

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: TOURISM

DATE: MAY 30, 2012

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS MERLINO
KENNY
DICKINSON
STRAINER
CONOVER
WOOD
VANSELOW

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

PETER GIRARD, CREATIVE DIRECTOR
TANYA BRAND, GROUP TOUR PLANNER
LEISA GRANT, PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT CLERK

DANIEL STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD

SUPERVISORS GIRARD
LOEB
MASON
TAYLOR
THOMAS

TOM CONNORS, AD WORKSHOP, INC.

MICHAEL CONSUELO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHRISTINA CURLEY, SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR, LAKE GEORGE
REGIONAL CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

JOHN STROUGH, COUNCILMAN, 3RD WARD, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY

FRED AUSTIN, FORT WILLIAM HENRY RESORT

DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*

CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Merlino called the meeting of the Tourism Committee to order at 10:49 a.m.

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

Mr. Merlino noted that Kate Johnson, Director of Tourism, had been unable to attend the meeting due to a request from the Governor's Office that she attend a tourism related press conference at 11:00 a.m. this morning in Albany.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Leisa Grant, Principal Account Clerk for the Tourism Department, 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. Grant requested a contract with Kenyon Press to print 100,000 copies of the 2012 Fall Brochure for a total amount not to exceed \$7,336 for a term commencing June 18, 2012 and terminating July 31, 2012. She noted seven vendors had responded to the RFP (Request for Proposal) and Kenyon Press had been the lowest responsible bidder. She added the funds for this contract were available in the budget.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with Kenyon Press as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 15, 2012 Board meeting.*

Ms. Grant requested to amend Resolution No. 694 of 2011, which authorized attendance at 2012 in-State and out-of-State Consumer Shows by Tourism Department Personnel and County Supervisors, to add the NYSTVA (New York State Travel & Vacation Association) Conference/Board Meeting to be held August 21-22, 2012 in Syracuse, New York. She noted Ms. Johnson had been asked to serve on the Board of Directors for NYSTVA and would need to attend the Conference to that end.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to amend Resolution 694 of 2011 as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 15, 2012 Board meeting.*

Ms. Grant exited the meeting at 10:52 a.m.

Tanya Brand, Group Tour Promoter, distributed copies of the Group Tour Update report to the Committee members; *a copy of the report is on file with the minutes.* She said the May edition of the Group Loop Newsletter had been sent electronically to approximately 3,500 industry contacts and the featured itinerary was *The Summer of O'Keeffe* which included The Hyde Collections's *Modern Nature: Georgia O'Keeffe and Lake George* exhibit, as well as a preview and reading of the Adirondack Theatre Festival's *Filming O'Keeffe* on July 21-22, 2012. She stated that solicitations for inclusion in the 2013 Group Travel Planner would be mailed by June 15, 2012 to all Warren County tourism related businesses, Chambers of Commerce, Towns and the City of Glens Falls, with a return deadline of July 6, 2012.

Ms. Brand announced she had nominated three local events for consideration for the American Bus Associations's (ABA) Top 100 Events in North America, as follows: The Adirondack Balloon Festival; My Summer Place: Georgia O'Keeffe events and activities; and The Last of the Mohicans Outdoor Drama. She said the winners would be announced in September and pointed out the Adirondack Balloon Festival had been a past winner. Ms. Brand apprised of new pull up displays which had been developed by Peter Girard, Creative Director, for group tour shows and noted they included a locator map of the region to highlight the close proximity of the Lake George Area. She displayed pictures of the new pull up displays to the Committee members.

Ms. Brand said that as a result of the success of the walking club last year, research was conducted on area walking clubs and 50 East Coast Club Chapters were mailed a packet of group tour information including a list of options for walking tours and attractions which could be included into their itineraries.

Ms. Brand reported that she and Mr. Girard had delivered a Power Point Presentation to the Glens Falls Lions Club Luncheon held at the Queensbury Hotel on April 10, 2012. She said the Presentation had provided an overview of the Tourism Department's marketing strategies, services and partnering opportunities. She informed of her attendance at the monthly Warren County Council of Chambers Meeting on May 10, 2012 which had been hosted by the Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce at The Sagamore Resort. She stated that Senator Little had attended the meeting and had announced the First Annual New York State Museum Week to be held May 31-June 6, 2012. Ms. Brand reported that she had been invited to participate in Clinton County's 2012 Business Expo Marketing Seminar on June 7, 2012 where she would provide details on how local businesses could attract group tours.

