



Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: August 16, 2012; 3:00–4:30p.m.

Location: Greene County Office Building

Committee Members Attending – Brian Christman, Christman’s Windham House; Kevin Smith, Sunny Hill Resort and Golf Course; Carol Schrieber ,Baumann’s Brookside; Bernadette Gavin - Palmieri, Gavin’s Irish Country Inn; Suzanne Oldakowski ,Bavarian Manor Country Inn and Restaurant; Peter Maassmann, Blackhead Mountain Lodge and Golf Course; Gerry Tschinkel for Russ Coloton, Hunter Mountain; Troy Ketcham, Windham Mountain; Betsy Jacks, Thomas Cole National Historic Site

Absent: Chuck Tomajko, Fairlawn Inn

Others in Attendance – Chairman Wayne Speenburgh; Legislator Kevin Lewis; Legislator Karen Deyo; Legislator Patty Handel; County Administrator Shaun Groden; Warren Hart, Director, Economic Development., Tourism & Planning

Staff - Karl Heck, Nancy Petramale, Patty Austin, Teri Weiss

The meeting opened with introductions.

Greene County Legislature Chairman, Wayne Speenburgh, welcomed and thanked everyone for accepting the invitation to participate on this newly formed Tourism Advisory Committee. Mr. Speenburgh explained the importance of tourism to the County, the role of the TAC, and that the work of the Committee is important and everything is on the table for discussion. He also talked about the recent formation of the Economic Development and Tourism Legislative Standing Committee.

Mr. Speenburgh announced that the County had received unanticipated funds from the refinancing of Athens Generating and that the County Legislature had decided to commit an additional \$181,000 of these funds towards tourism efforts, including that the Committee was charged with discussing how best to use the funds.

Mr. Lewis spoke briefly, thanking everyone for their participation, noting that the goal is to move the County and its tourism industry forward.

Mr. Hart then spoke regarding the mission and goals of the TAC and explained how the Department operates and it’s Agency of Record, Adworkshop and Inphorm. He explained that this is a long term initiative. The majority of the meeting was focused on the County’s Destination Marketing Program and plans for the future. Mr. Hart gave a broad overview of the marketing program, following



the handouts provided to each of the Committee members, including: recent accomplishments; web sites; advertising; social media; public relations; trade and travel shows; ILNY media plans; newsletters; Greene Card; travel and consumer shows; ILNY Catskill and Hudson Valley Travel regions; media plans; media budget; Search Marketing Report and Bi-Annual Report. Of note, some time was spent discussing the very positive increase in performance of Great Northern Catskills, and the importance of tracking results. Using analytics and metrics, such as Google, the County was able to show that website traffic increased, that domain authority and ranking had increased, and that major keywords had increased rankings on Google in many categories to rank in the top placements.

Mr. Hart concluded with a brief overview of an ILNY – Tourism Grant Application for the Catskills Region, “Rediscover the Catskills – The Birthplace of American Tourism”, and a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan project that the Department is starting, with a special emphasis on tourism assets and amenities.

The TAC discussed and established the schedule for future TAC meetings. The TAC decided to initially meet every three weeks, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with alternating morning and afternoon sessions. The use of Sub-Committees was discussed as a possibility depending on topics and projects.

The meeting closed at 5:00 p.m. with the next meeting date set for Tuesday, September 4th, 9:00 a.m., to be hosted by Betsy Jacks at the Thomas Cole House.