BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LAKE COUNTY, OREGON

AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO THE IMPOSITION OF A MOTEL ROOM TAX

ORDINANCE

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LAKE COUNTY, OREGON,
ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. TITLE - This Ordinance shall be known as the Lake County Motel Tax Ordinance.

Section 2. DEFINITIONS - Except where the context otherwise requires the definitions given in this section govern the construction of this Ordinance.

(1) "Accrual Accounting" means the operator enters the rent due from a transient on his records when the rent is earned whether or not it is paid.

(2) "Board" means the Lake County Board of Commissioners.

(3) "Cash Accounting" means the operator does not enter the rent due from a transient on his records until rent is paid.

(4) "County" means Lake County.

(5) "Motel" means any structure or any portion of any structure which is occupied or intended or designed for transient occupancy for less than thirty (30) days for dwelling, lodging, or sleeping purposes, and includes any hotel, inn, tourist home, condominium, motel, public or private dormitory, or similar structure or portions thereof so occupied.
“Occupancy” means the use or possession or the right to the use or possession for lodging or sleeping purposes of any room or rooms in a motel.

“Operator” means the person who is proprietor of the motel in any capacity. Where the operator performs his functions through a managing agent of any type or character other than an employee, the managing agent shall also be deemed an operator for the purposes of this Ordinance, and shall have the same duties and liabilities as his principal. Compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance by either the principal or the managing agent shall be considered to be compliance by both.

“Person” means any individual, firm, partnership, joint venture, association, social club, fraternal organization, fraternity, sorority, public or private dormitory, joint stock company, corporation, estate, trust, business trust, receiver, trustee, syndicate, or any other group or combination acting as a unit.

“Rent” means the consideration charged, whether or not received by the operator, for the occupancy of space in a motel valued in money, goods, labor, credits, property, or other consideration valued in money, without any deduction; but does not include the sale of any goods, services or commodities other than the furnishing of room accommodations.

“Rent Package Plan” means the consideration charged for both food and rent where a single rate is made for the total of both. The amount applicable to rent for determination of transient room tax under this Ordinance shall be the same charge made for rent when consideration is not a part of a package plan.
(11) "Tax Administrator" means the Lake County Treasurer.

(12) "Tax" means either the tax payable by the transient or the aggregate amount of taxes due from an operator during the period for which he is required to report his collections.

(13) "Transient" means any individual who exercises occupancy or is entitled to occupancy in a motel for a period of less than thirty (30) consecutive calendar days counting portions of calendar days as full days. The day a transient checks out of the motel shall not be included in determining the thirty-day period if the transient is not charged rent for that day by the operator. Any such individual so occupying space in a motel shall be deemed to be a transient until the period of twenty-nine (29) days has expired unless there is an agreement in writing between the operator and the occupant providing for a longer period of occupancy.

Section 3. TAX IMPOSED. For the privilege of occupancy in any motel, on and after the effective date of this Ordinance, each transient shall pay a tax in the amount of six percent (6%) of the rent charged by the operator. The tax constitutes a debt owed by the transient to the County which is extinguished only by payment to the operator. The transient shall pay the tax to the operator of the motel at the time the rent is paid. The operator shall enter the tax on his records when rent is collected if the operator keeps his records on the cash accounting basis, and when earned if the operator keeps his records on the accrual accounting basis. If rent is paid in installments, a proportionate share of the tax shall be paid by the transient to the operator with each installment.
Section 4. LIMITATION OF TAX IMPOSED. The tax imposed by this Ordinance shall apply to all motels located within Lake County both inside and outside of all incorporated cities within said County.

Section 5. COLLECTION OF TAX BY OPERATOR: RULES FOR COLLECTION.

(1) Every operator renting rooms in this County, the occupancy of which is not exempted under the terms of this Ordinance, shall collect a tax from the occupant. The tax collected or accrued by the operator constitutes a debt owed by the operator to the County.

(2) In all cases of credit or deferred payment of rent, the payment of tax to the operator may be deferred until the rent is paid; and the operator shall not be liable for the tax until credits are paid or deferred payments are made.

Section 6. OPERATOR'S DUTIES. Each operator shall collect the tax imposed by this Ordinance at the same time as the rent is collected from every transient. The amount of tax shall be separately stated upon the operators records and any receipt rendered by the operator. No operator of a motel shall advertise that the tax or any part of the tax will be assumed or absorbed by the operator, or that it will not be added to the rent or that when added, any part will be refunded, except in the manner provided by this Ordinance.

Section 7. EXEMPTIONS. No tax imposed under this Ordinance shall be imposed upon:

(1) Any occupant for more than twenty-nine (29) successive calendar days; (a person who pays for lodging on a monthly basis, irrespective of the number of days in such month, shall not be deemed a transient).

Page -4- Motel Room Tax Ordinance
(2) Any occupant whose rent is of a value less than $6.00 per day;

(3) Any person who rents a private home, boarding house, vacation cabin, or like facility from any owner who personally rents such facilities incidentally to his own use thereof;

(4) Any occupant whose rent is paid for hospital room or to a medical clinic, convalescent home or home for aged people and intermediate and skilled nursing home facilities.

Section 8. REGISTRATION OF OPERATOR: FORM AND CONTENTS:

EDUCATION: CERTIFICATION OF AUTHORITY. Every person engaging or about to engage in business as an operator of a motel in the County shall register with the Tax Administrator on a form provided by him. Operators engaged in business at the time of the Ordinance is adopted must register not later than thirty (30) calendar days after ratification of this Ordinance by the voters. Operators starting business after this Ordinance is adopted must register within fifteen (15) calendar days after commencing business. The privilege of registration after the date of imposition of such tax shall not relieve any person from the obligation of payment or collection of tax regardless of registration. Registration shall set forth the name under which an operator transacts or intends to transact business, the location of his place or places of business and such other information to facilitate the collection of the tax as the Tax Administrator may require. The registration shall be signed by the operator. The Tax Administrator shall within ten (10) days after registration issue without charge to the operator a Certificate of Authority to the registrant to collect the tax from the occupant of the motel together with a duplicate thereof for each additional place of business for each registrant.
Certificates shall be nonassignable and nontransferable and shall be surrendered immediately to the Tax Administrator upon the cessation of business at the location named or upon its sale or transfer. Each certificate and duplicate shall state the place of business to which it is applicable and shall be prominently displayed therein so as to be seen and come to the notice readily of all occupants and persons seeking occupancy.

Said certificate shall, among other things, state the following:

(1) The name of the operator;

(2) The address of the motel;

(3) The date upon which the certificate was issued;

(4) "This Transient Occupancy Registration Certificate signifies that the person named on the face hereof has fulfilled the requirements of the Motel Tax Ordinance of the County of Lake by registration with the Tax Administrator for the purpose of collecting from transients the room tax imposed by said County and remitting said tax to the Tax Administrator."

Section 9. DUE DATE: RETURNS AND PAYMENTS.

(1) The tax imposed by this Ordinance shall be paid by the transient to the operator at the time that rent is paid. All amounts of such taxes collected by any operator are due and payable to the Tax Administrator quarterly beginning April 1, 1985 for the preceding quarter and are delinquent on the last day of the month in which they are due.

(2) At the time the taxes collected by the operator are due a return for the preceding quarters tax collections shall be filed with the Tax Administrator.
The return shall be filed in such form as the Tax Administrator may prescribe by every operator liable for payment of tax.

(3) Returns shall show the amount of tax collected or otherwise due for the related period. The Tax Administrator may require returns to show the total rentals upon which tax was collected or otherwise due, gross receipts of operator for such period, and an explanation in detail of any discrepancy between such amounts, and the amount of rents exempt, if any.

(4) The person required to file the return shall deliver the return together with the remittance of the amount of the tax due to the Tax Administrator at his office either by personal delivery or by mail. If the return is mailed, the postmark shall be considered the date of delivery for determining delinquencies.

(5) For good cause, the Tax Administrator may extend, but not to exceed one month the time for making any return or payment of tax. No further extension shall be granted, except by the Board. Any operator to whom an extension is granted shall pay interest at the rate of one percent (1%) per month on the amount of tax due without proration for a fraction of a month. If a return is not filed and the tax and interest due is not paid by the end of the extension granted, then the interest shall become a part of the tax for computation of penalties described elsewhere in this Ordinance.

(6) If the operator has complied with the terms of this Ordinance and particularly the provisions of this section relating to prompt payment of taxes due and payable on to the Tax Administrator, he shall be permitted to deduct as a
personal collection expense five percent (5%) of the amount of the taxes collected.

Section 10. PENALTIES AND INTEREST.

