

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE
MINUTES

A meeting of the Economic Development Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on July 20, 2016.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. William J. Lindsay III, Chairperson
Leg. Steven H. Stern, Vice Chair
Leg. Kara Hahn
Leg. Kevin J. McCaffrey (excused absence)
Leg. Robert Trotta

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George M. Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Amy Ellis, Chief Deputy Clerk/Legislature
Laura Halloran, Budget Review Office
Brian Sapp, Aide to Leg. Lindsay
Zachary Baum, Aide to Leg. Hahn
Katie Horst, County Executive's Office
John Marafino, County Executive's Office
Rick Brand, Newsday
Dave Schwartz, Newsday
Kristen Jarnagin, President/Long Island Convention & Visitors Bureau
Sharon Wyman, LICVB
And all other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY:

Denise Weaver, Legislative Aide

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THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 2:25 PM

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Good afternoon. Welcome to the Economic Development Committee meeting. If I could get all Legislators to the horseshoe, please.

If we could all please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Trotta.

SALUTATION

Welcome to the Economic Development Committee meeting. Madam Clerk, do we have any public comment cards?

MS. ELLIS:

No, we do not.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Is anybody in the audience that wishes to speak during the Public Portion, please come forward, you have three minutes. Okay. Not seeing anyone, I will close the Public Portion. We do have a presentation today, but I'm just going to run through our -- the rest of the agenda really quickly because there's just a few items. And then we'll bring up Miss Jarnagin from the LICVB. So we'll start with Tabled Resolutions.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

We have Tabled Resolution **1391, Appointing Alan Inkles to the Suffolk County Motion Picture/Television Film Commission. (Co. Exec.)** I don't see him here so I will make a motion to table.

LEG. HAHN:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Second by Legislator Hahn. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The resolution's tabled. **Tabled (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. McCAFFREY NOT PRESENT)**

1398, Authorizing Suffolk County to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Suffolk County Landbank Corporation. (Co. Exec.) Katie, if you wouldn't mind coming forward just let us know what -- I believe we're going to table this again.

MS. HORST:

Yes, they're still working on the language of the MOU.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay. So I will make a motion to table; second by Legislator Hahn. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion's tabled. **(VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. McCAFFREY NOT PRESENT).**

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

Moving to the Introductory Resolutions, We have **IR 1647, Authorizing the filing of a grant application to develop a Suffolk County Blueway Trail System. (Hahn)**

LEG. HAHN:
Motion.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Motion by Legislator Hahn; I'll second it. Any discussion on the issue? Okay. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion carries. **(VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. McCAFFREY NOT PRESENT)** Madam Clerk, if you could put me as a cosponsor on that as well. Thank you.

Introductory Resolution 1650, To establish the Suffolk County Next Generation Advisory Council. (Pres. Off.) I'll make a motion.

LEG. HAHN:
Second.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Second by Legislator Hahn. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion carries. **(VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. McCAFFREY NOT PRESENT)**

PRESENTATION

If we could move onto our presentations, Miss Jarnagin, if you wouldn't mind coming forward, you could have a seat right at the center table there.

And, Madam Clerk, just for the record Legislator McCaffrey had an excused absence, if you could note that. Thank you.

Good afternoon, welcome. Thank you for coming in this afternoon.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Good afternoon, thanks for having me. Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Yes.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Okay. Good afternoon. For the record, I am Kristen Jarnagin, President and CEO of the Long Island Convention and Visitors Bureau. And you may remember, I came to you eight months ago and made many promises on what I'd like to achieve as your new tourism representative. So today is the day where I make good on those promises. And I appreciate the opportunity to share the initial results with you.

When I joined the Bureau last November, I realized immediately there was a lot of work to be done to establish not only the comprehensive tours and strategy for the destination, but also credibility for my organization and industry. My first priority was to listen and that's exactly what I did. I had countless meetings with industry, community and political stakeholders. I listened to the concerns and challenges and ideas that they had about our organization and our destination. The feedback we received was the foundation and serves as the foundation for all of our programs and projects I'm going to show you today.

So your voices, as well as those of your constituents, have and will continue to be heard. We've been very busy implementing those ideas so let's go ahead and begin. This report is just a brief highlight of our activities to date. And I have a copy of this report as well as links to all of the examples and videos that I'm presenting today on the flash drive that was presented to you, so you

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can review in more detail at your leisure. And, as always, feel free to contact me if you have any follow-up questions.

So we'll start with the overall economic impact of tourism to Long Island and Suffolk County. This is a 2015 report that was just released last week so you're getting hot-off-the-press information from nationally renowned research firm Tourism Economics. The primary purpose of tourism marketing is to drive tax revenues and job generation. And, as you can see, tourism taxes generated for Suffolk County in 2015 more than \$356 million. For all of Long Island that number almost doubles. So tourism taxes are a key revenue generator for our budgets and fund many of the public programs that our residents rely on. Tourism also accounts for about 120,000 Long Island jobs.

