



Greene County Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 9:30 a.m.

Location: Winter Clove Inn

Round Top, NY

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; Betsy Jacks, Thomas Cole House; Russ Coloton, Hunter Mountain; Kevin Smith, Sunny Hill Resort and Golf Course.

Others in Attendance – Shaun Groden, County Administrator; Linda Overbaugh, County Legislator; Gene Hatton, County Legislator; Ed & Denise Kerrigan, Country Place & Zoom Flume; Jennifer Campbell & Veshti Snyder, Kaatskill Mountain Club; Charlie Serro, Pollace’s Resort; Gail Nicholson, Sunny Hill Resort & Golf Course; Kurt Goettsche, Thompson House; Leonora & Bud Whitcomb, Winter Clove Inn; Kevin Baumann, Pine Lake Manor; Leslie Trosset, Biz Tech Link, Mary McGahen

Staff - Warren Hart, Heather Bagshaw, Nancy Petramale, Teri Weiss, Karl Heck

Minutes:

The minutes of the February 26, 2013 meeting were approved.

Destination Marketing Report:

Warren thanked Lenora and Bud Whitcomb for hosting the meeting. Lenora then spoke briefly on the history of Winter Clove Inn, stating that it’s in its fifth generation, owned and operated by her family. She has spent her entire life at the Inn, and in Greene County. They have done numerous upgrades throughout the many years, and this year they are replacing all the windows, which are 150 years old.

Kevin Lewis then spoke about the creation of the T.A.C. Committee and its goals. He explained the desire for a separate tourism committee and its importance. Once formed, Chairman Speenburgh backed \$181,000 in funding for the creation and implementation of the committee with an immediate \$90,000 in funds to be used at the discretion of the TAC committee for campaigns. The committee has been very active since its inception approximately six months ago.



County Administrator Shaun Groden then spoke, echoing the same sentiments as Kevin Lewis. He also explained how the funds were established due to Athens Generating refinancing their mortgage. He emphasized this is not a “one time shot” that the Legislature would replenish funds on a yearly budgetary basis. “This is a new era of communications”, said Groden, the importance of communicating quickly and effectively with the consumer/customer increases your exposure and is now more critical than ever. He referenced the Chairman’s State of the County’s address.

Warren then spoke about the work and the achievements that the T.A.C. committee has already accomplished, and the plans for the upcoming year. The committee formed a priority action list then there was the formation of the TAC 90 campaign in which \$90,000 was set aside to use for three major campaigns; Television Advertising, Adventure Passport and Contest, and Destination Weddings. Warren then explained each in more depth.

Warren talked about the upcoming Spring Tourism Seminar that we are co-hosting with the Great Northern Catskills Chamber of Commerce on April 25, 2013 from 3-5 p.m. followed by Business after Hours 5-7 p.m. at the Kaatskill Mountain Club at Hunter Mountain. We are partnering with KathodeRay Media, and will be focusing on websites, digital marketing and search engine optimization. KathodeRay Media will be offering their service to businesses as a “website assessment and tune-up”. The cost is \$1,000 per website with County providing a 50/50 match in an amount of up to \$500.

Heather Bagshaw, Tourism & Marketing Manger then gave an update on the Adventure Passport and Contest. This campaign is primarily to draw tourism to the County, increase visitor spending, move the tourists around the County to experience our four season destination and encourage them to return to the County. She spoke about the four grand prizes and the other various donations that have been donated from Greene County tourism businesses. Heather also explained in detail how the campaign is going to work.

Warren and Heather then answered various questions pertaining to the campaign.

A group discussion took place, led by TAC members Russ Coloton and Suzanne Oldakowski, focusing on Family Friendly Resorts. Some of the areas of discussion were. –

- Second Homeowners
- Baby Boomers, Length of Stay, Grand Parents and Travel Trends
- Fund Raisers
- Websites, Target Markets, Value of Paid Advertising, Press Releases
- Packages, especially the Mid-Week Market
- Third Party Advertising Services, such as Groupon and the Value of Discounts Mid-Week
- Social Media, Google Analytics, Digital Marketing Versus “Old School” Advertising
- Reservation and On-line Booking Systems



Warren then reinforced the efforts that the County has put forth on behalf of the tourism industry and our plans to continue to support this industry.

Russ Coloton then thanked the Legislature for taking a “leap of faith” and their excellent communication efforts. And feels it will be a good return on investment.

The next meeting will be the Tourism Seminar on Thursday, April 25th at the Kaatskill Mountain Club at Hunter Mountain at 3:00 p.m.