

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: TOURISM & OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: AUGUST 20, 2024

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: MERLINO
STROUGH
RUNYON
GERACI
CROCITTO
STRAINER

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR: BEAN

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

HEATHER BAGSHAW, DIRECTOR
PAUL TACKETT, TOURISM COORDINATOR
CHRISTINE NORTON, 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

SUPERVISORS BRUNO

DRISCOLL

PATCHETT

TURNER

WILD

TAMMIE DELORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

AMY COLLINS, TOURISM AND BUSINESS COORDINATOR, CITY OF GLENS
FALLS

GINA MINTZER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LAKE GEORGE CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE & CVB

LESLIE LOVELACE, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the August 20, 2024 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=5TcqrDQURtc>

Mr. Merlino called the meeting of the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 10:47 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Strough, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Bean 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 meeting minutes.

Privilege of the floor and public comment was called for, but no one was wishing to speak.

The Committee commenced with a review of the Discussion Items portion which included the following item:

- a. Treasurer's Report - Christine Norton, *County Treasurer*, reviewed the report; a copy is on file with the meeting minutes.

Heather Bagshaw, *Tourism Director*, provided a review of the distributed hand out entitled, "Occupancy Tax Available Balance as of 06/30/2024"; a copy is on file with the meeting minutes.

Review of the Action Agenda/New Business Items portion of the agenda commenced with the following requests:

- a. To appropriate funds in the amount of \$496,990 from Budget Code A.881.00, *Reserve, Occupancy Tax*, to Budget

Code A.6417.469, *Town Payments*, to fund the remaining 25% (\$179,997) for the first distribution of 2024 Occupancy Tax and to fund the 2024 Spending Plan (\$316,993) authorized by Resolution No. 198 of 2024.

Motion was made by Mr. Strough, seconded by Ms. Runyon and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Bean absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and refer same to the Finance & Budget Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

- b. To appropriate funds in the amount of \$500,000 from Budget Code A.881.00, *Reserve, Occupancy Tax*, to Budget Code A.6417.480, *Special Events*, to fund the 2024 Adirondack Balloon Festival event (\$100,000), Winter's Dream Marketing (\$250,000) and Winter's Dream Show Improvements (\$150,000).

Larry Elmen, *County Attorney*, noted for the record Mr. Crocitto had recused himself from this matter and exited the meeting at 10:53 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Strough, seconded by Ms. Runyon and carried by a majority vote of those present (*Messrs. Bean and Crocitto absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and refer same to the Finance & Budget Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Crocitto re-entered the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

- c. To appropriate funds in the amount of \$100,000 from Budget Code A.881.00 *Reserve, Occupancy Tax*, to Budget Code A.6417.0002.480.04, *Warren County Projects*, to reimburse SUNY Adirondack for funds expended for the synthetic turf recreation field authorized by Resolution No. 259 of 2023.

Motion was made by Mr. Strough, seconded by Mr. Crocitto and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Bean absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and refer same to the Finance & Budget Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Privilege of the floor and public comment was called for:

Mr. Wild inquired if the County could retain the \$180,000 municipality funding and what the return on the funds to the County was.

Chairman Geraghty spoke with regard to the yearly reporting the towns provided regarding the municipality funding.

Mr. Driscoll expressed his understanding of the importance of financials as well as residents receiving a return from their taxes and visitor attraction which the events provided.

Mr. Wild inquired how much funding was necessary for the summer season in comparison to the off-season for events and suggested evaluating the status of occupancy tax collections and what changes should be made for the future.

Mr. Patchett inquired as to whether sales and occupancy tax could be calculated from an event to determine if the occupancy tax funds allocated were substantiated and if an event doubled their profits the possibility of returning a percentage of the profits.

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

Gina Mintzer, *Executive Director, Lake George Chamber of Commerce & CVB*, spoke with regard to the importance of events providing a balance for both residents and visitors which was afforded through occupancy tax.

Amy Collins, *City of Glens Falls Tourism and Business Coordinator*, remarked that she echoed Ms. Mintzer's

thoughts on intra tourism and commended the local tourism industry on a job well done.

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism & Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strough, seconded by Ms. Runyon and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Messrs. Bean and Strainer absent*), Mr. Merlino adjourned the meeting at 11:14 a.m.

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