

## WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION

DATE: NOVEMBER 30, 2011

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS KENNY  
MERLINO  
BENTLEY  
CHAMPAGNE  
GOODSPEED  
MCCOY  
CONOVER

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF TOURISM  
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK, TOURISM  
FRANK O'KEEFE, COUNTY TREASURER  
DANIEL STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
NICOLE LIVINGSTON, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD  
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER  
SUPERVISOR STRAINER  
DR. JACQUILINE TOUBA, WORLD AWARENESS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM  
EMILY STANTON, NORTH CREEK BUSINESS ALLIANCE/GORE MOUNTAIN  
JOEL BEAUDIN, NORTH CREEK BUSINESS ALLIANCE/THE COPPERFIELD INN  
JOHN STRONG, LAKE GEORGE ARTS PROJECT  
NORMAN DASCHER, LAKE GEORGE PERFORMANCE WEEKEND  
LUISA CRAIGE-SHERMAN, LAST OF THE MOHICANS OUTDOOR DRAMA, INC.  
ALICE GREETHER, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE  
HYDE COLLECTION  
JIM MANDLE, FOUNDER, ADIRONDACK FOLK SCHOOL  
DAVID BULMER, WARREN COUNTY COUNCIL OF CHAMBERS  
MIKE CONSUELO, SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR, LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL  
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU  
CHRISTIAN DUTCHER, AMERICADE, INC.  
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*  
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*  
CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST  
*PLEASE SEE ATTACHED SIGN-IN SHEET FOR ALL OTHERS PRESENT*

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Mr. Kenny called the meeting of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to order at 9:32 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Merlino 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 packet were distributed to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda packet is on file with the minutes.*

Privilege of the floor was extended to Frank O'Keefe, County Treasurer, who distributed a Report on Occupancy Tax for 2011; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes.* Mr. O'Keefe reported occupancy tax revenues collected through November 29, 2011 totaling \$2,751,589.84, compared to \$2,777,070.89 for the same time period in 2010, a decrease of \$25,481.05.

Mr. Kenny commented that the need to add verbiage in the Warren County Tourist and Convention Development Agreement had been discussed at the November 2, 2011 Committee meeting. He noted minor changes had been made under Item 7, Sponsor Obligations. He requested Committee approval of the changes as discussed at the prior meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Goodspeed and carried unanimously to amend the Warren County Tourist and Convention Development Agreement to add verbiage to Item

7, Sponsor Obligations. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 16, 2011 Board meeting.*

Mr. Kenny opened the meeting to public comments from representatives of those who had submitted applications for Occupancy Tax Special Event funding. He asked that comments be limited in length.

Dr. Jacqueline Touba, World Awareness Children's Museum, stated the Museum had been in business for sixteen years and had completed renovations to the building this past year using private funding. The Museum, she continued, opened to the public on July 5, 2011 and would be opened on a year round basis. She apprised that the World Awareness Children's Museum was an educational experience for families of all ages. She added the Museum had scheduled tours of senior citizens groups and was making an effort to attract tourists. She apprised that although the Museum's resources were limited, they were advertising via social media websites. Dr. Touba said the Museum hoped to increase their tourism efforts with brochures and rack cards placed at Visitor Centers on the Thruway and in area hotels. She asked the Committee to consider the Museum's application for funding in order to produce rack cards. Dr. Touba informed that the World Awareness Children's Museum website was [www.worldchildrensmuseum.org](http://www.worldchildrensmuseum.org).