Traveler spend is also up over the year prior by 3% to almost \$5.5 billion dollars annually. This pie chart that you see reflects the strength of Long Island tourism in the State of New York. And while you can see that we have a significant share of the pie, only second to New York City, our annual budget is more inline with our much smaller Upstate destination marketing organizations. So that's something I'd love to have Legislative support in addressing. And I'll be bringing ideas on how to grow the funding to this Committee as they solidify; so be prepared.

Now we'll move onto Suffolk County specifics. As you can see, lodging performances are at record-breaking levels. While occupancy has remained relatively flat to last year, it is still well above the national average and rate has continued to increase driving additional tax revenues to the bottom line. Also according to Suffolk County documents about \$9.8 million in occupancy taxes were collected last year. In fact, 2.1 million, which is more than my organization receives from the County all year, was collected in the month of June. So while we support the use of hotel and motel taxes being distributed to the many worthwhile events and programs, it's important to remember that for every dollar spent on tourism promotion, the estimated return is \$39. Therefore, greater investments in our efforts will not only continue to benefit County coffers, but also increases the budgets of all the recipients of the Hotel/Motel tax.

So let's get into how we're spending those dollars specifically. When I listened, the first thing I heard was that our website was archaic. So we launched a new website in April that is not only compatible with all mobile devices, and responsive, which Google requires for search functioning, it is also -- it also features the first Island-wide online booking engine that connects consumers directly with the property at no cost to the property. This is free to every single lodging facility on Long Island.

Any time you launch a new website it takes a while for it to recover in search functionality. And our old website being nonresponsive for an extended period of time definitely impacted traffic. However, as you can see, our exposure in traffic is still fairly impressive for the first half of the year and we will continue to increase those numbers.

In addition to the many new technology features, our new site was designed to combine the two most important elements when booking travel: inspiration and navigation. Our new ad campaign *creative* was utilized in the imagery for brain consistency and the navigation bar along the side provides easy search functionality. There's also an interactive map, a comprehensive calendar events and regional destinations that speak to Long Island's geography. The regional breakouts are Suffolk County, Nassau County, North Shore, South Shore, North Fork, South Fork, Fire Island and Shelter Island. The way we like to talk about the Island is now how consumers can search the website, which I think is really important.

We also maintain a Suffolk specific website for the guidelines of the Suffolk specialty portion of our contract. While we currently utilize this site as the call to action for Suffolk's specific marketing initiatives and the traffic numbers are still impressive, you can see that they actually pale in

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comparison to the main website. So ideally my goal would be to merge those two sites for efficiencies.

We also launched an entirely new ad campaign that I believe really captures not only the beauty but the spirit of Long Island. The one word that consistently came up in my stakeholder meetings was history. Long Island has such a rich and proud history that we developed a series of ads utilizing lyrics from the National Anthem that not only conveys our role in shaping this country's great history, but also the feeling of freedom and stakes claim to the many iconic attractions that can only be found here.

This campaign truly reflects the feedback that we received from the community including yourselves. Legislator Trotta, you took me on a tour of the family friendly North Shore beaches that you'll see conveyed in our *O Say Can You See* ad. Legislator Hahn loves the outdoors and water activities and that's the focus of our Sunglasses ad. Legislator Lindsay talked about his passion for Fire Island, which is featured in the -- *By The Dawn's Early Light* ad as well as on the cover of our new visitors guide. And during a tour of Legislator Krupski's district, I had the privilege of learning about the generations of farming families like his on the East End; and you'll hear his words echoed in the *By The Twilights Last Gleaming* ad. And while I can't show every wonderful attraction area and attribute of Long Island in our marketing campaign, we absorbed the feedback from each of you as well as our grassroots community when we developed this campaign. The idea is to stir emotion and to connect the dots of our destinations most widely-known assets and to convert inspiration into action for perspective visitors.

So not only was this entire campaign conceptualized and written in-house, we also utilized photography from a Facebook photo contest; so the imagery was provided by Long Island locals. In fact, we'll go back to that one slide, **[Indicating]**, we called the dad of this little girl to tell him that his daughter was going to be featured in our ad campaign and to get permission. And he was so excited and said he was just trying to take a picture of the beach and his daughter ran in front of the camera. So this is really -- this really does capture what it's like to be on Long Island and we're proud to have the local participation in this campaign.

So, also for the record, this campaign was developed in January, just so you know, long before other major brands like Anheuser-Busch and Coke started to evoke the American spirit in their advertising. So I'm proud to say we were on the forefront of that trend. And the entire campaign is provided for you on your flash drive. This is just a sample. And I encourage you to go in and look and read each one because I'm pretty proud of the copy in them and I think we're lucky to live in such a beautiful and special place.