Ms. Brand informed that she and Ms. Johnson had met with Great Escape & Splashwater Kingdom representatives: Steve Greene, General Sales Manager; and Pam Corsones, Group Tour Sales. She

said the purpose of the meeting was to discuss tourism programs, marketing and partnering opportunities. Ms. Brand added she was also invited to attend two events at the Great Escape & Splashwater Kingdom in order to obtain images for future use, as follows: The Americade Great Escape Night; and Girl Scout Day at the Park, both in June of 2012.

Ms. Brand displayed the 2012 Meeting Site Planner to the Committee members, noting that it featured a re-designed cover, an inside front cover with a welcome page, a regional amenities page, a locator map and mileage and transportation options on the outside back cover. She said she had been assisting the International Coleman Collectors Club for the last two years for their event to be held June 28-30, 2012 at the Fort William Henry Resort.

Paul Dusek, County Administrator, entered the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

Mr. Girard displayed the latest edition of the Quarterly Newsletter to the Committee members and noted it had been sent electronically to approximately 1,000 tourism related businesses. He displayed the new pull up displays for the Travel Shows to the Committee members and pointed out some of the larger area events had been included and one pull up display was intended to highlight the region as a four season destination.

Mr. Girard displayed the three most recent email blasts to the Committee members, as follows:

- ▶ the Camping Contest email blast was released on April 4, 2012 to approximately 102,000 subscribers and was viewed by approximately 12,000 people;
- ▶ the Summer Fun email blast was released on April 18, 2012 to approximately 111,000 subscribers and was viewed by approximately 15,000 people; and
- ▶ the Memorial Day email blast was released on May 23, 2012 to approximately 111,000 subscribers and was viewed by approximately 13,000 people.

Mr. Girard noted that each email blast presented an opportunity for up to three sponsor advertisements and most of the email blasts were released with all three sponsor slots filled. He displayed some of the recent photographs which had been captured to add to the photo library. He noted new photos had been taken of whitewater rapids which had been uploaded immediately to the website. He displayed the Invasive Species - Protect Lake George Initiative logo to the Committee members and noted the logo had been included on the boating and fishing landing pages of the Warren County Tourism website and the logo could be clicked on to provide a direct link to the Invasive Species - Protect Lake George landing page of the Lake George Association website. He added the logo had also been included in the Travel Guide and the Rates, Dates and Events Brochure.

Mr. Girard displayed the updated Warren County Tourism website to the Committee members and pointed out the various landing pages and attributes of the website. He noted the speed and efficiency of the website had been greatly improved with an average load time of 5 seconds per page. He pointed out that the list of events had been condensed on the website to allow more events to be viewed at one time. He added clicking on each individual event would allow the user access to additional information. He commented that Google Geo-Coding had been added to the events page to show the specific location for each event. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Girard played the 30 second and 60 second Summer Television Commercials for the Committee members. He said Working Pictures, Inc. provided the television stations with all the necessary files to air the commercials and had provided the Tourism Department with internet versions of the commercials.

Tom Connors, of Ad Workshop, Inc., distributed a map of the marketing area for the Summer and Fall television commercials which included locations between Montreal, Canada and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He informed that the Summer television commercials had commenced airing on April 30, 2012 and were viewed in over 7,300,000 households. Mr. Connors reported the following responses from television commercials aired since 2009:

- ▶ in 2009 there were 31,517 responses;
- ▶ in 2010 there were 58,895 responses, an 87% increase;
- ▶ in 2011 there were approximately 59,000 responses; and
- ▶ thus far in 2012 there was an increase of approximately 10% compared to the same time period in 2011.

