items portion of the agenda, as follows:

- a. Occupancy Tax Applications for special event funding - Heather Bagshaw, *Tourism Director*, apprised there were applicants in attendance and explained the changes made to the occupancy tax application process and spending would be in the conservative realm. Committee addressed the applications per the attached spreadsheet.

John Lefner, *CEO, The Hyde Collection*, spoke regarding his application request for \$25,000 for 2024 exhibitions and marketing efforts.

Mark Brenneisen, *representing Adirondack Weddings/Total Entertainment*, spoke regarding his application request for \$10,000 for the Lake George DJ Takeover Music and Arts Festival to be held June 7 - 9, 2024.

With regard to the application request for Silver Bay YMCA for \$15,000 for the Bluegrass in Heaven event to be held September 13 - 15, 2024, Ms. Bagshaw informed the decision was to suggest application to their local municipality and then come back depending on how the local municipality funded the event.

With regard to the application request from Adirondack Axe LLC for \$15,000 for Battle at the Barn Axe Throwing Tournament/Fall Fest event to be held September 26 - 29, 2024. The applicant had been in attendance but not currently present to speak, Ms. Bagshaw noted she would move forward with the next applicant and return to this one when the applicant entered the meeting.

Caleb Eick and Ginny Britt, *representing The Sembrich*, spoke regarding their application for \$20,000 for A Century of Sembrich and 2024 Summer Festival to be held June 5 - August 31, 2024.

With regard to the application request from Lake George Music Festival for \$30,000 for the 2024 Lake George Music Festival to be held August 11 - 22, 2024, the applicant was not in attendance.

With regard to the application request from Warren County Historical Society for \$4,000 for The Joseph Warren Museum of Warren County Ms. Bagshaw apprised awards of \$50,000 and higher needed Committee approval and the matter would be addressed at the December meeting.

Tim LaSarso, *representing Greater Glens Falls Amateur Athletic Championship Association*, spoke regarding his application request for \$46,000 for the NYSPHSAA Boys State Basketball Championships to be held March 14 - 17, 2024.

George Normandin, *representing Eastern New York Marine Trades Association*, spoke with regard to the application request for \$25,000 for The Great Upstate Boat Show to be held March 22 - 24, 2024.

Ms. Bagshaw informed she would invite Silver Bay YMCA to attend the next meeting to answer questions the Committee may have, as she noticed the event was not a single day event, rather a multi-day event.

George Normandin, *representing Lake George Steamboat Company*, spoke with regard to the application for request for \$20,000 for Rock the Dock Music Festival to be held July 13, 2024. Ms. Bagshaw agreed to allow the owners of Lake George Steamboat Company to attend the next meeting to have further discussion on the event.

Action was taken to authorize agreements for the disbursement of 2024 Occupancy Tax Revenues in the amounts as follows:

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- \$25,000 to The Hyde Collection for 2024 exhibitions
 - \$5,000 to Adirondack Weddings/Total Entertainment
 - \$20,000 to Sembrich
 - \$30,000 to Lake George Music Festival
 - \$46,000 to Greater Glens Falls Amateur Athletic Championship Association
 - \$25,000 to Eastern New York Marine Trades Association (ENYMTA)

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon and seconded by Mr. Diamond to approve the request; following discussion, Mr. Merlino called the question and the motion was carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Dickinson absent*) to authorize agreements for the disbursement of 2024 Occupancy Tax Revenues as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 15th Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

With regard to Item b, Sam Luciano and Vinnie Crocitto III, *representing Warren County Coalition*, provided an update on the Winter's Dream event which included ticket sales and expressed concern with expenses not within the occupancy tax funding guidelines.

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Wild and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Dickinson absent*) to authorize the County Attorney to meet with Warren County Coalition and discuss the questionable expenses and providing authority for the County Attorney to bring a resolution to the December 15th Board Meeting if he determined one to be necessary.

- c. To authorize a three-year contract with the Lake George Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau in the amount of \$650,000 in year one, \$700,000 in year two and \$750,000 in year three.

The Committee decided to re-visit the item and obtain more information for discussion at an upcoming meeting.

- d. To authorize Warren County Tourist and Convention Development agreement with Adirondack Civic Center Coalition, Inc. for Occupancy Tax Special Event Funding, in the amount of \$250,000.

Motion was made by Mr. Diamond, seconded by Ms. Runyon and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Dickinson absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 15th Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes.* Runyon/Diamond

- e. To authorize continuation of the intermunicipal agreement with the Village of Lake George to provide funding for promotion space in The Lake George Visitor Center, in the amount of \$25,000.

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Diamond and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Dickinson absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 15th Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes.* Geraci/Runyon

- f. To authorize an increase in award to Warren County Sheriff's Office for the disbursement of 2023 Occupancy Tax Revenues in the amount of \$15,130.64 to cover expenses incurred during 2023 events.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraci, seconded by Ms. Runyon and carried by unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Dickinson absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 15th Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Privilege of the floor was extended to Michael Swan, *County Treasurer*, who reviewed the Treasurer's Occupancy Tax Report; a copy of which is on file with the meeting minutes.

As there was no further business to come before the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. Wild, seconded by Ms. Runyon and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Dickinson absent*), Mr. Merlino adjourned the meeting at 12:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie Lovelace, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board