

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: BUDGET

DATE: AUGUST 12, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:	OTHERS PRESENT:
SUPERVISORS GERAGHTY	REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:
BELDEN	KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR
KENNY	LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK
SHEEHAN	HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE
MERLINO	FISCAL SERVICES
STRAINER	NICOLE LIVINGSTON, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD
	SUPERVISOR O'CONNOR
	SUPERVISOR CHAMPAGNE
	SUPERVISOR THOMAS
	ALYSON MARTIN, THE POST STAR
	JOANNE COLLINS, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Geraghty called the meeting of the Budget Committee to order at 2:55 p.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Kate Johnson, Tourism Director, who distributed copies of the 2009 Tourism Budget Request to the Committee members; *a copy of which is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson reviewed the Budget report and noted that the figures were based on Occupancy Tax dollars as opposed to Taxpayers dollars. She stated the 2007 Occupancy Tax collections were \$3,478,028 and appropriated as follows: 10% for event funding, 25% to the Towns, two contracts which included \$50,000 to the City of Glens Falls, and \$25,000 for the Village of Lake George Visitor Center. She apprised the remaining balance was \$2,150,600 with \$241,964 to remain in the reserve account.

Ms. Johnson apprised that overall payroll had been decreased. The only significant increase, she said, was for postage and that was a result of the 2008 budget reductions. She stated that due to the fact that sufficient funds were not reserved last year, \$97,000 had been taken out of the Occupancy Tax line item of the Tourism Budget, until funds from the reserve could be used to transfer the money back to the Tourism Budget. Ms. Johnson noted that the Department operated on Occupancy Tax collections from 2007, and had \$241,964 remaining in reserve.

Mr. Geraghty asked if the Budget would satisfy all payments owed to the Towns for the year, and Ms. Johnson replied affirmatively. Mr. Kenny pointed out that prior

to Occupancy Tax collections, the Budget line for Tourism was \$1,000,000 and he compared it to the current figure of \$3,500,000 which included payment to the Towns for event funding, contractors, and other expenses. He cited the increase as one reason that the Tourism Department had succeeded with regard to the Budget.

Ms. Johnson reported that over \$800,000 was paid to the municipalities and Mr. Kenny apprised that the money that was paid to the municipalities was spent on promotion.

Mr. Geraghty asked if the \$50,000 going to the City of Glens Falls was for the seats at The Civic Center and Ms. Johnson answered affirmatively. She stated that 2008 was the second year of the 4 year contract with the City.

Mr. Geraghty raised the issue of a Budget figure exceeding the amount collected for Occupancy Tax, and stated that there was a concern that this had happened in a prior Budget year; however, he said, this would not occur again.

Ms. Johnson stated that the reserve was a closing account, therefore the money was not available until after the close of the year and Mr. Geraghty noted to Ms. Johnson that with regard to the summer tourism numbers, the efforts of the Department were commendable.

Mr. Kenny added that tourism had been strong for this summer and, he said, the weekly Smith Travel Reports indicated such strength.

As there was no further business to come before the Budget Committee, on motion made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Geraghty adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Collins, Legislative Office Specialist