

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: APRIL 30, 2018

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: DICKINSON
MERLINO
SIMPSON
STROUGH
BEATY
LEGGETT
GERAGHTY

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

JOANNE CONLEY, DIRECTOR
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK
RONALD F. CONOVER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MARY ELIZABETH KISSANE, COUNTY ATTORNEY
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER

REPRESENTING THE ADIRONDACK CIVIC CENTER COALITION:

ELIZABETH MAHONEY, BOARD MEMBER
ED MOORE, BOARD MEMBER
JEFF MEAD, GLENS FALLS CIVIC CENTER GENERAL MANAGER
SUPERVISORS HOGAN
WILD

REPRESENTING THE LAKE GEORGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND CVB

GINA MINTZER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
KRISTEN HANIFAN, SPECIAL EVENTS & CONVENTION SALES
DIRECTOR
AMY COLLINS, TOURISM & DOWNTOWN BUSINESS COORDINATOR,
CITY OF GLENS FALLS
TRAVIS WHITEHEAD, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY RESIDENT
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
MOLLY GANOTES-GLEASON, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS: FRASIER
DRISCOLL

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the April 30, 2018 meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <http://www.warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2018/occupancy/>

Mr. Dickinson called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 11:23 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Leggett 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 presented to Mike Swan, *County Treasurer*, who reviewed the Treasurers Report indicating Occupancy Tax collected between April 26, 2017 and April 26, 2018 was up 1.31% which, he said, was \$3,815.45. He mentioned the amount collected during that time was \$291,452.22. He apologized for not providing a copy of the report, indicating he would email a copy to the Committee members. *Note: subsequent to the meeting a copy of the Occupancy Tax Report was provided and a copy of same is on file with the meeting minutes.*

Privilege of the floor was extended to Jeff Mead, *Cool Insuring Arena, General Manager*, who reported on the first quarter events held at the arena. He indicated in the first three months they hosted thirty-six events which, he said, was an increase from the same period last year. He apprised Adirondack Thunder Hockey was doing well, the

Sunmark Shootout had 3,000 attendees, the Harlem Globetrotters had 2,000 attendees, Section Two Wrestling acquired 2,700 attendees, 12,000 individuals attended the final Section Two Basketball Tournament and Federation Basketball had 3,000 attendees. Regarding recent and upcoming events, Mr. Mead indicated 3,000 individuals attended the two day Garden Brothers Circus event. He apprised the bands Primus and Mastodon would perform May 25th, High School graduations would commence next month and there were five offers for concerts and shows in the fall. He provided a breakdown of the number of hotel rooms events brought in during the first three months.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Elizabeth Mahoney, *Board Member, Adirondack Civic Center Coalition*, who distributed copies of the Performance Report to the Committee members; *a copy of the report is on file with the minutes*. She mentioned the report was from the previous month and included a request for second quarter reimbursement. She explained that when they prepared the reports for the upcoming quarter they were not always positive if the event would take place or the cost of the event. She indicated they were estimates, advising last months report they asked for funds for a concert that they did not know the date of, which she said, was the Primus concert that would fall under the second quarter. She added they did not use the funds for the concert provided by the County in the first quarter so they would use the funds in the second quarter and report back to the Committee in the third quarter. She spoke regarding performance from the first quarter, informing the funds they asked for were for the Harlem Globetrotters and the Primus concert. She advised she had detailed the expenses from first quarter and advised she was asking for \$50,000 for reimbursement of last quarter and funds for the circus. A brief discussion ensued, following the consensus of the Committee was to approve the second quarter funding.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Kristen Hanifan, *Special Events & Convention Sales Director, Lake George Chamber of Commerce and CVB* who distributed the March 2018 CVB Report to the Committee members which she reviewed in detail, *a copy of the report is on file with the minutes*.

Gina Mintzer, *Executive Director, Lake George Chamber of Commerce and CVB*, spoke of the new subscription software they were using. She distributed copies of the Event Impact Summery to the Committee members, *a copy of the summery is on file with the minutes*. She indicated there was an economic impact from transportation, food and beverage and retail, as well as lodging. She informed the Barbershop Society had a contract for 210 room nights and they could be penalized if they did not fill all the reservations according to a clause in their contract. She mentioned the event was worth \$82,000 of which \$60,000 was paid out of pocket by attendees. She said they calculated there to be 1.7 individuals per room and with the software they could calculate what would be spent on retail and recreation. She noted the organizer had expenses for lodging, transportation and food and beverage for their judges along with space rental. She informed the second part of the Event Impact Summary were the number of jobs that were sustained, adding forty-seven jobs were sustained from the business with the Barbershop Society through direct spending. She informed an additional part of the Event Impact Summary included State and local taxes along with property tax. She mentioned with repeat business their cost was minimal and the ROI (*Return on Investment*) for hosting the Barbershop Society was 724%. She informed the business she spoke of regarding the Barbershop Society was not final because they did not have all the numbers to run a final Event Impact Summary. She reviewed the remaining business calculations in the Event Impact Summary.

With apologies, Mr. Dickinson informed he had to leave the meeting but first wished to advise of his opposition to award Occupancy Tax funds to the Warrensburg Bike Rally; he exited the meeting at 11:46 a.m. turning the Chair over to Vice Chairman Merlino.

Ms. Mintzer continued, notifying they would provide economic impact calculations for every booked piece of business and she implied they could run the economic impact calculator on anything the Committee deemed

necessary. She mentioned there would be joint training with the Tourism Department about how to operate the economic impact calculator.

Ms. Hanifan apprised the economic impact calculator would be a powerful tool to analyze what events were in the area. She mentioned that the CVB provided support, business outreach and liaison services to insure that those who booked events had a great time and would return in the future. She indicated they were working with The Tourism Department on the 2019 Atta Elevate conference and were also working on an CFA (*Consolidated Funding Application*) Market New York grant. She stated the event would impact the region and the State, noting she was also working with I Love New York, NYSDEC (*New York State Department of Environmental Conservation*) and New York State Parks & Historic Preservation to highlight adventure travel throughout the State. She apprised the Fort William Henry Hotel was booked as the host hotel. She discussed at the 2018 Atta Elevate conference that was held last month, where they provided a brochure entitled “*Awaken Your Sense*” which outlined all the towns throughout the County, *a copy of the brochure is on file with the minutes*. She indicated she spoke with twenty-one different media outlets, three being National Geographic Traveler, Mens Health and Epic Trails. She apprised it was a strong platform for learning which would bring adventure travel business to the County that was rich with culture, history and recreational assets. She indicated the conference would bring in a lot of PR (*Public Relations*) that would lead to advertising opportunities.

Mr. Merlino discussed the application from the Warrensburg Bike Rally for Occupancy Tax funding. Mr. Conover apprised the County was in the position to provide the funds. Mr. Merlino notified they were given \$5,000 last year. Mr. Geraghty added 57,000 motorcycles had attended the Warrensburg Bike Rally last year and he said the Town of Warrensburg had provided them with funding last year.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 382 of 2017 to include an award of \$5,000 in Occupancy Tax funding to the Warrensburg Bike Rally and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 15th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Amy Collins, *Tourism & Downtown Business Coordinator, City of Glens Falls*, apprised the City of Glens Falls was working with Americade organizers to schedule events in the City of Glens Falls during their event.

As there was no further business to come before the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. Geraghty and seconded by Mr. Strough, Mr. Merlino adjourned the meeting at 12:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Ganotes-Gleason, Legislative Office Specialist