And the ads were printed in many regional versions of national publications including AAA, Endless Vacation, National Geographic Traveler and more. And, in addition, we're conducting a first-ever Facebook targeting campaign, which is currently underway. And it's got incredible responses. In fact, the new campaign just launched on June 20th. And you can see those results that are beyond successful. They're staggering and there's no other campaign in the history of this organization that has produced such a large response in such a short amount of time. So we're going to continue to explore the digital focus.

Also for the first time ever, we've commissioned research to determine our targeted Long Island visitor. This research is brand new. You're the first ones seeing it. And it's being presented to our board of directors at our meeting this afternoon, so we haven't yet had the chance to implement it yet, but I still wanted to share it with you today.

We commissioned Ruf Strategic, a nationally recognized research firm specializing in the consumer behavior patterns of tourists. They took the information that we had from 80,000 visitors' guide

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request that we received and they overlaid it with their database of 260 million households nationwide to determine the specific visitor with the highest propensity to travel to Long Island. This research is incredibly in depth and can be dissected in countless ways. But, as you can see at first glance on the map, our current focus of the northeast market is right on target.

This new research defines perspective visitors in two specific clusters. The one that tracks highest for Long Island is called suburban splendor, or C15, if you're a researcher. It's a brief snapshot of this cluster on the report, but as you can see, this new research provides us incredibly specific details about our customers such as their household income, whether they attended a theme park or played a round of golf in the past few months, what time of media they consume, if they purchased or rented a car, and what make and model, down to the last time they purchased a small kitchen appliance. The amount of information on your purchasing power is scary, but for us is wonderfully beneficial. And this specific cluster is three times more likely to visit Long Island than the national average. And now we know exactly where they are, what they read, what they want to do when they go on vacation and we can communicate directly to them with a message that resonates in their interest. This data is fluid and it changes based on what activities, interests, etcetera, are selected. And we can chart the data in multiple ways that shows the clusters that best fit each selective search. It's really exciting and we're looking forward to implementing it in everything that we do moving forward.

Another LICVB initiative capitalized on the popular TURN series airing on the AMC Network that is based on the Washington Spy Ring. We combined the trend of TV travel with historic sites along the North Shore spy trail to convert the show's viewers into potential travelers. Through a combined online television and social media campaign, we have received thousands of inquiries and even a recent article, I don't know if anyone -- if you saw it in the New York Times Sunday section promoting this weekend's Culper Spy Day event. It's not easy to get the New York Times to -- to cover an event like that.

So if you'll indulge me for 30 seconds, I'd like to show you the TURN commercial.

(*Commercial being played*)

I can't believe we weren't doing that for the first two seasons, to be honest. You know who was doing that? Virginia, where the show is filmed, not where all the events took place. So I'm glad that we can, again, reclaim those as our homestretch there to promote, so.

We also launched a new Long Island craft beverage trail to help guide visitors to the many craft beverage, winery and agricultural stops in Suffolk County. Craft brew and beverage trails are a very important national trend that Long Island should definitely be taking advantage of and reaping exposure from. However, we listened to the concerns about the promotion of alcohol to some of -- and some of the challenges that come with attracting that crowd to our local communities. It is a real concern that people wanted to make sure we approached delicately. So based on that, we developed a website collateral and produced a video that shows how our target visitors can experience a taste of Long Island responsibly. So one more time I'll show you one more video that we did.

(*Video being played*)

Is that adorable? Doesn't that make you want to spend a day on the East End? I want to have that day. I'll tell you what, I think it's adorable and that's -- that's how you can promote something that, you know, does have -- it's a national trend, you want to capitalize on it, but we want to do it in a way that really reflects Long Island's character and culture.

So this year's Winterfest was another success for the East End businesses during the offseason with

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strong marketing support from the LICVB. It really is an artery for a lot of the winter season businesses on the East End and it had over 90 events. It's in the ninth year and we're happy to show Long Islanders what to do in their own backyard and to support that.

We pitch and assist local, national and international media on a daily basis. And articles resulting from our efforts so far this year have generated more than 25 million impressions, continue to grow that number. And we work in constant partnership with the team from Suffolk County Economic Development to ensure that our programs support and align with the County initiatives and goals. Everything we do, all the videos that you've seen, the *creative*, we worked very closely with the team there, the film commission, the arts and culture, the agriculture. We want to make sure what we're doing makes sense for the County moving forward and the long-term vision.

And, in addition to that, thanks to the cooperative marketing legislation that was spearheaded by this Committee, we have been able to provide opportunities and exposure to our industry partners through trade shows, sales missions and media events and we're going to continue to grow those cooperative programs as well.

