

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**AMENDED**

**COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION**

**DATE: MAY 28, 2008**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: OTHERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS	KENNY	FRANCIS X. O'KEEFE, COUNTY TREASURER
	TESSIER	REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:
	MERLINO	KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR
	HASKELL	LEISA GRANT, ACCOUNT CLERK
	CHAMPAGNE	PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY
	SIMMES	HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE &
	GOODSPEED	FISCAL SERVICES
		JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
		SUPERVISOR BELDEN
		SUPERVISOR STRAINER
		FRED AUSTIN, BUILDING PROJECTS COORDINATOR
		ALICE GREYER, DIRECTOR OF TOURISM, CITY OF
		GLENS FALLS
		LUISA SHERMAN, LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL CHAMBER
		OF COMMERCE
		TOM RANDALL, <i>THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL</i>
		DEBRA L. SCHREIBER, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE
		SPECIALIST

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Mr. Kenny called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 10:15 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Goodspeed, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2008 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Kate Johnson, Tourism Director, distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing with the first item on the agenda, Francis X. O'Keefe, Treasurer, reported the County collected Occupancy Tax revenues from January through May of 2008 totaling \$378,230, compared to the same period in 2007, which totaled \$342,334, an increase of approximately \$35,000. He further stated that he would submit a quarterly Occupancy Tax report at the June Committee meeting; however, he noted, that since 2004, the County collected approximately

\$12,190,350 in Occupancy Tax revenues.

Skipping on to Item 5 of the agenda, Mr. Kenny indicated the representatives of the Lake George Winter Carnival had not responded to repeated requests by the County to provide proof of insurance; therefore, he suggested the Committee consider forfeiting their award of \$5,000 in Occupancy Tax funds.

**Note: Subsequent to the meeting the Lake George Winter Carnival Committee provided proof of insurance as required. The members of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee were polled by phone, and the request for \$5,000 from Occupancy Tax was reinstated.**

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne and seconded by Mr. Goodspeed authorizing the request to rescind the agreement with the Lake George Winter Carnival due to their failure to provide proof of insurance.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Kenny called the question and the motion was carried unanimously approving the request as outlined above; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting.

Referring to Item 4 of the agenda, Mr. Kenny indicated there was approximately \$54,000 remaining in unappropriated funds, as well as a number of applications that did not receive funding approval at the December 2007 Occupancy Tax Committee meeting.

Paul Dusek interjected that the WISH Retreat & Expo (LG Venture Partners, LLC) would require a motion rescinding the authorization of that agreement due to the cancellation of that event.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Haskell and carried unanimously approving the request as outlined above; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting.

Ms. Johnson stated she recently learned that the Swim Lake George Association had to cancel their event as they did not receive their sanction, which was a prerequisite to their organization obtaining insurance; therefore, she requested the Committee rescind the agreement with Swim Lake George Association.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously approving the request as outlined above; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting.

Mr. Kenny informed the Committee that Leisa Grant, Account Clerk in the

Tourism Department, had advised those applicants that were unsuccessful recipients of Occupancy Tax funds in December of 2007 that their applications would be reconsidered. He noted the following organizations were being reviewed:

- Adirondack Triathlon Club, Inc. (\$4,000);
- Cornell Cooperative Extension (\$2,000);
- Lake George Arts Project (\$15,000);
- Lake George Blues Blast (\$8,000); and
- Lake George Community Band, Inc. (\$15,000).

Mr. Kenny went on to explain that when they reviewed the Occupancy Tax spending guidelines in December of 2007, he said, the Committee decided to reduce the amount of funding awarded to those events that had been sponsored in previous years. For example, he noted, an event that scored less than forty points in its third year application request would receive fifty percent of the maximum eligible funding.

After a brief discussion, motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously authorizing the Adirondack Triathlon Club, Inc. be awarded \$3,500 in Occupancy Tax funds; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting.

Continuing on with the request by Cornell Cooperative Extension, a motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mrs. Simmes and carried unanimously awarding \$2,000 in Occupancy Tax funds; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting.

Referring to the Lake George Arts Project application request of \$15,000 for their jazz festival weekend being held on September 13 and 14, 2008, a motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Goodspeed and carried unanimously authorizing \$4,000 be disbursed from the Occupancy Tax Budget; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Belden articulated that William Lamy, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works (DPW), apprised the members of the Public Works Committee that due to the previous winter season, their overtime budget for 2008 had been depleted; that significant funds had been expended to cover their increased fuel costs, and he was unsure how they would pay the expenses associated with the Adirondack Balloon Festival. Mr. Haskell added that the funds for the Adirondack Balloon Festival had always been appropriated in the DPW Budget; however, he said, during the budget process, the Budget Officer removed those funds from the

2008 Budget. He suggested the Tourism Department be responsible for allocating the necessary funds to promote the Adirondack Balloon Festival. Mr. Kenny responded that the Committee was first obligated to consider those applications that were originally denied Occupancy Tax funds and thereafter they would discuss how to fund the Adirondack Balloon Festival. He further recommended the request for funds should be submitted by the event promoter.

A brief discussion ensued.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Goodspeed, Mr. Kenny stated Occupancy Tax funds could not be utilized to pay salaries.

With respect to the Lake George Blues Blast event being held on October 5 and 6, 2008, a motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Goodspeed and carried unanimously authorizing \$3,500 be disbursed from the Occupancy Tax Budget; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting.

Mr. Kenny indicated the Lake George Community Band requested \$15,000 for their 2008 Band Festival that they were hosting from July 18 through July 20, 2008.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Goodspeed and carried unanimously authorizing \$2,000 for the Lake George Community Band; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting.

Mr. Kenny stated that Luke Ventures LLC had requested \$15,000 for the North Country Triathlon to be held in Hague the weekend of June 28, 2008. Mr. Belden apprised the Committee this North Country Triathlon was a first time event that would take place over three days and currently had 410 registered accommodations.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously authorizing Luke Ventures, LLC be awarded \$5,000 in Occupancy Tax funds; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting.

The general consensus of the Committee agreed to appropriate the remaining \$34,000 to the Occupancy Tax Reserve Fund in the event that additional requests came to the Committee during the year.

Ms. Johnson requested permission to transfer \$425 to purchase trend reports, as well as historical data, from Smith Travel for promotional purposes. Mr. Kenny said he anticipated the information provided in the yearly reports to be as valuable as the information contained in the weekly analysis.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously approving the request as submitted; and to refer same to the Finance Committee for consideration. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Simmes asked whether the Marcella Sembrich Concert Series for 2008 could be reconsidered.

Motion was made by Mrs. Simmes, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously authorizing Marcella Sembrich be awarded \$3,000 in Occupancy Tax funds; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2008 Board Meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. Merlino and seconded by Mr. Goodspeed, Mr. Kenny adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Schreiber, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist