

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: MARCH 24, 2025

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: CROCITTO
RUNYON
GILLIGAN
ETU
THOMAS
MERLINO

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

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR: PATCHETT

AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD

SUPERVISORS BRUNO
STRAINER
STROUGH
TURNER
WILD

TAMMIE DeLORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
LUKE MOSSEAU, *POST STAR*
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 March 24, 2025 meeting of the 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=l7Z3Krcib7c>

Mr. Crocitto called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 9:32 a.m.

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously (*Mr. Patchett 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 was extended to the following:

Mr. Wild spoke with regard to the Occupancy Tax Spending Plan, questioning why revenues were being allocated to the municipalities instead of remaining in the County when each municipality collected their own occupancy tax. He requested a business justification going forward for the distribution of the Spending Plan, as well as what the municipalities used the funds for and what the return was.

Mr. Strough voiced his disagreement with Mr. Wild, stating the Town's and City knew their community needs best and explained local government was sensitive to their particular needs. He stated an example was the cultural institutions such as the Chapman Museum, The Hyde Collection, and World Awareness Children's Museum which were important to tourism although not directly putting heads in beds and may not exist if the Town of Queensbury and City of Glens Falls did not support them.

Mr. Wild clarified his request was not about what entity was receiving funds; rather, what the business case was and what amount needed to be given to towns to thrive.

Mr. Merlino apprised although hotel business had decreased due to short-term rentals occupancy tax and sales tax were flourishing and he preferred to have it remain how it currently was.

The Committee commenced with a review of the Action Agenda/New Business Items portion of the agenda, which included the following requests:

- a. To authorize the 2025 Spending Plan agreements between Municipalities in Warren County for tourism promotion and disbursements in the amount of \$450,000. (*Previous Resolution No. 198 of 2024*)

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Patchett absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the April 11th Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

- b. To rescind Resolution No. 54 of 2024, which authorized an extension agreement with Loud Media, LLC, for Tourism Revitalization and Rejuvenation Services, to create a weekly Warren County radio feature that aired twice daily during prime listenership (7:20 a.m. and 5:20 p.m.) due to new ownership.
- c. To authorize a new contract with Sticks Media LLC, to create a weekly Warren County radio feature that airs twice daily during prime listenership (7:20 a.m. and 5:20 p.m.) in a total amount not to exceed \$24,000 annually for a term commencing February 27, 2025 and terminating February 28, 2026, with the option for two additional one-year renewals.

Chair Crocitto recused himself from the matter and exited the meeting at 9:42 a.m.

In the absence of Chair Crocitto, Vice-Chair Runyon served as Chair.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried by a majority vote of those present (*Messrs. Crocitto and Patchett absent*), to approve the requests as outlined above and the necessary resolutions were authorized for the April 11th Board meeting. *Copies of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Crocitto re-entered the meeting at 9:43 a.m. and resumed the role of Chair.

The Discussion Items portion included the following items:

- a. Tourism Department Overview was provided by Heather Bagshaw, *Tourism Director*.
- b. Treasurer's Report was reviewed by Christine Norton, *County Treasurer*; a copy is on file with the meeting minutes.

Privilege of the floor was extended to the following:

Gary Thornquist, *Lake George RV Park*, inquired as to why penalties and interest for failure to register or pay short-term rental tax went into the General fund instead of occupancy tax.

Ms. Norton responded that interest and penalties had always gone into the General fund, adding she would research the matter further.

Mr. Wild asked the County Treasurer what percentage of short-term rentals was from direct bookings or if that information was able to be obtained.

Ms. Norton replied direct bookings could be obtained through audits and that her office was trying to close all loop holes that existed to achieve compliance.

As there was no further business to come before the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Patchett absent*), Mr. Crocitto

adjourned the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

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