

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: TOURISM & OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: JULY 23, 2024

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: MERLINO
STROUGH
RUNYON
BEAN
GERACI
CROCITTO
STRAINER

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

HEATHER BAGSHAW, DIRECTOR
PAUL TACKETT, TOURISM COORDINATOR
KACEY O'BRIEN, COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
JOHN TAFLAN, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
LARRY ELMEN, COUNTY ATTORNEY
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
SARAH MCLENITHAN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER

SUPERVISORS BRUNO
DIAMOND
GILLIGAN
PATCHETT
TURNER
WILD

TAMMIE DeLORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTER
CHRISTINE NORTON, COUNTY TREASURER
ED MOORE, VICE PRESIDENT, ADIRONDACK CIVIC CENTER COALITION
JEFF MEAD, GENERAL MANAGER, COOL INSURING ARENA
REPRESENTING THE WARREN COUNTY COALITION:
SAM LUCIANO
TYLER HERRICK
REPRESENTING AD WORKSHOP:
KIERA LACY, DIRECTOR OF CLIENT SERVICES
ALLIE WITHEE, MANAGER, SEARCH & PAID MEDIA
ED LARKIN, SR. VICE PRESIDENT, HOOD COMMUNICATIONS
GINA MINTZER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LAKE GEORGE CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND CVB
CATHY DEDE, *CHRONICLE*
LUKE MOSSEAU, *THE POST STAR*
MOLLY GANOTES-GLEASON, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST
*SEE SIGN IN SHEET FOR ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the July 23, 2023 meeting of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following links

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

Warren County's YouTube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ke1dm1kcwCE>

Mr. Merlino called the meeting of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 10:06 a.m.

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

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Ms. Runyon 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 the following individuals:

Ed Moore, *Vice President, Adirondack Civic Center Coalition*, who advised to prevent the sale of the Civic Center in July of 2014 a collaboration came together which raised \$635,000 to lease. He then provided an overview of the Economic Impact of the Cool Insuring Arena; a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Jeff Mead, *General Manager, Cool Insuring Arena*, distributed a handout entitled “*Cool Insuring Arena August 2022-July 2023 Economic & Fiscal Impact of Arena Operations*” which was reviewed, a copy of the handout is on file with the minutes.

Sam Luciano, *Lake George Coalition*, provided a handout which he indicated included privileged and confidential information which he asked the Supervisors to refrain from sharing. County Attorney advised that if the information was distributed during a public meeting it was subject to FOIL (*Freedom of Information Law*) and must be made available to the public; he counseled that if the information was confidential and not to be distributed, all copies should be immediately returned. Mr. Luciano proceeded to collect all copies of the proprietary information he had distributed, thereby removing them from the record.

Mr. Bean exited the meeting at 10:21 a.m. and returned at 10:24 a.m.

Mr. Merlino directed the Committee to Action Agenda/New Business Item C, pertaining to the two applications for special event funding submitted by the Warren County Coalition for their 2025 Winter’s Dream event totaling \$400,000. It was noted that as per Resolution No. 461 of 2023, Committee consensus was required in order to consider the applications which both exceeded the \$50,000 funding maximum set; Mr. Merlino asked that the Committee make this determination so that Mr. Luciano could proceed with the presentation regarding the funding applications submitted. Following discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried by majority vote of those present, with Mr. Crocitto recusing himself from the matter.

Mr. Luciano provided a hand out entitled “*Changes to Winter’s Dream for 2024-2025 Season (In Development)*” a copy is on file with the minutes. He explained tickets sales had not meet projections and they did not receive surplus profits for the next year adding, there was a 9% increase in occupancy over the previous year and they were looking for additional funding in the amount of \$400,000 to continue the event.

Review of the Action Agenda/New Business Items portion of the agenda continued with requests reviewed in the following order:

- d. To approve the Warren County Coalition application requesting Special Event Funding in the amount of \$250,000 for Winter’s Dream attraction 2024-2025.

A motion was made by Mr. Geraci, seconded by Ms. Runyon and carried by majority vote, with Mr. Strough voting in opposition and Mr. Crocitto having recused himself, to approve the request as presented and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 16th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

- e. To approve the Warren County Coalition show improvements application requesting Special Event Funding in the amount of \$150,000 for Winter’s Dream in the Winter 2024-2025.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraci, seconded by Ms. Runyon and carried by majority vote, with Mr. Strough voting in opposition and Mr. Crocitto having recused himself, to approve the request as presented and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 16th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

- a. To create the new position of Fiscal Coordinator *Grade 15, Base Annual Salary \$52,674*, and delete the position

of Principle Account Clerk, effective August 19, 2024.

The County Administer advised this request had been moved forward, rather than being postponed to the 2025 Budget process, to avoid a gap in service that would be created due to retirement.

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented and refer same to the Personnel, Administration & Higher Education Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr Strainer exited the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

- b. To adopt an updated online version of the Occupancy Tax Grant Application for conventions, trade shows and events. A handout was distributed entitled "*Occupancy Tax Application Portal Recommendations*" that was reviewed, a copy of the handout is on file with the minutes.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraci, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Strainer absent*) to approve the request as presented and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 16th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Bean exited the meeting at 11:18 a.m. and returned at 11:21 a.m.

The Information for Discussion/Review item was addressed as follows:

- a. Ad Workshop presentation of the Fall and Winter 2024 Campaign. A handout was provided that was entitled "*Warren County Fall & Winter 2024 (August-December) Strategy*", which was reviewed in detail, a copy of the handout is on file with the minutes.
- b. Occupancy Tax Budget update. Heather Bagshaw, *Tourism Director*, reviewed a handout entitled, "*Occupancy Tax 3-Month Projection*"; a copy is on file with the meeting minutes.
- c. Treasurer's Report - Christine Norton, *County Treasurer*, reviewed the report; a copy is on file with the meeting minutes.
- d. Cool Insuring Arena update. Was previously provided.
- e. Lake George Regional CVB Quarterly Report April - June 2024 update provided by Gina Mintzer, *Executive Director, Lake George Chamber of Commerce and CVB*; a copy of the report is on file with the minutes.

Privilege of the floor and public comment were called for, the following individual spoke:

Ed Larkin Sr., *Vice President, Hood Communications*, mentioned he would like to set up a meeting with Ad Workshop that would be scheduled through the Director of Tourism.

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strough and seconded by Mr. Bean, Mr. Merlino declared the meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Ganotes-Gleason, Legislative Office Specialist