We hosted our first-ever PR event targeting the New York media in Manhattan. That's another thing I can't believe we've never done before, but it was a rave success. The event was held at a digitally-driven venue with partners who provided Long Island food, wine, beer and an overall feel of the destination. Both County Executives attended as well as more than 70 top travel media. So on your flash drive, I provided you a GoPro time-lapsed video of the event so you can kind of feel like you were there and you can see the flow and get a good idea of how the event took place.

In addition, every attendee received a Long Island summer soundtrack Spotify playlist to keep Long Island top of mind with some music that evokes the character of our destination. And I provided that to you for your listening pleasure as well.

Social media is an integral part of our communication strategy and we continue to see growth over all mediums. Through social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest we promote Long Island attractions and events.

We also support industry partners, such as the new Elite Airlines flight out of Long Island Airport. And we take advantage of social trends. You'll see our tweet on the Pokémon GO craze; of course, we jumped on that.

So we have vastly increased our communications through weekly newsletters and industry and partner events and community speaking engagements. I'm always happy to provide information on our efforts. And I've spoken at Stony Brook, Sayville, Mattituck, North Fork and several other chamber and rotary events. One of my favorite ones is the Sayville Chamber -- or Rotary at the top. I unveiled our new ad campaign and they loved it so much they asked me to take a group photo of all of them holding it. And that -- we work really hard in our office all year long. And it's really wonderful to get the positive reactions from the local community. So if there's any time where you feel that it would be beneficial for us to share information, please feel free to give me a call, I'm happy to do so.

So we conduct meetings and events all year round in addition that generate sales leads and significant economic impact: Meetings, sports and international arenas. In your report I provided several slides of the details of these efforts to date, the shows that we've attended and the results to date so far of those shows as far as leads and economic impact. They're fairly self-explanatory, so I'm not going to go into them. You can look at them at your leisure. I'll just let you review them individually.

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We produce collateral including annual visitors' guides and calendar events in both print and online versions that serve as resources and inspirational material. And we also participated in both the New York Times and Connecticut Consumer Travel Shows for the first time in several years this year. They were both very successful so we're going to continue to do that as well.

And this is the team that makes it all happen. I get to be the lucky one to present the good work to you, but we have a really wonderful team at the LICVB that is behind the scenes doing all of this. And one of -- we made -- just since -- in the last eight months we've made several internal and external changes to our team and our vendors. And the newest member of our team, just filled a newly-created director of brand development position this week. We're excited to have Jamie Claudio from the famed Claudio family from the East End as our new Director of Brand Development. And who better to protect and develop and promote Long Island brand than someone from the Claudio family? So we're happy to have her. But we also have our new partner relations manager in the audience, as well as our new Director of Administration here; and a couple of my board members. We have a wonderful board of directors that supports us all year round and really helps to provide vision.

So that's my report. I look forward to seeing you again in November. This is by no means all encompassing. And we still have a lot of work to do and a lot of new initiatives, which I'll share with you then. I'm happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Well, thank you, Miss Jarnagin, for coming in and making that presentation. I also appreciate the fact that you gave us flash drives and kept it paperless as we try to promote as much as possible. My questions would be on the -- if you back up a bunch of slides to the market research, so the areas in which you're focusing from Ruf Strategic Solutions, that Connex Cluster Propensity Analyzer, so that tells you who is receiving the messages or who is actually traveling here? Could you kind of just explain that a little bit.

MS. JARNAGIN:

So that -- this is brand new information. It tells you who has the highest propensity to inquire and to visit Long Island.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay.

MS. JARNAGIN:

So it helps us in our future targeting. Right now, that cluster that has the highest propensity, as you can see, is in the northeast region. And there's different ways of saying -- it could be because that's what we've been targeting for so many years, is the 200 to 300 mile radius. So if we're targeting them, maybe that's why that's our audience. But it also gives us the type of customer that we want to reach, the household income, what they like to do as far as activities. And then -- now we can reach them throughout the country in different areas if we so choose.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

So this is telling us who's coming here now.

MS. JARNAGIN:

This is telling us who -- no, this is telling us who has the highest propensity to visit Long Island. So who we should be targeting --

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay.

MS. JARNAGIN:

-- based on activities.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Just looking at this map it's such a random outlay where obviously a lot of it's in the northeast, but then, like midwest, is splattered, so be curious to see why, you know --

MS. JARNAGIN:

It's interesting. It just happens to be that that's that type of customer that would visit Long Island so that they fill in -- they fall into that cluster where they -- they're educated and they're affluent and they like to golf and they have family activities. And it's their purchasing power and consumer-spending habits. However -- so we'll probably still primarily focus on the northeast based on this because you can see that's -- when we have such a small budget, we have to be very focused.

But what this is going to help us do is -- an example is, *I Love New York*. The State has designated three other states: Chicago, Texas and California as the key drivers for New York State. And they're going to be putting advertising dollars into those markets. So if we wanted to go in after *I Love New York* and utilize their overlaying message in New York and then say Long Island, what this information will do is I can look at where our exact cluster lies in those specific states and follow along and really talk to the Long Island customer within those states. There's really endless amounts of ways that this research can be used. If we wanted to promote a golf event, we can see who golfs; if we want to promote youth sports, we can see who's attended a youth soccer activity in the last year. It really -- we can dissect and drill down our information to be incredibly specific.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Yeah, that's great because you're obviously laser-focused on your marketing efforts. My last question and I'll open it up to the rest of the members of the Committee is, from your pie chart on the travel spending in 2015, obviously New York City has got the lion's share of the pie. Have you considered or looked at trying to squeeze off some of their travelers and try to draw them since we're so close graphically?

MS. JARNAGIN:

We actually have. And the other number I'll throw out is New York City also has a \$37 million budget and ours is three. So, of course, we try to reach out to New York City as much as possible. And, in fact, we're submitting an REDC grant proposal for the first time ever in partnership with New York City, where we're going to target two international markets. And they've agreed to co-brand New York City and Long Island as one destination, and Australia and Canada. So we're going to be looking to do that next year if we do, in fact, get grant dollars to do so.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Wow, that's pretty impressive that you've gotten them to be willing to partner and cooperate with us, is they don't see us as a threat. So congratulations on that effort.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

I'll open it up to any other members of the Committee if they have any questions. Legislator Stern.

LEG. STERN:

Thank you. Welcome.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Thank you.

LEG. STERN:

Good to see you and welcome to your team. I had a few questions. And I was trying to follow the presentation, which comes to us in a slightly different format than we're used to in years past where it was, I guess, because of format and how often it was given, it was easy to follow the numbers, so bear with me just a few moments because I'm thinking that some of the numbers there reflect 2015 and maybe some of them reflect 2016, so I'm trying to get a feel for trends here.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Correct.

LEG. STERN:

We -- we were told a couple of years ago that after 2013 and heading into 2014 that it was going to be a new day for tourism on Long Island because we were seeing the end of the Sandy effect; and that we would be getting back to reality somewhat in terms of the numbers and the trends that we might be looking at going forward. So the -- going to -- I'm not sure what page number you had it down as, but my first question is regarding occupancy rates, because we had experienced relatively high occupancy rates because of the Sandy impact. It had then gone down and so I'm wondering if you see trend lines, and, again, I'm not sure where you left off there, if that was a 2015 or a 2016 number, I can't see it from here.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Happy to answer that. This is 2015 report. It's brand new. We just got it from the State. It's done by the State of New York as far as occupancy. But it is about 147. It's -- we get it from the STAR report every month and so it tracks monthly, but it's, I think, 147 overall, which is national, one of the national highest, it's one of the top occupancy and average daily rate trackings.

LEG. STERN:

Okay. So the one on the left is the room rate. I wanted to ask about that in a moment. But first going to the -- the graph on the right, occupancy rates, those numbers are for the first half of 2016; Right?

MS. JARNAGIN:

That number -- yeah, those are first 2016, you can -- January, February, March, April, May, we show you every single month how they're tracking.

LEG. STERN:

Okay. And so without any ill luck what would -- the average?

MS. JARNAGIN:

Oh, God, you're going to ask me to do math. Um.

LEG. STERN:

I mean, I go right smack in the middle and say it's somewhere around 70-ish, right, high 60's, 70 percent.

MS. JARNAGIN:

At the end of last year it averages out to about 70 --

LEG. STERN:

Yeah.

MS. JARNAGIN:

-- which is well above the national average for occupancy, just so you know. But, obviously we peak in the summer. We have -- we're a very seasonal destination so you'll see them go up and down. But overall year-round is still very strong occupancy numbers. I want to say it's probably comparable, or higher than what we even see in Scottsdale back when I was there during our peak and low season. So I think my colleagues in Arizona would be very jealous to see these numbers.

LEG. STERN:

Very good. The -- would you know what the RevPAR numbers are at this point?

MS. JARNAGIN:

I do have those. I didn't report them because that's a very sophisticated question. It's hard to explain what RevPAR is. To most people revenue per available room. I have them in my report that I get them every single month. I'd be happy to follow-up with you and provide those to you.

LEG. STERN:

I appreciate that. I'm sure other members of the Committee would like to see them.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Sure, I can send them to the whole Committee. But RevPAR is -- it's a great question. It's the way that the industry measures its success nationwide basically and it's a combination of occupancy and average daily rate to produce revenue per available room. And I'll follow up with you on that information.

LEG. STERN:

I appreciate that.

Going to the -- the website, you had mentioned that you launched your new website in April. Congratulations, it looks good. The numbers that are reflected there I was wondering if those are numbers on the new website alone or if those are year-to-date numbers that combined the new website with the older one?

MS. JARNAGIN:

So we soft-launched the website in January. There was some transition during this site and then we actually -- when you launch a website, we're working out wrinkles, making sure everything's functional. This is from January to today, those numbers. So it combines the transition of the old website as well as the soft launch of the site. But it is -- these Suffolk County -- these numbers from our organization are January through June.

LEG. STERN:

And there were a couple of different numbers from a couple of different sources. And I certainly see the difference between, you know, views and unique visitors, etcetera. How would you say the numbers then compare to last year's?

MS. JARNAGIN:

I think that they're comparable if not flat, but we did -- in the beginning of the year we did most of our print advertising while we were soft launching our website. We just launched our Facebook campaign, which starts -- started June 20th. And all of the new digital marketing that we're doing from this point moving forward drives to the website for the booking engine.

LEG. STERN:

Yes.

MS. JARNAGIN:

So when I report back to you in November I can give you -- I think, those numbers will be significantly higher. In fact, as you'll see from the Facebook ads we've got 20,000 people just in the last couple of weeks that have gone through and clicked on that and we're really driving to the website.

And the other new number you're going to see us present in November based on this new website is the booking engine number. We've never had that before so we'll be able to bring to you how many people are actually booking hotel rooms based on the click-throughs from the website. It's just so new that I didn't present that yet, but that's something we'll present in November and will continue to grow over the years as well.

LEG. STERN:

All right. That was my very next question so I'll look forward to seeing those numbers.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Sure.

LEG. STERN:

The international effort, I remember we had had -- and I have a copy of it here, there was a list of those international travelers that -- that book and spend time in New York City. And then we were told that there was a focused effort primarily in the UK and in Germany for our Long Island or Suffolk County -- our Long Island/Suffolk County effort. My question to you is, is that still the case? Are we making -- are you making those efforts in the UK and Germany specifically? And then I have a follow-up question on that.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Thank you. Yes, that's still correct. New York City gets about 54 million visitors a year and we get about nine million visitors a year. And the international traveler -- the reason why, as Legislator Lindsay pointed out, the reason why New York City agreed to partner with us on our new international campaign is because the international -- the average international itinerary is 14 days. So they come to the U.S. for 14 days, they're going to do New York City and something else during that itinerary. We were able to convince them if they come to Long Island, they're basically, thanks to our geography, they have to go back through New York City at some point to leave. So they're still probably going to get an extra night, an extra dinner.

Whereas if that visitor goes to Pennsylvania or Washington D.C., the option is you probably lose them. So that's why we were able to convince them to partner with us. And we do combine our efforts with New York City in the U.K. market. They have an annual trade show, World Travel Market. We are the only non-New York City entity in their booth. We promote Long Island with them. We look to work very closely. We're also in the German market as part of the *I love New York* statewide effort. Those are the two primary European destinations.

But I would like to see us with our new partnership with New York City explore into some, what I consider, low-hanging fruit; Canada, being one of them. Upstate New York reaps tremendous benefits from Canada and we have zero currently exposure in that market. And Australia is another -- if you look at our website, what we learned is it's one of our top five visitors to our website as far as international markets. And we are not communicating with them in any way. So we look to grow the international focus in those areas.

And when I just recently returned from the International Pow Wow trade show that I attended to try and get a grasp on what we're doing in an international level, I met with Brand USA, which is the global marketing arm for the United States. And we're going to establish content on the Brand USA

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site as well. They spend \$10 million a year promoting United States. And we currently have no content on the New York site. We're one of the only people that haven't purchased into that program yet so we're going to rectify that immediately. Does that answer your question?

LEG. STERN:

So I -- I see the top international markets that are listed there. Those are top international markets that are -- those countries represent what? That's what I was not able to make out.

MS. JARNAGIN:

If you see that this -- those are the ones that are the top visitors to our website.

LEG. STERN:

Those are the top visitors to the website.

MS. JARNAGIN:

That's correct.

LEG. STERN:

Got it, okay.

MS. JARNAGIN:

We don't have data. We haven't done a research study so far for Long Island to track which international markets are coming to us. That's pretty extensive. You can do it through credit cards, you can do it through commercial service, but we are tracking it currently with visitation to our website.

LEG. STERN:

Okay. I got it. Well that explains a lot because then when you take a look at the -- the top places that people come from internationally for New York City travel, it's the U.K., Canada, Brazil, France and China. Germany is number seven on that list. So my question would be why are there specific marketing efforts made towards the German marketplace? But if you're saying based on what you're seeing in terms of website traffic that number two on the -- I'm assuming that there's an order.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Right. Another thing to think of when you're marketing to international markets and the reason why we chose Canada and Australia and we do this, New York City has in-market offices, people year-round in 17 different countries because of their budget. So they're able to communicate with them in every way possible year-round consistently.

We have a very small budget so when we have to choose international markets to market to Brazil and China requires collateral in those languages. It requires a lot of additional laborious work to try and reach out to them because of cultural nuances. So when we're -- when we're able to track international visitors to Long Island, the best way to do so is to pick the markets that have the highest propensity to come here as well as that we can afford to market to in their destination, we can provide material that they can utilize. And when they come here, they have the kind of experience that they're looking for.

LEG. STERN:

Very good. I know that there is an effort -- you mentioned an effort in making better utilization of the Islip MacArthur Airport. Islip MacArthur Airport, of course, has its challenges. So I was wondering what you see from a tourism standpoint going forward and the relationship that can and perhaps should be between the two but given that there are certainly challenges with the Islip

airport.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Absolutely. We should be working hand-in-hand with the airport to make sure it's a critical artery for our community and our destination and our industry. So we want to support them and we want to make sure that what we're doing through, not only the economic development strategy that we're doing with the County, but also the airport, we have a grant that we're looking to spend with them through the Kraft Beverage grant that we'll be spending it the rest of the year. In fact, we just got information on -- on different airport advertising, not only creating in a sense of arrival when people come to, what we're calling the Long Island MacArthur airport, no longer Islip, so that people know that there's an airport in Long Island, but also making sure that the markets that we're going into based on that consumer data I provided, are markets where people will travel into the airport whether, you know, looking at feeder markets: Baltimore, Pennsylvania.

Making sure that when we're working with the airport, for example, where are they looking to get more flights to come in. Are they working with airlines to secure flights in Boston. And, if so, we can go in to support them with marketing in Boston and generate the excitement that is needed in the marketplace to get people to fill those planes. There's a lot of opportunity that we have to work with the airport. And they have a new commissioner so once she gets settled a little bit, we definitely should be working hand-in-hand with them.

LEG. STERN:

I was interested in some of the numbers in your presentation regarding the -- the sales generation. And a lot of the work that you and your team are doing and going to meetings and conventions, etcetera. I have some notes on the numbers. I'm not going to ask specifically about the numbers, but let me just make a comment that you can certainly see the presence of the organization. And a lot of these meetings that business people go to, it's great to see there's certainly a growing buzz with the organization and Long Island tourism in general. Looking forward to exciting things in the future. Thank you for being here.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Any other questions? Legislator Trotta.

LEG. TROTTA:

What does Long Island need?

MS. JARNAGIN:

Well, one of the things -- the other RADC grants I'm applying for is a Capital Tourism Feasibility Study for capital projects. So I have recently met, as you know, we talked about a destination resort potentially, whether it goes Kings Park or Dowling College, it's fine, as long as it's something that's a good viable destination. I met with the civics organization of King's Park. I've met with State and Legislators and government office officials. I would love to see more meeting space. If you look at all the trends I send out in my business -- in my Friday newsletter, the trends are business travel. Business travel is increasing and the business traveler is the one that's here Monday through Friday, not just the weekend traveler. And they're the ones that come with expense accounts. And when they book meetings, they pay \$75 for a vat of coffee and \$14 for a muffin and they don't blink an eye. And it's really the consistent traveler. It's the affluent educated traveler that I think fits the Long Island cluster that we talked about.

So I'd love to see a study done for all of Long Island to determine what the capital projects are

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needed, whether it's a destination resort with meeting space, a convention center, a theme park. I don't know what it is, but I look forward to getting someone that does this for a living on a national level to look at our entire destination, the trends in the industry and our competitors and to tell us what is needed and the best places those facilities could be built.

LEG. TROTТА:

And you mentioned the airport, changing it to Long Island. I've always said that. How do you do that? Just go to each airline and tell them to change the Islip name? Or --

MS. JARNAGIN:

It's not even the Islip name. It's, first of all, internally branding it as the Long Island Airport, just making sure -- when I speak to Congressman Zeldin, every time he corrects himself now, he's says, I'm sorry, the Long Island Airport. It's getting us to call it the Long Island Airport and brand it the Long Island Airport and getting the local community to embrace that. Supervisor Angie Carpenter --

LEG. TROTТА:

Even the Southwest window still says Islip.

MS. JARNAGIN:

It says -- ISP is not the problem. It's the reader boards. And I look forward to working with the Commissioner. There is a way to do that. The airlines can control changing the reader boards and what it says on the reader boards when you contact them. But --

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Can they also change the code though? Because the code is --

MS. JARNAGIN:

The code would go -- that's a federal issue.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

-- LIA.