Emily Stanton, Co-Chairman of the North Creek Business Alliance, distributed copies of the Gore Mountain 2011-2012 Getaway Guide and a handout pertaining to the Free Shuttle Service operated by the North Creek Business Alliance to the Committee members; *copies of same are on file with the minutes*. She advised that Gore Mountain had a successful opening weekend over the Thanksgiving holiday despite the lack of snowfall. She noted the North Creek Business Alliance had submitted an application for funding assistance with the Regional Shuttle Program. She introduced Joel Beaudin, Co-Chairman of the North Creek Business Alliance, who noted he was also Co-Owner of the Copperfield Inn in North Creek. Ms. Stanton informed that the Shuttle Program involved a 14-passenger airport style shuttle which operated in the winter months on Saturdays and Sundays and daily during holiday periods, as well as on-call for busy Fridays. She said the shuttle was free and convenient transportation for tourists and residents. She acknowledged Brant Lake Taxi as providing the service for the North Creek Business Alliance. She reported that ridership of the Shuttle Program last year was 2,620 riders from 160 unique zip codes. Ms. Stanton apprised the shuttle service had been expanded into other seasons, such as the Harvest Festival in October and the Whitewater Derby and Adirondack Adventure Festival in May. She stated the North Creek Business Alliance wanted to broaden the route of the shuttle to other communities. Mr. Beaudin commended the County for selecting Saratoga North Creek Railway (SNCR) as the railroad operator. He explained that a local developer had donated a six-passenger electric golf cart to the Shuttle Program which was operated during the summer months along the railroad tracks. He noted the intent of the North Creek Business Alliance to purchase an additional electric car and he mentioned a local resident had purchased a horse and wagon which would be incorporated into the Shuttle Program. Mr. Beaudin announced the goal of the North Creek Business Alliance was to market Gore Mountain as a destination ski location.

John Strong, representing the Lake George Arts Project, said he had submitted an application for funding of the Lake George Jazz Weekend. He apologized for the late submission of the application as he had missed the email in September informing of the new deadline. He noted 2012 would be the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Lake George Jazz Weekend, making it one of the longest running jazz festivals in the Country. He pointed out that the Lake George Jazz Weekend had been mentioned in *The New York Times*, *The Philadelphia Enquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal*. He commented that the 2011 Lake George Jazz Weekend had been well attended and attendees had filled Shepard Park on both

Saturday and Sunday. He stated the funding received from the County in the past had been expended wisely and he added their mailing list extended from North Carolina to Maine. He apprised the Lake George Jazz Weekend was a quality cultural event which reflected well on Lake George and Warren County.

Norman Dascher, volunteer committee member representing the Lake George Performance Weekend, said the former name of the event was the Queens Great Boating Weekend which was sponsored by the Village of Lake George and Performance Marine in Bolton Landing. He stated the name had been changed to increase the size and scope of the program, as well as participation. He apprised the event had been successful the last two years and support had been received from the County, the Village of Lake George and the Town of Lake George. He added the number of participants and attendees had increased and the Lake George Performance Weekend would now include power boats, custom cars and motorcycles. He said the goal was to expand the venue to include the following:

- ▶ on Friday night there would be a boat parade followed by a reception at a local restaurant;
- ▶ on Saturday there would be a display of boats, cars and motorcycles, an off-shore demonstration of the boats, a parade of custom cars and motorcycles and an awards ceremony/party with fireworks; and
- ▶ on Sunday the cars and motorcycles would remain on display and a sailboat race would be held.

Mr. Dascher stated the funding received last year was used to advertise on four radio stations and in local newspapers. He said the goal this year would be to focus on increasing the promotion and advertising for the event. He reported that visitors had attended the 2011 event from New York, Vermont, New Jersey, Connecticut and Canada.

Luisa Craige-Sherman, representing the Last of the Mohicans Outdoor Drama, Inc., advised she had recently attended the National Conference of Outdoor Dramas in Louisville, Kentucky. She noted the Conference would be held in the Lake George area in October 2012. She said the Conference would host Outdoor Drama Companies from locations such as Oregon, California, Utah and Louisiana. She advised that bus tour destination groups visiting Outdoor Dramas represented a large segment of the motorcoach industry. She noted the Last of the Mohicans Outdoor Drama, Inc. could become a major tourist attraction for bus tour groups. She commended the Tourism Department and the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce and CVB (Convention and Visitors Bureau) for the assistance they had provided. Ms. Craige-Sherman announced the Last of the Mohicans Outdoor Drama, Inc. had a new permanent location at Wild West Ranch in Lake George. She apprised that the owners of the Wild West Ranch were making a tremendous investment in order to make the property suitable as a permanent location over the next couple of years. She advised that one of the goals of the Last of the Mohicans Outdoor Drama, Inc. was to be present at as many group tour conventions as possible in order to advertise. She said another goal of the marketing plan for 2012 was to produce a television commercial to be aired in the Albany area. She noted that due to the fact that the production did not conclude until 10:00 p.m., most of the visitors from the Albany area chose to stay in a local hotel.

Alice Grether, Director of Marketing and Communications for The Hyde Collection, thanked the Committee for their previous support and stated the exhibitions for Summer of 2012 would be Steven Knapp, Light Paintings, who was an amazing sculptural contemporary artist whose media was glass and light and Tiffany Glass would be featured simultaneously. The Fall 2012 exhibition, she continued, would be Romare Bearden who was regarded as one of the most creative and original visual artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Ms. Grether stated The Hyde Collection's application was for

funding to be used for marketing to assist in promoting the exhibitions. She estimated 15,000 visitors to The Hyde Collection for the Summer and Fall of 2012, 31% of whom would travel a distance which would require an overnight stay. She advised the marketing efforts would be geared towards advertising on WCKM, a public radio station in Albany which broadcasted to seven states. She said WCKM had 22 radio stations in Canada, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New Hampshire. She added the marketing efforts would also include partnering with local and regional media.

Jim Mandle, Founder of the Adirondack Folk School (AFS), distributed a brochure to the Committee members; *a copy of the Adirondack Folk School Brochure is on file with the minutes*. Mr. Mandle thanked the Committee for the funding which had been received for 2011 and noted that AFS was a not-for-profit organization which had been started in June 2010. He said AFS's three objectives were 1) to hire local artists and craftspeople as instructors; 2) to keep the traditional arts, crafts and cultures of the Adirondacks alive; and 3) to be an economic engine for the region. In the first year, he continued, AFS held over 90 classes with 280 students and over 30 instructors were hired locally at a salary of \$11,000 each. In 2011, he added, AFS had over 150 classes with almost 600 students and 45 instructors were hired at a salary of \$16,600. He noted over 12,000 visitors and students had signed the AFS registry and they represented over 50 communities in New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Vermont. Mr. Mandle pointed out the AFS was publicized on national public radio stations and several publications and newspapers. He reported records of students staying in hotels in Lake George, Glens Falls, Queensbury and Lake Luzerne, as well as several local campgrounds. He apprised the application for funding was for the Saturday Program which was open to the public, free of charge.

David Bulmer, of the Warren County Council of Chambers, stated he was presenting two separate applications for Occupancy Tax Special Event funding, the first of which was for the 2013 Centurion Cycling Lake George event and was submitted by the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce and CVB. He said he was the Local Race Director for Centurion Cycling and he thanked the Committee for the funding awarded to the event for 2011. Mr. Bulmer apprised that postponing the date of the event by a year allowed for additional advertising. He reported the Centurion Cycling Canada event had 1,400 riders the first year, 3,700 riders in 2011 and they were projecting over 5,000 riders in 2012. He said they were projecting approximately 2,000 riders for the first year of the Lake George event and noted approximately 2 to 3 people would accompany each rider. He added they projected over 5,000 room nights for the first year of the event. The goal was to have 6,000 to 8,000 riders a year, Mr. Bulmer continued, in the next three to four years. He reported work was being accomplished in conjunction with not-for-profit organizations to allow them to utilize the event as a fund-raising effort. He noted the organizers of Centurion Cycling events hoped to hold the event in Lake George for a minimum of five years.

