

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**COMMITTEE:            TOURISM**

**DATE:                    AUGUST 27, 2008**

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<b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>
SUPERVISORS    TESSIER	KATE JOHNSON, TOURISM DIRECTOR
BELDEN	SUSAN STRATTON, STRATTON PARTNERS ADVERTISING
KENNY	FREDERICK MONROE, CHAIRMAN
SHEEHAN	HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE &
MERLINO	FISCAL SERVICES
SIMMES	JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
STRAINER	KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
	TODD LUNT, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
	FRED AUSTIN, FORT WILLIAM HENRY
	CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE
	SPECIALIST

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Mr. Tessier called the meeting of the Tourism Committee to order at 9:53 a.m.

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

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

Ms. Johnson requested authorization for a contract with Guilderland Printing Inc. to print 60,000 copies of the 2008/2009 Winter Brochure, commencing September 22, 2008 and terminating October 31, 2008, for a total amount not to exceed \$2,790, to be paid upon completion of the project. She noted that Guilderland Printing Inc. had been the lowest bid that had been generated by the Request for Proposal.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with Guilderland Printing Inc., as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 19, 2008 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested a transfer of funds in the amount of \$25,000, from the Salaries-Regular Code (A.6417 110) to the Postage Code (A.6417 424) to cover the cost of postage in excess of the amount that had originally been budgeted.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mrs. Simmes and carried

unanimously to approve the request for a transfer of funds, as outlined above and to refer the same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request for Transfer of Funds is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson requested to amend the 2008 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$2,970, to reflect revenue received from the 2009 Warren County Group Tour Planner.

Motion was made by Mrs. Simmes, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to amend the 2008 County budget, as outlined above and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson requested to amend the 2008 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$23,370, to reflect revenue received from the 2009 Warren County Travel Guide.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to amend the 2008 County budget, as outlined above and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson presented a 30-second television commercial, which had aired during the summer, to the Committee. She noted that there had also been two 15-second commercials aired, as well as a two-minute Video on Demand segment. She advised that Susan Stratton, of Stratton Partners Advertising, was present to review the media purchases which had been made on behalf of Warren County Tourism. Ms. Stratton commented that the summer television commercial had been very exciting. She distributed copies of a summary sheet which pertained to media purchases from May 5, 2008 through August 3, 2008; a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Stratton pointed out that in Albany, New York, 30-second commercials had been aired on the cable stations and 15-second commercials had been aired on the broadcast networks. She added that 15-second commercials had been aired in Springfield, Massachusetts and Hartford, Connecticut. She noted that the 30-second commercial had aired on cable stations via Connecticut Cable and National Cable Communications (NCC).

Ms. Stratton reminded the Committee that Video on Demand (VOD) and Request for Information (RFI) were two new technologies that were being offered by digital cable companies, to customers that had a digital cable box in their homes. She explained that with VOD, the viewer could elect to watch the two-minute video for

Warren County Tourism, by pressing the 'B' button on their digital cable remote while the 30-second commercial was airing. She further explained that with RFI, the viewer could elect to receive information on the Lake George area by mail, by pressing the 'A' button on their digital cable remote while the commercial was airing. If the viewer used the RFI option, she continued, their name and address was sent to a database which would then be sent to the Tourism Department so that information could be mailed to them. She noted that VOD and RFI had been part of the 'value added' purchase from the Albany and NCC cable buy. She explained that the NCC serviced homes in Metro New York, Long Island, Connecticut, northern New Jersey and the Hudson Valley. She noted that the Tourism Department had generated an incredible number of information requests by utilizing this new technology.

Ms. Stratton reminded the Committee that they had tested the VOD and RFI technologies in December and January, with a much smaller budget, to see if it would be useful to Warren County. She advised that there had been 27,334 RFI's resulting from a broadcast in the Metro New York/Hudson Valley area and nationally and 797 RFI's from the Albany area between May 5, 2008 and August 3, 2008. She added that 2,229 people had visited the Warren County Tourism website as a direct result of having viewed the television commercial. She said that the VOD segment had been viewed by 10,750 households in the Metro New York/Long Island/Hudson Valley area, 1,613 households in Albany and 6,581 households in Connecticut.

Ms. Stratton advised that the two-minute promotional video was also available on Journey TV On Demand, which was available to 7,102,043 households nationally. She explained that the viewer would tune-in to the Journey TV On Demand Channel (channel 1282 locally), select 'State by State' and then select 'Lake George, New York' in order to view the video. Ms. Johnson apprised that she had received a phone call from a woman in San Diego, California who was planning a visit to Cooperstown, New York in August. She said that the woman had viewed the video on Journey TV On Demand and had decided to include a trip to the Lake George area as part of her vacation.

Ms. Stratton advised that Time Warner Cable had another new technology that was currently being tested in the Albany area that would allow the viewer to push a button to receive a coupon or coupon packet from the business which was advertised in the commercial. Referring to the VOD and RFI options, Mr. Sheehan questioned, if anything was displayed on the screen to let the viewer know about these options. Ms. Stratton responded that the information came on the screen as a bar across the bottom of the screen for those viewers who had digital cable boxes in their homes. She explained that the option was displayed on the screen for 20 seconds in the middle of the 30-second commercial. She added that the 1-

800 number and the Warren County website were also displayed during the commercial. Mr. Merlino questioned if other municipalities were using this technology to advertise tourism in their area. Ms. Stratton responded that this was a new technology and that Warren County was one of three clients in the Metro New York area to purchase this technology from Time Warner Cable. Ms. Johnson apprised that the Adirondack Region had used the technology and she had learned about it from them. She noted that there had been in excess of 30,000 requests for information this summer from the website, the 1-800 number and the RFI/VOD and she complimented her staff on their hard work in keeping up with the large mailings.

Ms. Johnson presented the 30-second fall television commercial to the Committee and noted that it was the same 'Rekindle' campaign that had been used for fall 2007. She explained that the original actors who had been hired did not show up for the filming of the commercial, so the gripper who worked with the photographer and an employee from the Tourism Department stepped in to play the couple in the commercial. Ms. Stratton advised that she had already seen this commercial aired on television and noted that the 1-800 number and the website were on the bottom of the screen throughout the entire airing.

Ms. Stratton distributed copies of the Warren County Tourism Fall Television campaign to the Committee members; a copy of which is on file with the minutes. She said that the campaign had begun on August 18, 2008 and would run through October 12, 2008. She noted that there were no rates listed because the television stations considered the rates to be confidential. She added that she had the rates available if any of the Committee members wished to inquire about them. She stated that they would no longer be advertising in the Plattsburgh, New York or Scranton, Pennsylvania markets because the leads had not been strong in those areas. She added that the areas that produced the greatest number of leads were Albany, New York; Springfield, Massachusetts; Hartford, Connecticut and downstate New York.

Ms. Stratton apprised that in the Albany, New York area, CBS, NBC, ABC and FOX had all given attractive 'value added' packages, such as, 5-second news sponsorships and bonus spots. She added that FOX had included a 'value added' option that included a weblink from the FOX Community Calendar to the Warren County Tourism website. She stated that the VOD and RFI technology through Time Warner Cable would be used again for the fall campaign. She said that they purchased commercial time slots through Time Warner Cable during the Channel 9 News and programming that was most popular with adults age 25 to 54. She noted that she had purchased more time slots during the news broadcasts this fall due to the increase in the amount of viewers that would be watching the news during the Presidential Election. She expounded that Springfield, Massachusetts

was an affordable market and the ABC station in Springfield had added the Warren County Tourism weblink onto their website. She noted that most stations charged an extra \$1,000 to \$1,500 per month for this service.

Mr. Belden entered the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Ms. Stratton apprised that they would use the VOD technology for the fall 2008 campaign with Connecticut Cable. She noted that the 15-second commercial would air on the network stations and the 30-second commercial would air on the cable stations. She advised that the total media purchasing budget for the fall 2008 campaign was \$239,844.60.

Ms. Johnson stated that Ms. Stratton worked very hard on the media buy and added that the two of them had reviewed all aspects of the plan. She said that they were very pleased with the results.

Ms. Johnson requested that the Committee enter into an executive session to discuss matters leading to the possible employment of a particular person.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously that executive session be declared pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session was declared from 10:16 a.m. to 10:42 a.m.

Chairman Monroe and Mr. Geraghty entered the meeting during the executive session.

Committee reconvened.

Pursuant to the executive session, motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to authorize the filling of the vacant position of Creative Director, base salary of \$65,205, with the chosen candidate to be named at a later date and to forward same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position is on file with the minutes.*

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism Committee, on motion made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Merlino, Mr. Tessier adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist