

Hells Canyon Chamber of Commerce

Minutes for Meeting of February 4, 2020

Held at the Cornucopia Coffee House • Halfway, Oregon • 1:10-3:00pm

Financial commitments are highlighted in green, action items in blue.

“MSA” indicates “moved, seconded, and approved.”

Present: Pres. Becky Kaaen, V. Pres. Tami Waldron, Sec. Bill Schuhle, Treas. Lauri Bryan, Shelly Cutler, Whitey Bloom, Lisa Steele, Kat Davis, Gail Kimberling, Timothy Bishop.

Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were used as a template for this meeting and discussed accordingly.

Finance Report

The finance report was presented and approved.

Introductions

Becky requested 20-second introductions from all present:

Becky: Taught at Blue Mountain Community College, now retired for 10 years

Shelly Cutler: Baker County Chamber of Commerce

Kat Davis: United Community Partners, Pine Fest

Gail Kimberling: Hells Canyon Journal

Whitey Bloom: Panhandle Snowmobile Club

Lauri Bryan: HCCC Treasurer and owner of Old Pine Market for 20 years

Tami Waldron: owner of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home for 20 years

Lisa Steele: representing the businesses of David and Kathryn Moore

Bill Schuhle: HCCC Secretary and owner, Bill Schuhle Desktop Publishing

Timothy Bishop: Travel Baker County

Business

Nuanced Consensus Process: Becky introduced us to a group consensus process which allows for a gradient of agreement/approval rather than the standard “yea or nay” choices. Voting on a motion or proposal is accomplished by holding up a hand displaying a particular number of fingers which corresponds to the individual's level of agreement:

Five fingers: Total agreement, best solution

Four fingers: Good solution, support it, but no cartwheels

Three fingers: Yes, you'll support it

Two fingers: Do not support, but will not sabotage

One finger: Do not support and will sabotage

A mock vote was taken on a patently absurd proposal, made by Becky, to illustrate how this would work. This process is intended to facilitate discussion and consensus. It does not replace the move/second/discuss/vote process required for effecting official approval of a proposal or action.

Rock Climbing: Thinking about possible area attractions to bring folks here during April and May, it turns out there are some good rock climbing areas in Hells Canyon and temperatures as well as other factors are optimum for climbing during those months. For folks coming from Idaho to camp/climb, we could advertise the availability of supplies in Halfway. The Gateway convenience store/restaurant on Idaho 71 coming from Cambridge has agreed to placing table tents to that effect. Maybe someone could initiate some planning on addressing that market, including seeing what appropriate phone apps might exist.

Valentine Hearts: Becky agreed to get a note into the HCJ thanking all the folks who purchased Valentine hearts and all those who contributed their time and talents to accomplishing this year's hearts project.

Snowmobile Poker Run: Whitey said the club had some new trail signs made for the run as well as some refurbishing work done on the spinners. Donation of items for the raffle have been great. The purse for the poker run is \$4,000 compared to around \$3,000 for other runs in the region, which is a draw. Becky made a point of the fact that anyone can purchase hands for the poker run. If you're not a snowmobiler, someone who is will take your hand and play it for you. Approximately 200 riders participate each year.



Pine Fest: Kat said they enjoyed getting their sponsored table set up for the Baker County Chamber Annual Banquet (which Shelly complimented). A “soft opening” locally, featuring the bands and new ticket prices for this year, will appear soon in the HCJ.

Richland Oyster Feed: Coming up at the Shorthorn.

Valentine’s & St. Patrick’s Dinners in Richland: Special Valentine’s Day hours at the Richland Cafe. \$25.00, two seatings. Surf and turf for St. Patrick’s Day.

Crab Feed: Coming up March 14th. Becky suggested offering online ticket sales. Bill said it was considered last year but not done due to the 10% increase in ticket price involved. Consensus was that online ticket purchasers are used to that price differential so it shouldn’t be a problem. Pine Fest sells approximately 50% of their tickets online through Brown Paper Tickets.

Rush Hour Pizza: Grand Opening is 3-7pm this coming Saturday with giveaways and prizes. Bill heard she had sold over 700 pizzas since opening. She now offers baked pizzas for visitors who can’t bake their own.

High School Wrestling Tournament: Invitational coming up this weekend.

Pine Fest Band Suggestions: Timothy suggested country singer Gary Tackett out of Boise as well as Headstone, also from Boise, with 80s/90s music. Bread and Circus was another Boise band suggested.

BCCC Man of the Year: Shelly said that Steven Sharp was chosen Man of the Year and was totally surprised, and thrilled, to receive the honor.

Snowmobile Poker Run Support: **We approved \$500 for the Snowmobile Club** to help ensure their \$4,000 purse.

Bidding on Operation of the Baker County Visitors Center: Shelly said that the contract to operate the Visitors Center was up for bid with the Chamber and Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort competing for the contract. The Transient Lodging Tax Committee has said they’d like to move the Visitors Center to the Trailhead shop (operate by Anthony Lakes) on Main St. in downtown Baker. She provided us with information on the Chamber’s bid and **asked that we give our input to the County Commissioners** who will be deciding on the winner of the contract.

Video Advertising of Our Area: Timothy shared that based on a need to let folks know about the opportunities available along the Hells Canyon Scenic Byway, even during the winter when 39 Road is closed, former west side TV anchor Rick Dancer and his wife have been shooting promotional video and posting on YouTube, the segment on Cornucopia already receiving over 12,000 views!

Boise Outdoor Expo (Idaho Sportsman Show): March 5-8 Travel Baker County has a booth and is in need of volunteers to man it for the four days.

Scenic Byway Promotion Steering Committee: A committee is being formed to represent stakeholders along the Scenic Byway in a three-county (Baker/Union/Wallowa) project organized by Travel Oregon to promote the Byway and Timothy asked for a Halfway representative. Kat volunteered wholeheartedly with the caveat that she might not be able to attend all the 8-10 meetings during the year of the project. Timothy said it could be a “Hells Canyon Chamber” seat and someone else could fill in on the times that Kat couldn’t make it. This arrangement was enthusiastically approved.

Hells Canyon Junior Rodeo: Timothy said this would be the last weekend in June this year, the same time as the Baker Cycling Classic as well as an auto show with the Idaho British Car Club, offering a marketing opportunity for the rodeo draw people to Halfway who like to “get outta Dodge” with all the crowding and traffic in Baker.

Minutes Correction: Kat wanted to modify the statement in last meeting’s minutes that the Fair Board was giving Pine Fest a “huge break” on rental of the fairgrounds. The actuality is that their pricing is quite reasonable already, so Pine Fest would not feel comfortable asking for a further consideration. Kat also thanked Becky for the souvenir pens she provided to Pine Fest to be given away. Becky said she could provide a supply to be given away at the Boise Outdoor Expo as well.

Baker City Realty Postcard: Bill shared a sample of a postcard he had designed and had printed for Denise Cairns to announce her new association as a broker with Baker City Realty. This inspired Becky to wonder if something similar could be produced for Pine Fest that folks could pass out when traveling.

Bigfoot Presentation: Scott Violette will be giving a presentation on his bigfoot research at 7:00pm this Thursday at the High School Library.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on April 7, 2020, 1:00pm at the Cornucopia Coffee House.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Schuhle, Secretary