Mr. Bulmer said the second application was for the Adirondack Adventure Festival and was submitted by the Gore Mountain Regional Chamber of Commerce. He apprised the Festival was started in conjunction with the Annual Whitewater Derby in order to give people more activity choices as it offered hiking, rafting and bicycling. He added a new activity this year would be a train ride with a 53 mile bicycle ride, with stations and medical support, followed by a train ride back to North Creek. He said a 5K run had been added as a fundraiser for a scholarship program sponsored by the Gore Mountain Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Kenny stated that Centurion Cycling had been awarded \$33,000 last year and it was his understanding that there was \$24,000 remaining. Mr. Bulmer explained that originally the event was scheduled to take place in June 2011 but it was decided that the time frame was too short. He

added they had consulted with the Occupancy Tax Committee in order to receive permission to extend the award to the 2012 Centurion Cycling event to allow more time to promote and advertise it. He noted the current application was for the event to be held in June of 2013 because they began their marketing one year in advance.

Mike Consuelo, Special Events Coordinator for the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce and CVB, said he was representing applications submitted for the Restaurant Weeks and the Canadian Visitor Promotion Program. He commented that both programs had been successful in the past and pointed out that the Restaurant Week was held twice a year. Relative to Restaurant Week, Mr. Consuelo stated the participating restaurants had expanded to Queensbury and Warrensburg. Pertaining to the Canadian Visitor Promotion Program, Mr. Consuelo referred to Canadian tourists as vital to tourism in the County.

Christian Dutcher, Vice President of Americade, Inc., distributed the Americade 2011 Official Program, the 2011 issue of Americade Times and the Americade Lake George Brochure to the Committee members; *copies of same are on file with the minutes*. He reported the Official Program was distributed to the many thousands of attendees during the event, the Americade Times was mailed to over 30,000 homes across the Country and the Brochure was distributed at trade shows. He thanked the Committee for their prior support which he said was used effectively. He advised Americade put more "heads in beds" than any other Warren County event and he noted due to the fact that most Americade attendees arrived on Monday and stayed until the following Sunday, the Americade event filled area hotels during a period when they would normally be empty. Mr. Dutcher referred to the \$50,000 in Occupancy Tax Special Event funding as a "great return on investment", as the amount of occupancy tax revenues collected during Americade Week was approximately \$200,000 or more, in his estimate. He informed of a 2007 study completed by SUNY-Plattsburgh Technical Assistance Center which concluded that Americade contributed an annual economic impact of \$46 million to Warren County. Mr. Dutcher noted many motorcycle rallies had cancelled or relocated due to economic reasons; however, he continued, Americade had been able to continue and had maintained attendance. He reported Americade, Inc. had to overcome many obstacles, such as a decrease in motorcycle manufacturer support due to decreased motorcycle sales and an increase in the rental fee for Million Dollar Beach. Mr. Dutcher announced Americade 2012 would mark the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the motorcycle rally and he predicted an increase in attendance.

Mr. Kenny stated the Committee took all applications for funding seriously. He reported the Core Committee included himself, Mr. Merlino, Tanya Brand, Group Tour Promoter and Kate Johnson, Director of Tourism, and they had met to discuss recommended award amounts. He noted that Committee members had been reviewing the applications for the last two weeks. He announced that the Committee would enter into a Workshop Session in order to decide on funding awards. He advised the public would not be allowed to participate in the Workshop Session but they were welcome to stay if they wished.

Mr. Merlino asked Mr. Kenny to inform the public about the amount of the requests versus the amount of available funding. Mr. Kenny said the Committee had received requests totaling \$639,901 in applications and had \$350,000 in available funding. Mr. Kenny stated the Core Committee had recommended \$325,000 in awards and had made the decision to disqualify the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association, Inc. application based on the fact that their parade was held in South Glens Falls. He requested the Committee consider the fact that Centurion Cycling had \$24,000 remaining from the 2011 funding award. Mr. McCoy said he disagreed with the disqualification of the Hudson Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association, Inc. and noted the participants stayed in area hotels

and Mr. Kenny responded it was his opinion that the Committee should not award funding to a South Glens Falls event, as that was in Saratoga County.

Workshop session was declared from 10:20 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.

The Committee reconvened and Mr. Kenny reviewed the list of 2012 Occupancy Tax Special Event Funding Awards, as follows:

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Funding Awarded</b>
Americade, Inc.	Americade 2012	50,000
Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce and CVB, Inc.	Centurion Cycling Lake George	20,000
Greater Glens Falls Amateur Athletics Championship Association, Inc.	NYS High School Basketball Championships	33,000
Adirondack Race Management, LLC	Lake George Triathlon Festival	11,000
Adirondack Sports Complex, LLC	ADKSC Winter & Summer Youth Softball Tournaments	20,000
Last of the Mohicans Outdoor Drama, Inc.	2012 Season of the production	21,000
Adirondack Hot Air Balloon Festival, Inc.	Adirondack Hot Air Balloon Festival	25,000
Lake George Winter Carnival, Inc.	Lake George Winter Carnival	15,000
Albany Rods & Kustoms Car Club, Inc.	24th Annual Adirondack Nationals Car Show	25,000
Anthem Thermal Solutions, LLC	2012 Tour of the Adirondacks	8,000
Reinke Sports Group, LLC	Lake George Half Marathon	4,500
North Creek Business Alliance	North Creek/Gore Mountain Shuttle Service	16,000
Bolton Landing Chamber of Commerce	Girlfriends' Getaway in Bolton Landing	6,000
Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce	33rd Worlds Largest Garage Sale	20,000
Adirondack Living Show	Adirondack Living Show	2,000
Bolton Landing Chamber of Commerce	Crossroads of the French & Indian War	10,000
Special Olympics New York	2012 Special Olympics Fall State Games	10,000
Adirondack Theatre Festival, Inc.	18th Summer Season of Professional Theatre	5,000
Lake George Reg. Chamber of Commerce	Restaurant Weeks	2,000
Lake George Reg. Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Visitor Promotion Program	4,000
World Awareness Children's Museum	Production of 90,000 rack cards	2,000
Up Yonda Farm Environmental Education Ctr	2012 Summer Nature Program Series	3,000
Foundation for the Advancement of Dev. Disabled Persons	Beach Volleyball Tournament	1,000
Gore Mountain Regional Chamber of Commerce	Adirondack Adventure Festival	5,000
Poker Run/Village of Lake George	Lake George Performance Weekend	3,000
Eastern NY Marine Trades Assoc.	Great Upstate Boat Show	1,500
Sherry Management, LLC	Family Fun Week	1,500
Glens Falls NY American Legion Post 233	2012 Coopers Cave Baseball Tournament	1,000
Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council (LARAC)	LARAC Festivals - June & November	1,000
Sham "Rock" the Block	Irish Festival & Parade	1,000
Luzerne Music Center	32 concerts	3,000
Hyde Collection	(3) 2012 exhibitions	4,000
Improv Records Inc.	Free concerts	2,000
Marcella Sembrich Memorial Assoc. Inc.	Exploring a World of Music	2,000
Luke Ventures, LLC	North Country Triathlon	2,000
Sister Cities Committee of GF & WC	exchange programs with Saga City, Japan	1,000
Adirondack Folk School, Inc.	2012 speakers, events, & evening programs	2,000
Lake George Arts Project, Inc.	Lake George Jazz Weekend	5,000
Lake George Community Band		1,500
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$350,000</b>

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Goodspeed and carried unanimously to award 2012 Occupancy Tax Special Event Funding as outlined above. *The necessary resolution was authorized for the December 16, 2011 Board meeting.*

As there was no further business to come before the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee, on motion made by Mr. McCoy and seconded by Mr. Merlino, Mr. Kenny adjourned the meeting at 11:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist