

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: TOURISM

DATE: NOVEMBER 2, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS MERLINO
KENNY
BELDEN
STRAINER
GOODSPEED
MCCOY
CONOVER

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR
PETER GIRARD, CREATIVE DIRECTOR
TANYA GRANT, GROUP TOUR PLANNER
DANIEL STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS TAYLOR
THOMAS
WOOD

MIKE CONSUELO, SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR, LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
DAVID BULMER, WARREN COUNTY COUNCIL OF CHAMBERS
BILL COLLINS, SPECIAL OLYMPICS, NEW YORK
LINDA MERLINO, LAMPLIGHT INN BED & BREAKFAST, LAKE LUZERNE
BLAKE JONES, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Merlino called the meeting of the Tourism Committee to order at 10:24 a.m.

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

Mr. Merlino suggested the Committee hold the necessary executive session at the beginning of the meeting as opposed to the end to allow Paul Dusek, County Administrator, to leave for a prior commitment. Mr. Dusek explained an executive session was necessary to discuss matters leading to the possible employment or termination of a particular person or corporation and could include a discussion pertaining to the employment history of a particular person.

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

Executive session was declared from 10:25 a.m. to 10:40 a.m.

The Committee reconvened and Mr. Merlino noted that no action was necessary pursuant to the executive session.

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.*

Commencing the agenda review, Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Kenyon Press, Inc. to print 45,000 copies of the 2012 Warren County Whitewater Rafting Brochure, for a term commencing

November 21, 2011 and terminating December 30, 2011, in an amount not to exceed \$4,113 to be paid upon completion of the project.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Goodspeed and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with Kenyon Press, 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 November 18, 2011 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested a transfer of funds in the amount of \$165 from Tourism Occupancy- Office Equipment (A.6417 220) to Tourism Occupancy-Promotion (A.6417 481).

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Goodspeed and carried unanimously to approve the request for a transfer of funds as outlined above and forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the Request for Transfer of Funds form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Dusek exited the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Ms. Johnson circulated a copy of the 2012 Warren County Travel Guide to the Committee members; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes.* She listed the new inclusions in the Travel Guide, as follows:

- ▶ a reference to the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor in the Scenic Drives and Lodging Grids sections;
- ▶ a reference to Asian Clams and other invasive species in the Fishing and Boating sections;
- ▶ a snowmobile alert to inform riders not to use the rail trail between Stony Creek and North Creek due to train operations;
- ▶ Stand Up Paddling (SUP) was included in the Kayaking & Canoeing listings and in the Water Sports Rentals Grid;
- ▶ new listings for Saratoga & North Creek Railway (SNCR) and the Ski Train;
- ▶ at the request of Mr. Loeb, a Chronic Conditions section was added to the Visitor Information to inform travelers of the contact information for Glens Falls Hospital for assistance with their chronic care needs;
- ▶ a new category was added to the Lodging Grids to inform of which Campgrounds and RV Parks offered onsite rentals;
- ▶ Hiking, Climbing and Nature Trails & Walks have been combined into one category; and
- ▶ a Travel Resources category was added to the Visitor Information page.

Ms. Johnson reported that the Lodging Demographics were updated each year following the production of the Travel Guide. She reviewed the list of demographics for Warren County Lodging Properties 2012 which included information by town, such as the number of properties, number of hotel rooms, cabins, cottages, efficiencies and campsite/RV sites, the average daily rate, etc.; *a copy of the list is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson apprised that she and Ms. Brand visited Gore Mountain on October 18, 2011 and met with Mike Pratt, General Manager. She said many improvements were being completed at Gore Mountain and the Ski Bowl and images of same were displayed for the Committee members. She added the images had been uploaded to the Warren County Tourism Facebook page. She noted there were large television screens at Gore Mountain and a discussion had been held pertaining to the possibility of featuring the video produced for the Glens Falls Civic Center on the screens, at no cost to the County. She said they had also discussed a partnership for the Eastern Ski Writers

Association Conference where Warren County Tourism had been offered a table. Ms. Johnson reported that she had been contacted by Alice Grether, Marketing Director for the Hyde Collection, pertaining to Public Relations opportunities for the Georgia O'Keeffe Exhibit in 2013.

Ms. Johnson displayed and reviewed the Warren County Tourism Department Blast Timeline 2012; *a copy of which is on file with the minutes*. She said the timeline listed the dates and subjects of the scheduled email blasts for 2012. She noted the Tourism Department allowed up to three partners per email blast. She explained that every piece of print material produced by the Department had a Production Calendar, all of which were produced prior to the end of the year. She noted that each project involved the participation of every staff member to ensure everyone was informed.

Ms. Johnson stated that the Consumer Show Schedule for 2012 had been completed and businesses were requested to participate with brochure distribution. She apprised of her attendance at a Capital Region Economic Development Council Meeting on Friday, October 28, 2011 at which there was a discussion pertaining to not-for-profit tourism organizations. She added several Tourism Promotion Agency representatives had attended the meeting. She explained that New York State was divided into eleven tourism regions and there were ten Economic Development Councils.

Ms. Johnson said staff members would attend the Albany Ski and Snow Expo this weekend and representatives from the Saratoga & North Creek Railway (SNCR) would be present at the booth, as well. She noted that the SNCR did not possess any visual aids for the presentation, so the Tourism Department assisted them with pull-up displays and tabletop images.

Ms. Johnson reported that she had submitted Part 1 of the Matching Funds Application and was anticipating the receipt of Part 2. She noted there would be a decrease in the amount of funding awarded in 2012. She stated that the Department responded to queries from HARO (Help A Reporter Out) and there had been a query pertaining to the success of QR Codes in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry. She informed of a press release from Iowa Pacific pertaining to Great Scenic Railway Journeys, an Emmy Award winning public television series, who had visited the area on October 20-21, 2011 to film operations of the SNCR. She pointed out a mention on about.com pertaining to Culinary Travel in the Adirondacks which highlighted the Beer Festival held at Basil & Wick's in North Creek on October 8-9, 2011. She advised that Tom Connors, of Ad Workshop, would attend the next Committee meeting to report on the Fall Television Campaign.

Chairman Stec exited the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

Mr. Goodspeed reported there were collaboration efforts in place between the Towns of North Creek and Johnsbury and Iowa Pacific attempting to create a three day a week winter festival during the ski season including entertainment for non-skiers.

Tanya Brand, Group Tour Promoter, announced that 3,000 copies of the 2012 Group Tour Planner had been delivered and a press release pertaining to the Planner was sent to local and national media. She noted that GroupTourMagazine.com and LeisureGroupTravel.com had created flip page versions of the Group Tour Planner on their websites as part of the online listing for Warren County Tourism. Ms. Brand displayed the August Group Loop Electronic Newsletter and said she was currently working on the November edition.

Ms. Brand apprised of her attendance at the American Bus Association Show in Grapevine, Texas on January 6-10, 2012 where she would conduct in excess of 50 appointments with Tour Operators.

She noted she would be exhibiting as part of the Adirondack Regional Booth on the Marketplace floor. She stated that a newly designed postcard would be included in the delegate registration bags to be presented at the booth and would allow the delegates to be entered into a contest to win an authentic cedar Adirondack Chair, embossed with the Adirondack Region Logo and website. Other Warren County delegates scheduled to attend the show, she continued, included the Lake George Steamboat Company, Surfside on the Lake, The Georgian Resort, Hampton Inn & Suites, the Clarion Inn Lake George and the Tiki Resort.

Ms. Brand reported on her attendance at the Bienvenue Quebec Show sponsored by the Quebec Bus Owners Association where she conducted 25 appointments with Canadian Tour Operators interested in group tours to the United States. She apprised of a productive appointment with Voyages Gendron who was interested in adding train excursions to their catalog and was considering bringing five busses to our area in 2012.

Ms. Brand explained the Department continued to provide support to Lakes to Locks Passage in their partnership with National Geographic for a geotourism website. She said she provided seven images for use on the landing page of the website and distributed an email to the Warren County Chambers of Commerce members requesting that their community events be added to the website. The Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce, she continued, distributed the request on their informational blog and encouraged businesses to participate. She said the Quarterly and Group Loop Newsletters for November would include a feature on the Lakes to Locks Passage website opportunities.

Ms. Brand apprised of VisitNYS.org, an Israel based website partnered with "I ♥ NY" and stated that the Adirondack Region section of the website had been updated to include a full-page of Warren County information with features on history and attractions and a link to the VisitLakeGeorge.com website. The Warren County landing page on the VisitNYS.org website was displayed and Ms. Johnson suggested a change from the heading of "Warren County" which did not identify the area to other countries as there were several states with a Warren County.

Ms. Brand reported of her attendance at the monthly Warren County Safe & Quality Bicycle Committee meetings and said the organization had added the Warren County Tourism logo to their website and included a link to the VisitLakeGeorge.com website. As part of the partnership, she stated, Warren County Tourism had added the Warren County Safe & Quality Bicycle Committee logo to the VisitLakeGeorge.com website, as well as a link to the organization's website from the Outdoor Recreation landing page. She noted she provided the organization with an Occupancy Tax application form for the production of a Warren County On and Off-Road Bicycling Map.

Ms. Brand announced she had distributed an RFP (Request for Proposal) to Warren County Convention venues for the 2012 New York State Probation Officers Association Annual Meeting in June 2012. She said 75 to 100 attendees were anticipated and responses to the RFP had been received by Surfside on the Lake, The Georgian Resort, the Fort William Henry Resort, Roaring Brook Ranch and the Holiday Inn Resort. She noted the Criminal Justice Committee would select a location for the Annual Meeting at their next Committee meeting.

Ms. Brand apprised of a meeting pertaining to the September 28-29, 2012 Ragnar Relay, a 200 mile relay style event beginning in Saratoga and ending in Lake Placid. She noted that the Million Dollar Beach Parking Area would be a major exchange point for the race.

Peter Girard, Creative Director, displayed various print ads, email blasts and other advertising materials for the Committee members. He played the Fall Television Video and noted that they had just concluded the Fall Giveaway Promotion. Mr. Girard played the video which had been produced for use on the video screens at the Glens Falls Civic Center. He noted the 60-second video would also be played at Gore Mountain and on the Warren County Tourism website.