Mr. Connors played the new Fishing Commercial for the Committee members which offered viewers an opportunity to call or visit the website to receive a free fishing information packet. He reminded the Committee that two episodes of *Lakes Region Fishing with Nate Laskiewicz* had been filmed last summer to air on the Sportsman Channel which had featured Lake George fishing. He noted Mr. Laskiewicz had produced two additional 30 minute segments this year which also featured Lake George fishing. He said the new segments had aired in the Burlington area on April 22, 2012 and May 20, 2012 and were scheduled to air in the Montreal/Burlington area on June 17, 2012. Mr. Girard reminded the Committee that Mr. Laskiewicz allowed him and a camera man to accompany them for one day during the filming of the show in order to acquire photos and footage for future use. Mr. Connors noted Mr. Laskiewicz was the man represented in the Fishing Commercial which was played for the Committee members earlier. He advised of a one hour show entitled *On the Lake* which would kick off with a segment on Lake George which was currently being produced in Albany and would air on June 23, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. on Channel 13. He apprised the show would feature attractions, such as ghost sightings, activities involving the Lake, The Sagamore Resort, The Great Escape & Splashwater Kingdom and many others.

Mr. Connors commented that Warren County was one of seven counties in the Adirondack Region. He said the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council (ARTC) aired various television commercials and he played two of their current television commercials for the Committee members. He pointed out that the ARTC commercials commenced airing two weeks after the Warren County commercials and had received 2,500 responses thus far. He said the commercials aired throughout New York State to the Pennsylvania border and in parts of New Jersey. He noted the ARTC was conducting public relations pertaining to *The Summer of O'Keeffe* and the *Filming of O'Keeffe* readings.

Michael Consuelo, Executive Director of the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce, introduced Christina Curley, Special Events Coordinator for the Lake George Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) and said she had been employed with the CVB for the last couple of months. He thanked all of the Supervisors who had been able to attend the press conference for the Big Apple Circus which would be held July 14-29, 2012. He noted one of the Fort William Henry Resort cannons had been fired during the press conference and Fred Austin, of the Fort William Henry Resort, had assured him that the cannons would not be fired during the Big Apple Circus event to ensure the animals were not affected. He mentioned the Centurion Cycling Event would be held June 22-24, 2012 and approximately 700 people had registered.

Ms. Curley distributed copies of her May 2012 Monthly Report to the Committee members; *a copy of which is on file with the minutes*. She said she had spent time introducing herself to the area properties and Chambers of Commerce. She stated the Gore Mountain Regional Chamber of Commerce had invited her to attend a North Creek Business Alliance meeting in order to participate as a speaker. She informed of her new memberships in MPI (Meeting Professionals International)

and ESSAE (Empire State Society of Association Professionals). She announced her plans to attend the New York State Association of Destination Marketing Organizations quarterly meeting on June 1, 2012. Mr. Dickinson apprised of his invitation to the press conference for the Cadillac and LaSalle Club upcoming 2014 event and he noted he was pleased to see Ms. Curley in attendance, as well.

Pertaining to the Warren County Council of Chambers Report, Ms. Brand reiterated that the monthly meeting had been held at The Sagamore Resort on May 10, 2012 and Senator Little had announced the First Annual Museum Week to be held May 31-June 6, 2012. Other speakers, she continued, included Thom Guay, of The Sagamore Resort, who discussed the facilities renovations and improvements and Dr. Chandler Atkins, of SUNY Adirondack, who discussed strategies for tourism growth. Ms. Brand announced the next Warren County Council of Chambers Dinner would be held at Martucci's Northern Lake George Resort on June 14, 2012.

Mr. Merlino noted there were no pending items this month.

Mr. Kenny distributed copies of a portion of the Smith Travel Report to the Committee members; *a copy of which is on file with the minutes*. He noted the report showed that the occupancy tax collections for Warren County for the week of April 22-28, 2012 reflected an increase of 17.3%. He added the 28-day running occupancy tax collections total reflected an increase of 9.9%. He said occupancy tax collections had been positive this year and he would provide further details at the next Committee meeting.

Mrs. Wood suggested her report on tourism in the Town of Thurman be delayed until the next Committee meeting. She said that her volunteer publicist had put a lot of work into the report and she wanted to have an opportunity to present it in its entirety.

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Merlino adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist