

Hells Canyon Chamber of Commerce

Minutes for Meeting of June 6, 2017

Held at Quilts Plus • Halfway, Oregon • 1:10-3:55pm

Action items are highlighted in blue, financial commitments in green.

“MSA” indicates “moved, seconded, approved”

Present: Pres. Ron Hunter, V.P. Tami Waldron, Treas. Lauri Bryan, Sec. Bill Schuhle, Becky Kaaen, Whitey Bloom, Kat Davis, Lauren Meyers, Timothy Bishop, Roberta Bryan.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Bill was asked if he was being reimbursed for his ink cost for printing the minutes and when he said it was negligible, he was asked for his source(s). **He will email links to all present.** The minutes were approved as presented.

Finance Report

Lauri provided printed reports for both this meeting and last. She amended the written report by saying that Baker County Tourism’s \$500 contribution to our brochure printing arrived yesterday and should be added to the General Account. Tami explained the new telephone charges. Pinetel wanted too much to continue our voicemail-only line after we dropped the web cam, so she got us a new number through Snake River PCS at \$10/mo. with a free phone. **MSA that we cover the \$120/yr. for the PCS mobile number.** Tami will ask that the bill sent directly to the Chamber.

Old Business

MainStreet Stage: Tami indicated that Cornucopia Arts Council President Steve Backstrom said that anyone wishing to book the MainStreet Stage should contact him directly so the booking can be handled by CAC and covered by their insurance. Kat expressed concern about the end-of-season reading program wrap-up on the Stage being advertised to the general public as it’s just for the kids in the program. **Bill will remove the listing from the web site calendar.** The Clear Creek Music Festival will be using the Stage for several performances, but we have no information on that yet. Ron asked about the possible repositioning of the Stage to a location in the park more conducive to not roasting the performers in the late afternoon sun. There’s nothing in the works that we know of. Bill inquired about our chipping in on the Arts Council’s insurance bill and **Lauri thought we’d paid \$300 last year. She will double check so we can see about doing something similar this year.**

Feedback on New Brochure: Bill provided copies of the completed brochure to the group which was the first time some had seen the finished product. Comments were uniformly positive. Tim is getting them distributed all around NE Oregon and will include Cambridge and Weiser as well. Ron asked if the links in the brochure are live in the online edition. **Bill said no, but he would make them so.** Timothy suggested re-printing an updated version of the brochure at least every two years if not yearly. Tami requested a supply of brochures to send out to folks who call the Chamber. **Bill will provide her with a stack.**

4th of July Planning: Kim Stutzman with the Pine Valley Fair Association is in charge of planning the Halfway 4th of July celebration. Tami said things are going well. They have purchased \$5,000 worth of fireworks and are going to have them electronically hooked up for firing with firing to be done by our local fire department. Since the Fair folks had no experience in booking music, Tami arranged for Brady Goss to perform again this year and at a very reasonable price. **We are arranging for the pie auction and Ron will contact Mib Daley about working his magic at selling pies. We are also taking care of the posters advertising our 4th celebration and Lauri will get the necessary info and get those printed and distributed.** Whitey got the fireworks trailer re-floored for \$305 and has been reimbursed. **He will contact Casey Rowan about the use thereof** with Chip Carter apparently in charge of getting the firing tubes mounted on the trailer. Becky moved that, in addition to the \$5,000 already given to them for purchasing fireworks, we also give the Fair Board a lump sum of \$1,000 to cover the music as well as other unanticipated incidentals related to putting on the evening. After much discussion it was decided that we would pay Brady directly from our own funds and the motion was amended to **give the Fair Board \$350 specifically for area-wide advertising and unanticipated incidentals related to putting on the 4th celebration. MSA. It was then moved that we pay Brady \$400 for his performance. MSA.**



Eclipse Planning: Timothy informed us that there are no eclipse events currently planned for Ontario, the Boise/Eagle/Nampa area, Sun Valley, or Caldwell that he knows of, so folks from those areas may well be coming toward Baker County in search of activities around the eclipse. Long range forecasts are showing overcast on the coast during the eclipse, so folks may be heading inland for a better view. The difference between viewing in Richland (totality) and Halfway (not quite) will be blue sky in Halfway, night sky with stars in Richland.

We need events in the days leading up to the eclipse and need to let Timothy know about them so they can be advertised widely. He also pointed out that internet and cellular services will be overwhelmed around this time, so be prepared for very slow service. Temporary businesses should be set up to swipe credit/debit cards via Square, PayPal, or US Bank's services. Timothy suggested that organizations such as the Lions and maybe even the Chamber get set up for this some time in advance and get used to using it prior to the eclipse. **Lauri moved that the Chamber get set up with a seasonal account through US Bank. MSA.**

Ron urged us to inform people about the realities of the eclipse weekend and the need to prepare. Folks renting, e.g., pasture space will need a permit from the county. There is a question as to whether Holcomb & Hewitt parks in Richland will be open for the eclipse because of budget shortfalls. The question of liability should you choose to rent camping spaces was raised. Info on this and all other things that need to be considered are listed on the visitbaker.com web site and at traveloregon.com/eclipse.

As a possible Chamber event for the eclipse, Lauren suggested a star party, i.e., bring a star-knowledgeable person to the valley and set up telescopes for an educational experience on Saturday and Sunday evenings.

To get an event published in the Baker City Herald's special Eclipse Planner, info needs to be in by July 15th.

Marketing Discussion: Becky asked about the Northeastern Oregon phone app that informs folks about goings-on in Baker, Union, and Wallowa counties. Tim said the "GO Northeast" app is run through the Baker City Herald with a small monthly fee for a business to be on the app and then event listings are free.

Becky enthusiastically introduced us to the "Northeast Oregon Business News" newspaper, circulation 5,000, based in Elgin. If a local business provides them with a written article and pictures, it's almost certain to be published in their bi-monthly paper. Ads are available starting at \$100 per issue for 1/8th page.

Becky reiterated her concern about the possible closure of the Richland reservoir parks and wondered what our responsibility might be to do something about that. Ron urged writing to the County as they are requesting input so they can document people's concerns and the economic impact of the closures. Options for action were outlined in a Hells Canyon Journal article in the May 30th issue. Tami suggested inviting commissioner Bill Harvey to our August meeting to get filled in on what's happening and how we might help as a chamber.

Timothy indicated that Baker County Tourism has budgeted to help with reprinting of the Panhandle Snowmobile Club's trail maps for next season and will need them by October for the November show in Boise. He also showed us the full page ad on the back cover of the Wallowa County visitors guide which lets visitors also know about Baker County across the mountains.

There was discussion about "boosting" posts on Facebook to extend reach for a small fee. Timothy warned us that having any text **in an image** being boosted automatically reduces the reach purchased. **MSA that we allocate \$100 for the year for boosting FB posts. While Tami and Lauri are at the bank setting up a card swiping account, they will also get a Chamber credit card to which the FB boosts may be charged as well as a smart phone swiping device.**

Kat Davis shared that the Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall reconstruction is now officially a project of United Community Partners (UCP) and they will be gladly accepting donations to have a new building completed by 2018 or 2019.

Our next meeting will be on August 1st at 1:00pm, again at Quilts Plus.

Meeting adjourned at 3:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Schuhle, Secretary