

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: MARCH 10, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS KENNY
MERLINO
BENTLEY
CHAMPAGNE
GOODSPEED
MCCOY
CONOVER

OTHERS PRESENT:

KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF TOURISM
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK, TOURISM
DANIEL STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY/ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
SUPERVISOR THOMAS
TERRY MCGARR, LEGAL ASSISTANT
LUISA CRAIGE-SHERMAN, WARREN COUNTY COUNCIL OF CHAMBERS
MARK DONAHUE, ADIRONDACK BALLOON FESTIVAL
PAUL BRICOCCOLI, LAKE GEORGE TRIATHLON FESTIVAL
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Kenny called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 9:34 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. McCoy, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the agenda were distributed to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Kenny announced that the meeting would commence in a workshop session format. He stated the only presentations allowed would be for new Special Event Funding applications. Mr. Kenny reminded the Committee that existing applications would be given preference over any new applications presented. Other than new applications, he continued, the only new information to be considered would be if there was a pertinent amendment to any of the existing applications, such as the loss of sponsorship. Mr. Kenny asked if there were any members of the public wishing to present a new application or information pertaining to a major change to an existing application.

Mr. Kenny announced he had received a new application from the City of Glens Falls to host the 2011 and 2012 Special Olympics to be held in the month of October. He advised the event anticipated 900 athletes, 300 coaches and in excess of 500 attendees. He listed the Special Olympics event categories, as follows: bocce ball, cross country, cycling, equestrian, golf, soccer and softball. He noted the venues for the events would be the Glens Falls Civic Center, the Adirondack Sports Complex, Crandall Park and some area golf courses and public schools. He reported the City of Glens Falls had a two-year contract to host the Special Olympics and were requesting a two-year funding commitment of \$13,500 annually.

Mr. Kenny noted that at the previous Committee meeting, he had requested the Committee members review the list of current applications to determine which events they felt deserved additional funding. Mr. Champagne announced that he had read in this morning's newspaper that the Town of Thurman was proposing the initiation of a logging competition in August. Mr. Kenny said that no application had been received for this event.

The Committee entered into a workshop session at 9:38 a.m.

Messrs. Bentley and Goodspeed entered the meeting during the workshop session.

During the workshop session a discussion was held, in which the following points were made:

- ▶ Pertaining to additional funding for the Railroads on Parade event, Mr. Goodspeed noted that he had completed legal services for North Country Enterprises, LLC and would abstain from offering his opinion on additional funding for the event;
- ▶ Pertaining to additional funding for the Adirondack Balloon Festival, Mark Donahue, of the Adirondack Balloon Festival Committee, pointed out there was a shortfall of \$21,000 for the event's budget. Kate Johnson, Director of Tourism, advised there was \$15,000 in the Tourism Department budget that was earmarked to cover the shortfall. Mr. Donahue explained the shortfall was caused by the overtime used by DPW (Department of Public Works) staff in assisting with the event and he added the Sunday night launch was relocated from the Warren County Airport to Crandall Park in order to reduce the amount of overtime. Mr. Kenny asked if the \$15,000 in the Tourism budget was included in the \$21,000 shortfall and Paul Dusek, County Attorney/Administrator, replied the DPW budget did not take the Tourism Department budget into consideration; therefore, he added, the actual shortfall was \$6,000. Mr. Dusek explained the necessary \$21,000 to cover the cost of overtime was anticipated to be allocated from occupancy tax revenues and the Adirondack Balloon Festival. Mr. Geraghty said it had been decided during the budget process that the \$21,000 would not be allocated from the DPW budget; therefore, he continued, \$15,000 of the Tourism Department budget was earmarked to offset the majority of the expense leaving a \$6,000 shortfall in the DPW overtime budget. Mr. Kenny pointed out that the Adirondack Balloon Festival had been awarded \$26,000 in Special Event Funding in addition to the \$15,000 from the Tourism budget, for a total of \$41,000. Following a brief discussion, the consensus of the Committee was to increase the Tourism Budget by an additional \$6,000 to cover the anticipated cost of DPW overtime for the Adirondack Balloon Festival.

The Committee reconvened at 10:40 a.m.

Mr. Kenny requested Leisa Grant, Principal Account Clerk for the Tourism Department, review the list of events to be awarded additional Special Event Funding. He noted the total amount of additional funding that would be awarded was \$44,700, which included the \$6,000 transfer from special Event Funding to the Tourism Budget towards overtime costs for the Adirondack Hot Air Balloon Festival. Ms. Grant read the list of events awarded additional funding, as follows:

- ▶ \$2,000 to Americade, Inc.;
- ▶ \$6,000 to the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association, Inc. (HVVFA) for the HVVFA Convention and Parades;
- ▶ \$3,000 to the Adirondack Sports Complex, LLC for the Winter & Summer Youth Softball Tournaments;
- ▶ \$1,000 to the Last of the Mohicans Outdoor Drama, Inc. for the 2011 Season of productions;
- ▶ \$5,000 to the Lake George Winter Carnival, Inc.;
- ▶ \$5,000 to Albany Rods & Kustoms, Inc. for the 23rd Annual Adirondack Nationals Car Show;
- ▶ \$4,000 to North Country Enterprises, LLC for the Railroads on Parade event;
- ▶ \$4,000 to the Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce for the World's Largest Garage Sale;
- ▶ \$1,500 to Lake George Arts Project, Inc. for the Lake George Jazz Weekend;
- ▶ \$4,000 to North Creek Business Alliance for the North Creek/Gore Mountain Shuttle Service;
- ▶ \$2,000 to Up Yonda Farm Environmental Education Center for the 2011 Summer Nature Program Series; and

- ▶ \$1,200 to Marcella Sembrich Memorial Association, Inc. for the Weekends with the Masters event.

Motion was made by Mr. Goodspeed, seconded by Mr. McCoy and carried unanimously to award additional Special Event Funding totaling \$44,700 as outlined above contingent on Board approval to increase the amount of Special Event Funding available from 10% of the prior year's occupancy tax collections to a flat amount of \$350,000 per year. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 18, 2011 Board meeting.*

Mr. Kenny stated the City of Glens Falls would be notified that there was no funding available for the 2011 Special Olympics and to encourage them to submit an application for the 2012 Special Olympics by the November 1, 2011 deadline.

Mr. Kenny reminded the Committee that the possibility of establishing a Capital Project Reserve Fund with occupancy tax revenues to fund the future construction of a Tourism Building was discussed at the previous meeting. He requested Mr. Dusek to present his opinion on this proposal. Mr. Dusek stated that General Municipal Law allowed the establishment of a Capital Reserve of this type; however, he cautioned, one caveat was the difficulty in reallocating the funds elsewhere, if the County later decided against the construction of a building. He advised the Capital Project Reserve Fund could be reallocated to establish other Reserve Funds, such as for equipment or smaller projects; however, he said, the funds could not be reallocated to other occupancy tax accounts, such as the Special Event Funding. Mr. Dusek advised the funds could be accumulated for the purpose of constructing the building by leaving them in the unappropriated surplus balance.

Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee to forgo the possibility of establishing a Capital Project Reserve Fund.

As there was no further business to come before the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. Champagne and seconded by Mr. McCoy, Mr. Kenny adjourned the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Legislative Office Specialist