

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: JUNE 9, 2020

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS DICKINSON  
MERLINO  
STROUGH  
BRAYMER  
BRUNO  
FRASIER  
GERAGHTY  
LEGGETT  
SEEBER

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

JOANNE CONLEY, DIRECTOR  
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK  
FRANK THOMAS, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
RYAN DICKEY, SECOND ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY

SUPERVISORS DRISCOLL

HOGAN

WILD

TAMMIE DELORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

DON LEHMAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JEREMY SCRIME, SENIOR COMPUTER SYSTEMS ANALYST/PROGRAMMER

MIKE SWAN, WARREN COUNTY TREASURER

KRISTEN HANIFAN, SPECIAL EVENTS & CONVENTION SALES DIRECTOR -

LAKE GEORGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & CVB

SCOTT HAYDEN, ADIRONDACK FOLK SCHOOL

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Please note, the following contains a summarization of the June 9, 2020 meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <https://www.warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2020/occupancy/>

**Note: As per Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1: "Article 7 of the Public Officers Law, to the extent necessary to permit any public body to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings and authorizing such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed". All committee members and attendees participated by video or teleconference, aside from Supervisors Geraghty and Merlino who were physically present.**

Mr. Dickinson called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 10:59 a.m.

Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed to those in attendance, those participating virtually accessed the agenda via the Warren County website. A copy of the agenda is on file with the meeting minutes.

Motion was made by Ms. Braymer, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Michael Swan, *County Treasurer*, who briefly reviewed the Occupancy Tax Report, which reflected a 35% (\$120,814.49) decrease in collections as compared to this time last year. He noted the total amount of Occupancy Tax collected for 2019 was \$4,728,803.86. Mr. Dickinson asked Mr. Swan what the projected total decrease for 2020 was and Mr. Swan replied he anticipated up to a 40% decrease. Mr. Dickinson asked Mr. Swan what the anticipated decrease for sales tax was and Mr. Swan replied sales tax

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collections were currently down 33% (\$2,000,000) from last year; however, he said, in relation to the amount budgeted for revenue it was down \$600,000.

A brief discussion ensued in regards to room rate decreases for hospitality.

Commencing the review of the Action Agenda, Leisa Grant, *Principal Account Clerk*, presented a request to amend Resolution No. 480 of 2019, and the 2019 Occupancy Tax contract with Adirondack Folk School, to increase the amount of the award for Adirondack Folk School to \$18,827.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Scott Hayden, *Adirondack Folk School*, who explained the largest expense for the 2019 Christkindlmarkt event consisted of tents and heating; he added that due to a lack of sponsorships for the 2020 event, combined with shortages from the 2019 event, the 2020 Christkindlmarkt had been cancelled and instead was expected to be held in 2021. Kristen Hanifan, *Special Events & Convention Sales Director, Lake George Chamber of Commerce & CVB*, informed due to the weather, the size of the tents and heating costs were much higher than they had anticipated resulting in the shortages for 2019.

A discussion ensued in regards to tent rental for events in Lake George and sanitation stations.

Motion was made by Ms. Braymer, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to amend the resolution providing for 2019 occupancy tax awards to increase the distribution to the Adirondack Folk School for the 2019 Christkindlmarkt event and to amend the contract for same commensurately, with the additional funding to be provided from the 2020 Budget, contingent upon a determination by the County Attorney that such process is legal, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Next, Ms. Grant presented a request to amend Resolution No. 49 of 2020 to make corrections to event dates, as well as to indicate events that had been cancelled for 2020 and she proceeded to read the listing of changes aloud.

Motion was made by Mr. Leggett, seconded by Ms. Braymer and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Strough inquired about a letter the Town of Queensbury received from Mr. Dickinson stating there would not be any Occupancy Tax money distributed to the Town this year which impact the amounts awarded to events by the Towns. Mr. Dickinson advised because Occupancy Tax had not been collected there were no funds available for Towns. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Don Lehman, *Director of Public Affairs*, read aloud public comments from Gina Mintzer, *Executive Director, Lake George Chamber of Commerce & CVB* and Frank Dietrich, *Warren County Lodging Association*.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion made by Ms. Braymer, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously, Mr. Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

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