MS. JARNAGIN:

The code is ISP.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

I know, if they change it to LIA it would --

MS. JARNAGIN:

Most of the -- LIA is taken, I think. Most of the -- Long Island, we've gone through with the former commissioners several of the codes, the majority of them are taken. We have to figure out what code we wanted. But, again, most travelers don't look at the code. When you look at it --

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

They do. LIS, MIA.

MS. JARNAGIN:

JFK.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

JFK.

MS. JARNAGIN:

So, a lot of them -- I mean, if you look at a lot of airports, the code does not match the brand of the airport, though. I mean, that's not a do or die thing. First things first, I think, because that's a federal issue that would take some time. Primarily just the next steps, I think, would be to make sure we're calling it and branding it through all of the collateral and all of the materials, Long Island MacArthur Airport. And there's an opportunity to do that with a new direction and a new commissioner and then making sure that the airlines put Long Island on their reader board and in their information so people know where they're actually flying to.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Is there any coordination between your office and the airport? Because I know they do national advertising as well.

MS. JARNAGIN:

There -- the former commissioner was on our board of directors and so we're waiting until the new commissioner gets settled a little bit to determine if she would like to be on our board or put the co-deputy, the deputy on our board. We'll see, but I would like that to happen very much.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay. They could definitely use some advice because I've seen their national advertising, where they take a full page ad in a magazine and half the page is dedicated to who the supervisor is and who all the board members are, which I could imagine no traveler really cares; the other half is dedicated to what -- why you'd want to come here, which I would say, use the whole page to why you want to come here.

MS. JARNAGIN:

We would be happy to work closely with them, but we do work closely with the -- when the Elite Airlines came, we worked very closely in tandem with them and we did co-marketing with Elite Airlines and we would continue to do so with any new business development opportunities that come in. We want to make sure that we're supporting those flights because whether or not -- even though that flight is really more for Long Islanders to go to the other markets, we still need these flights to be successful so the other airlines can see success at the airport and can justify coming here.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Absolutely. Legislator Stern.

LEG. STERN:

Just quickly, the -- the commercials look great.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Thank you.

LEG. STERN:

My question about the commercials is, was one a commercial that was running on TV and the other one was -- was a web-based commercial?

MS. JARNAGIN:

Exactly, right.

LEG. STERN:

Yeah.

MS. JARNAGIN:

The TURN commercial ran during the TURN series to capture that audience and was an actual commercial on cable. And the --- the Long Island beverage -- because that's a minute and 30 seconds, no one's gonna run a -- that's just basically a video that we have on our YouTube channel. It's a web-based. We promote it through digital, but it's basically just a video to get people excited and to show the visuals of our destination.

LEG. STERN:

That's great. You had put up a picture or two with local organizations and chambers. And then you gave a list of some of the chambers that you have already met with. I would look forward to -- whether it's facilitating or attending many more of those kinds of meetings, the key to the backbone of our local economy, of course, our local business and we have so many outstanding chambers that do such a great job for our local businesses, so I would hope that there'd be many more meetings like that with our local chambers. And you're doing such wonderful things, it would be great for them to know about some of the things that you're doing and I'm sure there's great opportunity for collaboration there going forward.

MS. JARNAGIN:

I totally agree, thank you. And I welcome any invitations to do so.

LEG. STERN:

Yeah. I always look -- by the way, the Islip Airport, the big example for me always is New Orleans. I mean, the New Orleans Airport and New Orleans is one of the best tourist towns in -- in the world. And the call letters there are MSY and almost nobody knows why. But --

MS. JARNAGIN:

Legislator Stern, you did just call it Islip airport.

LEG. STERN:

I did, I did. You know, I grew up in the shadows of MacArthur Airport so to me it'll always be MacArthur Airport, Islip MacArthur Airport, so I -- start with me. I will have to -- to start to do my very best to call it Long Island Airport. But, yeah, the call signs, of course, you know, the perfect example is the New Orleans Airport and MSY. What does MSY mean? But it is actually the Moisant Stock Yards. I happen to know the answer, yeah, that's a good one, it's a good trivia question. But irrelevant for -- for knowing what the name, and, you know, and what the name should be to us as part of our local identity and what it means for us to portray that local identity to -- to parts throughout the country and around the world.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay. Well, thank you very much for your presentation. It's extremely informative and appreciate all your efforts. If we could support you in any way, please let us know. I know we've had some conversations back and forth and just trying to give you some direction in terms of where we see some of the opportunity. So we welcome that continued communication. So thank you to you and your team.

MS. JARNAGIN:

Thank you so much. I want to thank each and every one of you really professionally and personally, you've all been incredibly welcoming and I'm very grateful to be a member of the Long Island community, so thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay. That is the last piece of business on our agenda so we are adjourned.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 3:03 PM
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