



Greene County Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday January 14, 2013 p.m.

Location: Greene County Economic Development, Tourism and Planning

Attendance:

Committee Members Attending – Kevin Lewis, Chairman, Greene County Legislature, Economic Development and Tourism Committee; Brian Christman, Chrisman’s Windham House; Bernadette Gavin-Palmieri, Gavin’s Irish Country Inn; Troy Ketcham, Windham Mountain; Suzanne Oldakowski, Bavarian Manor Country Inn and Restaurant; Carol Schreiber, Bauman’s Brookside; Chuck Tomajko, Fairlawn Inn; Betsy Jacks, Thomas Cole House; Peter Maassmann, Blackhead Mountain Lodge; Russ Coloton, Hunter Mountain.

Others in Attendance – Harry Lennon, County Legislator; Linda Overbaugh, County Legislator; Patty Handle, County Legislator; Chip Seamans, Windham Mountain

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

Minutes:

The minutes of the December 13, 2013 meeting were approved.

Destination Marketing Report: (Special Meeting with Legislature)

Warren welcomed everyone to the meeting, and especially thanked Russ Coloton and Chip Seamans for presenting the Priority Project Campaigns on behalf of the Tourism Advisory Committee to the Economic Development and Tourism Committee following the meeting. The Priority Project Campaigns and budget had been emailed to the TAC and the Legislature prior to the meeting. The working components of the campaigns were discussed. Warren emphasized that the formation of the TAC committee included the development of Priority Project Campaigns with the Legislature looking for an immediate return on investment in the form of visitor spending and increased county sales tax revenue.

Discussion took place on New York State Thruway billboards. The county’s contract with Clear Channel for the NYS Thruway Billboard expires in February. The yearly cost for the billboard is \$38,000 inclusive of two skins per year. Warren wanted TAC input on the contract renewal, recommending that the billboard funds would be better repurposed to digital marketing. The TAC supported the



recommendation to not renew. Legislator Lennon refrained from the discussion due to his affiliation with the NYS Thruway.

Warren will be traveling to Lake Placid this week to meet with our ad agency, Adworkshop, to finalize the 2013 destination marketing plan, contract and budget. Additionally, the Travel Guide layout and creative will be discussed. The 2012 TG cover was visually appealing and very well received, and this year's cover will focus on our family travel and the adventure theme. The creative for the cover will be sent to the TAC for input. Nancy stated that all the ad space had been sold and more pages were added to accommodate additional advertising.

Legislator Lennon mentioned the importance and huge draw that mountain biking has on our region, and to make sure that Round Top is also mentioned in the guide as a mountain bike venue area.

The TAC meeting schedule was discussed. It was agreed that the meetings would be held once a month, primarily at the office of Economic Development, Tourism and Planning, but also having tourism businesses host meetings around the county, and inviting tourism businesses to attend.

The 2012 tourism seminar was mentioned and its success. Warren informed everyone that we've been discussing the next session and some creative ideas. Current thinking is to hold two seminars for the year, one focused on the full launch of the Adventure Passport Contest and the other on education and training. These are still up in the air. Once again we will reach out to the GNC Chamber of Commerce for co-sponsorship.

Warren mentioned that several travel writers will be in Greene County on February 6th focusing on winter related travel and activities. In this case, the travel writers are being coordinated through ILNY and the four Catskill Region Counties. Nancy has been working with them to showcase the area. Chuck suggested during the slow periods we arrange for a formal FAM tour.

Warren gave a brief summary of the Governor's State of the State address pertaining to tourism. He explained that a new ESD Regional Director for Tourism position will be created; the Governor is encouraging more upstate travel; a new emphasis on use of ILNY advertising and marketing funds supporting large festivals and events; and that an additional \$5 million in funds are going to tourism.

Of concern to Warren and echoed by the CATS Tourism Directors, is the funneling of ILNY tourism dollars through the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC). The new ILNY tourism funds will be under the purview of the REDC, including the ILNY matching funds program, which has always been a legislative initiative. The issue is the Capital Region EDC, which will make the decisions on where the tourism dollars will be awarded, does not align with the ILNY CATS Vacation Region. The new system will effectively diminish the Catskill brand which is one of the oldest and known tourism vacation regions in the country and which drives the majority of the county's visitor spending.



TAC Member Announcements:

Russ Coloton announced that on January 23, 2013 the organizers of Mountain Jam are holding a press conference to announce Taste of Country, which will be taking place on June 13-15, 2013 at Hunter Mountain.

Meeting Date and Location:

2013 Meeting Schedule to be developed.