

Hells Canyon Chamber of Commerce

Minutes for Meeting of June 5, 2018

Held at Pine Valley Lodge • Halfway, Oregon • 1:10-2:10pm

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

Present: V.P. Tami Waldron, Sec. Bill Schuhle, Whitey Bloom, Timothy Bishop, Lisa Steele. Tami presided.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Bill had emailed out copies of the April minutes. They were accepted as emailed.

Action Items Report

Bill said that the only action item from last meeting was that Lauri was going to check with Snake River PCS on how we might provide good public wi-fi coverage for visiting guests. Lauri is out of town and hadn't responded to Bill's query about this issue by meeting time.

Finance Report

In Lauri's absence, no finance report was available. We will look forward to one in August.

Old Business

Fourth of July: Plans are in place for vendors, live music (The Wasteland Kings, funded ½ by the Chamber and ½ by the Steve Waldron Memorial Fund), Pie Auction with Mib Dailey, and fireworks. There are no plans for a parade. Timothy will help with publicity by creating a Facebook event and, when they are printed, distributing posters to Baker City, Oxbow, and Cambridge.

Cycle Oregon: The Chamber's contribution to this major event will be the Local Coordinator position that Tami is filling. Thank you, Tami!

MainStreet Stage Update: Bill said that the Stage's web site (www.themainstreetstage.org) has been updated and now shows confirmed performances for this season.

Baker County Marketing Strategic Plan: Timothy reported that the strategic planning process is moving ahead, with results from the consultants expected in August. The community meetings that were held apparently confirmed the top issues that were coming to the fore several months ago: the importance of bicycle touring and out door recreation in general, the need for more and better "collateral" (brochures, maps, etc.) describing the area and available activities and events, and better way-finding and informational signage around the county.

Hells Canyon Junior Rodeo: The Junior Rodeo board is moving ahead aggressively with plans for a full weekend of rodeo and number of other family-oriented activities.

Welcome Sign Re-painting: Bill indicated that he had received a number of positive comments on the look of the newly refurbished sign which has been gratifying. He also again thanked Whitey and his crew for all their help with the refurbishing process.

Race Through Hells Canyon: This was a mild success with Timothy indicating that scheduling the half-marathon for 5:00pm was a major mistake as no serious runners would risk such a run in the heat of the day. Future scheduling for early morning should bring much greater participation.

New Business

"Oregon's Wilder Side" Welcome Signs: Bill pointed out that the welcome sign opposite the Co-op is in need of re-painting, particularly the elements in red. It was pointed out that there is an identical sign approaching Halfway from the river and it might need re-painting as well. **Bill will pursue finding someone who can do this.**

General Business Updates: Timothy reported that Baker County had a busy Memorial Day weekend with the Interpretive Center hosting about 700 visitors over Saturday and Sunday. He reiterated that numerous events are coming up in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the filming of "Paint Your Wagon", including a Hank Cramer concert series.

Lisa said that the Cornucopia Lodge is now open for lunch daily with no reservations needed and will be offering a "Paint Your Wagon" event in August including one of the Hank Cramer performances. Details are available at www.cornucopialodge.com.

Timothy said Eagle Valley Day is getting good promotion and this year will be featuring both antique automobiles and airplanes. He indicated the Croppie Tournament received little publicity and low attendance. The kayak fishing tournament had decent water and a decent turnout (about 40 boats), but could also use some better publicity.

He mentioned that the Baker Best Western's delayed remodel work has left them with only half their rooms being available during this tourist season, pushing lodging business to other venues including Air B'n'Bs and VRBOs.

The Elkhorn Crest 50-mile trail run was a huge success and looks to get bigger every year. Timothy floated the possibility of also having a similar run through the Wallowas, possibly alternating routes year to year.

The Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally is having its final run this year with its current organizer. The Baker Chamber is considering taking over sponsorship, however they already have a very full plate at this time of year. A shortened event (2 days instead of 3) or possibly a fall schedule might make it more doable by the Chamber. Or another group might consider taking on the project.

The Baker Chamber is considering publishing a brochure featuring all of the museums of Baker County, including the "Power of the Past" antique farm implement collection along Hwy. 86 just east of Baker. Timothy suggested that the Halfway museum put together a walking tour of their antique implement displays in Halfway and that TLT funds might be available for such a project.

A huge lineup of cover bands will be performing at "Tribute Fest" on August 17 & 18 in Baker.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on August 7th, 1:00pm at a location to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Schuhle, Secretary