(1) **Delinquency.** Any operator who has not been granted an extension of time for remittance of tax due and who fails to remit any tax imposed by this Ordinance prior to delinquency shall pay in addition to interest a penalty of one percent (1%) per month of the amount of the tax due in addition to the amount of the tax.

(2) **Fraud.** If the Tax Administrator determines that the non-payment of any remittance due under this Ordinance is due to fraud or intent to evade the provisions thereof, a penalty of twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount of the tax shall be added thereto in addition to the penalties stated in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of this section.

(3) **Interest.** In addition to the penalties imposed above, any operator who fails to remit any tax imposed by this Ordinance shall pay interest at the rate of one percent (1%) per month or fraction thereof without proration for portions of a month on the amount of the tax due, exclusive of penalties, for the date on which the remittance first became delinquent until paid.

(4) **Penalties Merged with Tax.** Every penalty imposed and such interest as accrues under the provisions of this Ordinance shall be merged with and become a part of the tax herein required to be paid.

(5) **Petition for Waiver.** Any operator who fails to remit the tax herein levied
within the time herein stated shall pay the penalties herein stated provided, however, the operator may petition the Board for waiver and refund of the penalty or any portion thereof, and the Board may, if a good and sufficient reason is shown, waive and direct a refund of the penalty or any portion thereof.

Section 11. DEFICIENCY DETERMINATIONS: FRAUD, EVASION, OPERATOR DELAY.

(1) Deficiency Determination. If the Tax Administrator determines that the returns are incorrect, he may compute and determine the amount required to be paid upon the basis of the facts contained in the return or returns or upon the basis of any information within his possession. One or more deficiency determinations may be made of the amount due for one or more than one period, and the amount so determined shall be due and payable immediately upon service of notice as herein provided after which the amount determined is delinquent. Penalties on deficiencies shall be applied as set forth in Section 10 above.

(1) In making a determination, the Tax Administrator may offset overpayments, if any, which may have been previously made for a period or periods against any underpayment for a subsequent period or periods or against penalties and interest on the under payments. The interest on under payments shall be computed in the manner set forth in Section 10 above.

(2) The Tax Administrator shall give to the operator or occupant a written
notice of his determination. The notice may be served personally or by certified mail. In the case of service by mail of any notice required by this Ordinance, the service is complete upon receipt by the operator or his agent or employee, or if refused, the date of its refusal as shown by the United States Postal Department return receipt.

(3) Except in the case of fraud, intent to evade this Ordinance or authorized rules and regulations, every deficiency determination shall be made and notice thereof mailed within three years after the last day of the month following the close of the monthly period for which the amount is proposed to be determined or within three years after the return is filed, whichever period expires the later.

(4) Any determination shall become due and payable immediately upon receipt of notice and shall become final within ten (10) days after the Tax Administrator has given notice thereof; provided, however, the operator may petition redemption and refund if the petition is filed before the determination becomes final as herein provided.

(2) Fraud, Refusal to Collect, Evasion. If any operator shall fail or refuse to collect said tax or to make within the time provided in this Ordinance any report and remittance of said tax or any portion thereof required by this Ordinance, or makes a fraudulent return or otherwise willfully attempts to evade this Ordinance, the Tax Administrator shall proceed in such manner as he may deem best to obtain facts and information on which to base an estimate of the tax due.
As soon as the Tax Administrator had determined the tax due that is imposed by this Ordinance from any operator who has failed or refused to collect the same and to report and remit said tax, he shall proceed to determine and assess against such operator the tax, interest, and penalties provided for by this Ordinance. In case such determination is made, the Tax Administrator shall give a notice in the manner aforesaid of the amount so assessed. Such determination and notice shall be made and mailed within three years after discovery by the Tax Administrator of any fraud, intent to evade or failure or refusal to collect said tax or failure to file return. Any determination shall become due and payable immediately upon receipt of notice and shall become final within ten days after the Tax Administrator has given notice thereof; provided, however, the operator may petition redemption and refund if the petition is filed before the determination becomes final as herein provided.

Section 12. REDETERMINATIONS.

(1) Any person against whom a determination is made under Section 11 or any person directly interested may petition for a redetermination and redemption and refund within the time required in Section 11 hereof. If a petition for redetermination and refund is not filed within the allowable period, the Tax Administrator shall reconsider the determination; and if the person has so requested in his petition, shall grant the person an oral hearing and shall give him ten days notice of the time and place of the hearing. The Tax Administrator may continue the hearing from time to time as may be necessary.
(3) The Tax Administrator may decrease or increase the amount of the determination as a result of the hearing; and if an increase is determined, such increase shall be payable immediately after the hearing.