Mr. Girard displayed the email blast pertaining to culture and crafts which had been released on October 9, 2011 and pointed out that approximately 8,000 recipients had opened the email blast. He displayed the Winter Print Ads and the New Jersey Transit Posters to the Committee members and noted the posters were currently in development and would be placed at New Jersey Transit stops.

Mr. Girard displayed the new Drupal website staging page to the Committee members and demonstrated the ease of use for updating information and images. He noted that the ability to update the information by himself would save a lot of time.

Ms. Johnson pointed out that at the request of Mr. Goodspeed, the logos for the three ski resorts had been placed on the front cover of the Winter Brochure as opposed to the back cover. She added that the logos for the three ski resorts were also included on the New Jersey Transit exterior billboards. Ms. Brand said she received a phone call from Upstate Transit pertaining to a Seniors Group inquiring about a potential trip to North Creek. Mr. Goodspeed stated he had been informed of repeat visitors to the Town of North Creek who had driven to the Town a few weeks after riding the train there.

Mike Consuelo, Special Events Coordinator for the Lake George Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), distributed copies of his Monthly Activity Report to the Committee members and reviewed the report in detail; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes*. Mr. Consuelo apprised of the New York State High School Junior Olympic Program Cross Country Championships to be held at the Queensbury High School on November 20, 2011. He said 800 participants were expected, as well as their families and friends. He stated that he had sent out an RFP to local hotels for a potential conference on May 4-6, 2012 for the American Cryptogram Association with 60-65 attendees anticipated. He noted the contact for this group was met during the Centurion Cycling Event in Toronto. He informed of his attendance at the Ragnar Relay meeting previously mentioned by Ms. Brand.

Pertaining to the 2012 Centurion Cycling Event, Mr. Consuelo said promoters and planners for the event met recently and appointed Dave Bulmer, of the North Creek Chamber of Commerce, as Local Race Director and Sue Scott Parker, of West Mountain Ski Resort, as the Local Volunteer Director. He announced that the Centurion Cycling Event in Toronto had 3,450 riders, 42% of whom had indicated their intention to participate in the 2012 Centurion Cycling Event in New York. Mr. Consuelo concluded his report by listing the various meetings he had attended during the month of October and he noted the Warren County Council of Chambers Dinner would be held on December 6, 2011 at a place to be determined and the keynote speaker would be Senator Little.

Mr. Merlino said there were no pending items and announced that the report on local tourism would be presented by Mr. Kenny who would report on local tourism in the City of Glens Falls.

Mr. Kenny read the following prepared statement:

"The City of Glens Falls offers tourists and locals a variety of things to do on a year round basis. The Chapman Historical Museum and The Hyde Collection are two museums in the City. For children, the World Awareness Children's Museum offers a wealth of activities. The Glens Falls Civic Center offers a variety of events, from concerts to sports. Glens Falls is also home to LARAC (Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council) which hosts an event in the City Park every June. Speaking of City Park, A Taste of the North Country is a big event and weekend band concerts also take place there. Of course, the Crandall Library is also located in City Park. There are a multitude of restaurants in the City of Glens Falls offering everything from breakfast at Poopie's to dinner at one of the more fashionable restaurants. Of course, if dinner and a movie are on tap, the City offers up Aimie's Dinner & Movie. The Wood Theater is a top venue offering stage shows and concerts. Tourism was down slightly in 2011."

Ms. Johnson asked Mr. Conover if he would be willing to report on tourism in the Town of Bolton at the next Committee meeting and Mr. Conover replied affirmatively.

Mr. Kenny said he would like to discuss the contract with the Lake George Chamber of Commerce and CVB pertaining to the services of the Special Events Coordinator.

Mr. McCoy opined that the Lake George Chamber of Commerce and CVB had done a fantastic job with the contract in question and he suggested the contract be renewed for an additional year. He noted this type of service did not yield immediate dividends as it was an ongoing process. He stated that the reason the majority of the business was in Lake George was due to the fact that the majority of the lodging properties were in Lake George. Lastly, he opined that Mr. Consuelo had done a good job in his role as Special Events Coordinator.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Strainer to allow the current contract to lapse with the Lake George Chamber of Commerce and CVB pertaining to the services of the Special Events Coordinator.

Mr. Strainer suggested discussing the contract with the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB prior to making any decisions concerning renewing or terminating the contract. Mr. Consuelo thanked Mr. McCoy for his comments and added that the contract was with the Chamber and any discussions should include them. Mr. Goodspeed stated that if it was necessary to vote today, he would vote in favor of terminating the contract; however, he added, his preference would be to delay voting until after discussions were held with Chamber representatives.

Following further discussion on the issue, Mr. Kenny withdrew his motion and Mr. Strainer withdrew his second to the motion. It was the consensus of the Committee to invite representatives from the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB to the next Committee meeting to discuss the continuation or termination of the contract with Warren County pertaining to the services of the Special Events Coordinator.

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism Committee, on motion made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. McCoy, Mr. Merlino adjourned the meeting at 11:29 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist