

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: AUGUST 19, 2025

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: CROCITTO
RUNYON
PATCHETT
GILLIGAN
THOMAS
MERLINO

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:
HEATHER BAGSHAW, DIRECTOR
PAUL TACKETT, TOURISM COORDINATOR
JESSICA CARSON, FISCAL COORDINATOR
REPRESENTING LAKE GEORGE TV:
JESSE JACKSON
ED LARKIN

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR: ETU

JEFF MEAD, GENERAL MANAGER, HARDING MAZZOTTI ARENA
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
SUPERVISORS BRUNO
DRISCOLL
STRAINER
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
LUKE MOSSEAU, *POST STAR*
LESLIE LOVELACE, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the August 19, 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=og0FdCi-GDI>

Mr. Crocitto called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 10:01 a.m.

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Etu 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 comments were called for:

Mr. Wild suggested the creation of a reserve from a portion of the occupancy tax for special projects similar to the Johnsbury and North Creek sewer project. He also suggested placing a limit on the occupancy tax distributed to municipalities going forward in an effort to create the special project reserve as one of the major comments from the meeting with the business community was that they did not have resources for additional projects due to the funds always being spent.

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 funding annual signature events and amounts as listed in agenda to be awarded for three consecutive years starting in 2026.

Motion was made by Mr. Patchett and seconded by Mr. Merlino to approve the request as presented. Larry Elmen, *County Attorney*, requested clarification on whether the request presented was for a three-year contract or a one-year agreement with two annual renewals for contract purposes. Heather Bagshaw, *Tourism Director*, replied the intent of the request was that the specified amounts would be awarded for three consecutive years. Mr. Elmen requested the motion be amended to authorize the County Attorney to establish a contract for each signature event recipient. Messrs. Patchett and Merlino amended their motion and second to include the language requested by the County Attorney. Mr. Crocitto called the question and the motion was carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Etu absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 19, 2025 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

- b. To appropriate funds in the amount of \$664,675.36 from Budget Code A.881.00, *Occupancy Tax Reserve*, to Budget Code A.6417.0002.469.05, *Municipal Application Funding (\$364,850)*, Budget Code A.6417.0002.480, *Special Events funding (\$159,238)*, Budget Code A.6417.0001.470, *Travel Guide (\$67,071)*, Budget Code A.6417.0002.469, *Payments to Towns (25%) (\$58,516.36)*, and Budget Code A.6417.0002.480.05, *Annual Contracts (Lake George Event Mgr) (\$15,000)* to cover the cost of funding previously approved by the Warren County Board of Supervisors. (*Previous Resolution Nos. 478 of 2024; 82 of 2023; 193 of 2025; 503 of 2007 and 214 of 2025*)

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr Etu 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.*

- c. To authorize sponsorship of the New York State Tourism Industry Association (*NYSTIA*) conference in the amount of \$7,500 to be held September 10-12, 2025.

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon and seconded by Mr. Thomas to approve the request as presented; following discussion, Mr. Crocitto called the question and the motion was carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Etu absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 19, 2025 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

- d. To appropriate funds in the amount of \$7,500 from Budget code A 881.00, *Occupancy Tax Reserve*, to Budget Code A.6417.0001.444, *Tourism/Occupancy, Tourism, Conferences/Education*, to cover the cost of sponsorship of the NYSTIA conference.

Motion was made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Ms. Gilligan and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Etu 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.*

- e. To amend Resolution No. 503 of 2007 to remove language in Paragraph 8 “*distributing one percent (1%) to the Municipalities*” to add language “*a total distribution of 25% of Occupancy Tax collections are directed to the Warren County municipalities*”.

The County Attorney apprised legally there was no reason to change the language, but it was at the Committee’s discretion whether they chose to amend Resolution No. 503 of 2007 to reflect the above language change. A brief discussion ensued, following which a motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Ms. Runyon and carried by a

unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Etu absent*) to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 19, 2025 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Next, a review of the Discussion Items portion of the agenda proceeded with the following items:

- a. Cash Flow Report was reviewed by Heather Bagshaw, *Tourism Director*.
- b. Treasurer's Report was reviewed by Christine Norton, *County Treasurer*.
- c. Harding Mazzotti Arena update was provided by Jeff Mead, *General Manager, Harding Mazzotti Arena*.
- d. Lake George (*LG*) TV Quarterly Overview presentation was provided by Ed Larkin and Jesse Jackson following which questions were answered by Ed Larkin.

Privilege of the floor and public comments were extended to the following:

Mr. Wild spoke with regard to the creation of LG TV, indicating he believed they were moving in the right direction. He questioned what the County was getting for the \$3.1 million increase in occupancy tax over the last five years, noting the towns were getting almost \$800,000 more a year. He asked the Committee if they believed the tourism economy was growing or just trading water.

Chairman Geraghty thanked Gina Mintzer, *Executive Director, Lake George Chamber of Commerce and CVB*, and the Tourism Department for their assistance promoting the Smoke Eaters Jamboree event in Warrensburg which had taken place for sixty-two years, adding the attendance had risen. He questioned where the increase in occupancy tax funds went, advising the Town of Warrensburg had not received any increase.

Ms. Norton clarified the 25% of the occupancy tax increase was divided based on the occupancy tax attributed to the location and \$800,000 was the total. She suggested LG TV request a source during booking to use as a metric. Mr. Larkin responded they requested that feedback from partners and had planned to implement that, but due to the extremely complex implementation and cost it did not come to fruition.

Mr. Thomas opined LG TV was one of the better ways occupancy tax had been spent.

Mr. Crocitto asked LG TV why the highest marketing campaign demographic age was 65-75 years old and Mr. Larkin replied they did not target anyone under 21 years old due to privacy issues and marketing to children issues. He stated 65-75 year olds were the highest respondents to the campaigns.

Mr. Thomas informed the intention of funding events when occupancy tax started was to fund an event for three years and then the expectation was the event should fund themselves. He said over the years the Committee had not upheld that concept.

Mr. Crocitto remarked there had been similar discussion on the topic of continued funding for more profitable and bigger events, but that those events expressed they could not continue without the occupancy tax funding.

Mr. Elmen stated the Board of Supervisors had the authority at any time to determine how they were going to spend occupancy tax funds.

As there was no further business to come before the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Ms. Runyon, seconded by Mr. Patchett and carried by a unanimous vote of those present (*Mr. Etu absent*), Mr. Crocitto adjourned the meeting at 11:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie Lovelace, Legislative Office Specialist