(4) The order or decision of the Tax Administrator upon a petition for redetermination of redemption and refund becomes final ten (10) days after service upon the petitioner of notice thereof unless appeal of such order or a decision is filed with the Board within ten (10) days after service of such notice.

(5) No petition for redetermination of redemption and refund or appeal therefrom shall be effective for any purpose unless the operator has first complied with the payment provisions thereof.

Section 13. LIEN. The tax imposed by this Ordinance together with the interest and penalties herein provided and the filing fees paid to the Clerk of Lake County, Oregon, and advertising costs which may be incurred when same becomes delinquent as set forth in this Ordinance shall be and until paid remain a lien from the date of its recording with the Clerk of Lake County, Oregon, and superior to all subsequent recorded liens on all tangible personal property used in the motel of an operator and may be foreclosed on and sold as may be necessary to discharge said lien if the lien has been recorded. Notice of lien may be issued by the Tax Administrator or his deputy whenever the operator is in default in the payment of said tax, interest, and penalty and shall be recorded and a copy sent by certified mail to the delinquent operator.

The personal property subject to such lien seized by any deputy or employee of the Tax Administrator may be sold by the department seizing the same at public auction after twenty
(20) days notice given by two publications of a notice to such effect in a newspaper of general circulation within the County. The notices required hereunder shall be published not less than seven days apart.

Any lien for taxes as shown on the records of the proper County official shall upon the payment of all taxes, penalties, and interest thereon be released by the Tax Administrator when the full amount determined to be due has been paid to the County, and the operator or person making such payment shall receive a receipt therefore stating that the full amount of taxes, penalties, and interest thereon have been paid and that the lien is thereby released and the record of lien is satisfied.

Section 14. REFUNDS.

(1) Operators' Refunds. Whenever the amount of any tax, penalty or interest has been paid more than once or has been erroneously or illegally collected or received by the Tax Administrator under this Ordinance, it may be refunded provided a verified claim in writing therefore stating the specific reason upon which the claim is founded is filed with the Tax Administrator within three years from the date of payment. The claim shall be made on forms provided by the Tax Administrator. If the claim is approved by the Tax Administrator, the excess amount collected or paid may be refunded, or may be credited on any amounts then due and payable from the operator from whom it was collected or by whom paid, and the balance may be refunded to each operator, his administrators, executors or assignees.

(2) Transient Refunds. Whenever the tax required by this Ordinance has been
collected by the operator and deposited by the operator with the Tax Administrator and it is later determined that the tax was erroneously or illegally collected or received by the Tax Administrator, it may be refunded by the Tax Administrator to the transient provided a verified claim in writing therefore, stating the specific reason on which the claim is founded is filed with the Tax Administrator within three years from the date of payment.

Section 15. ADMINISTRATION.

(1) **Transient Room Tax Fund.** The Tax Administrator shall place all monies received pursuant to this order in the Transient Room Tax Fund.

(2) **Records Required from Operators, etc., Form.** Every operator shall keep guest records of room sales and accounting books and records of room sales. All records shall be retained by the operator for a period of three years and six months after they come into being.

(3) **Examination of Records; Investigations.** For the purpose of enforcing Section 11 of this Ordinance, if the Tax Administrator has reason to believe that the returns are incorrect or that fraud, refusal to remit, evasion or operator delay has occurred as set forth in Section 11 of this Ordinance, then the Tax Administrator or any person authorized in writing by him may examine during normal business hours the books, papers, and accounting records relating to room sales of any operator after notification to the operator liable for the tax and may investigate the business of the operator in order to verify the accuracy of any return made; or if no return is made by the operator, to ascertain and
determine the amount required to be paid.

(4) Confidential Character of Information Obtained - Disclosure Unlawful. It shall be unlawful for the Tax Administrator or any person having an administrative or clerical duty under the provisions of this Ordinance to make known in any manner whatsoever the business affairs, operations, or information obtained by an investigation of records and equipment of any person required to obtain a Transient Occupancy Registration Certificate or pay a transient occupancy tax, or any other person visited or examined in the discharge of official duty, or the amount of source of income, profits, losses, expenditures, or any particular thereof set forth in any statement or application, or to permit any statement or application, or copy of either, or any book containing any abstract or particulars thereof to be seen or examined by any person. Provided that nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent:

(a) The disclosure to or the examination of records and equipment by another County official, employee, or agent for collection of taxes for the sole purpose of administering or enforcing any provisions of this Ordinance or collecting taxes imposed hereunder.

(b) The disclosure after the filing of a written request to that effect to the taxpayer himself, receivers, trustees, executors, administrators' assignees, and guarantors if directly interested of information as to any paid tax, any unpaid tax or amount of tax required to be collected, or interest, and penalties; further provided, however, that the Lake County
Counsel approves each such disclosure, and that the Tax Administrator may refuse to make any disclosure referred to in this paragraph when in his opinion the public interest would suffer thereby.

(c) The disclosure of the names and addresses of any persons to whom the Transient Occupancy Registration Certificates have been issued.

(d) The disclosure of general statistics regarding taxes collected or business done in the County.

(4) Administrative Costs. To cover the administration costs of administering the County motel tax, the Tax Administrator shall remit sufficient monies collected to Lake County in order to reimburse the County on an annual basis for administrative, operating and audit expenses. This reimbursal to the County shall be five percent (5%) of the motel tax collected.

Section 16. TAX REVENUE DISTRIBUTION.

The total net motel tax after collection and other administrative costs shall be distributed quarterly by the Lake County Treasurer as follows:

(1) Eighty percent (80%) of the funds collected from the motels in the Summer Lake, Silver Lake and Christmas Valley areas to the North Lake County Emergency Medical Service. Eighty percent (80%) of the funds collected from the motels in the Paisley area to the Paisley Disaster Unit. Such funds disbursed by the Lake County Treasurer shall be used solely for supplies, maintenance, and operation of the North Lake County and Paisley Disaster Units.

(2) One-third of the total net remaining funds to the Lake County Fair Board to
be used for long range development of the County Fairgrounds in accordance with their respective annual budget as approved by the Lake County Board of Commissioners.

(3) The total net remaining funds to the Lake County Chamber of Commerce of which at least fifty percent (50%) of such funds will be budgeted annually by the Chamber for tourism and business development promotion within Lake County.

Section 17. APPEALS TO THE BOARD.

Any person aggrieved by any provision of the Tax Administrator may appeal to the Board by filing a notice of appeal with the Tax Administrator within ten (10) days of the Administrator's decision. The Tax Administrator shall transmit said notice of appeal, together with the file of said appealed matter to the Board who shall fix a time and place for hearing such appeal. The Board shall give the appellant not less than ten (10) days written notice of the time and place of hearing of said appealed matter.

Section 18. SEVERABILITY.

If any section, subsection, subdivision, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance, or any part thereof is for any reason held to be unconstitutional (or otherwise invalid), such decisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance or any part thereof. The legislative body hereby declares that it would have passed each section, subsection, subdivision, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, subdivisions, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, or paragraphs be declared unconstitutional (or otherwise invalid).

Section 19. VIOLATIONS.
It is unlawful for any operator or other person so required to fail or refuse to register as required herein, or to furnish any return required to be made, or fail or refuse to furnish a supplemental return or other data required by the Tax Administrator or to render a false or fraudulent return. No person required to make, render, sign, or verify any report shall make any false or fraudulent report with intent to defeat or evade the determination of any amount due required by this Ordinance. Any person willfully violating any of the provisions of this Ordinance shall be subject to a fine of not more than Two Hundred Fifty Dollars ($250.00).

Section 20. ENABLING CLAUSE.

This Ordinance as adopted by the Lake County Board of Commissioners shall be referred to the voters of Lake County on a regularly scheduled election date. This Ordinance shall only be effective upon approval of a majority of the voters of Lake County at said election. This Ordinance if approved by the voters shall take effect January 1, 1985.

Section 21. ELECTION COSTS.

In order to reimburse Lake County for conducting the election as provided for in Section 20 of this Ordinance, costs which are necessary to cover those election costs incurred by Lake County, shall be distributed by the Tax Administrator to Lake County from the initial 1985 funds designated to go to the Lake County Chamber of Commerce.
DONE AND DATED THIS 19th DAY OF September, 1984

LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

George E. Carlon, Chairman

Arthur H. Sheer, Commissioner

Louis V. Lamb, Commissioner