

Hells Canyon Chamber of Commerce

Minutes for Meeting of August 7, 2018

Held at Pine Valley Lodge • Halfway, Oregon • 1:00-2:45pm

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

Present: Pres. Becky Kaaen, V.P. Tami Waldron, Sec. Bill Schuhle, Treas. Lauri Bryan, Shelley Cutler, Lynette Hauptman, Lisa Steele, Gabriel Schmoe.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Bill had emailed out copies of the June minutes. Becky went over items in the minutes and these are related under Old Business below. Following discussion, the minutes were approved as emailed.

Action Items Report

Bill was to look into getting the two "Entering Halfway, Oregon's Wilder Side" signs repainted and reported that Wix Covey is willing to gift that work to the Chamber.

Finance Report

The finance report covered all the way back to April since that was the last meeting Lauri was able to attend. It showed current balances in the General Account of \$7,435.97 and in the MainStreet Stage Account of \$230.15. Our expenditures with the Hells Canyon Journal for Cindy Thayer's maintenance of our web site were explained and appreciation expressed for the incredible job she does of keeping things up to date. We were reminded that, with the new web cam hosted by Snake River PCS, we no longer have that monthly expense and the cam seems to be up a running reliably for which we are grateful.

Lauri also provided everyone with a printout of the current membership list, including dues status.

The finance report was approved as presented.

Old Business

Fourth of July: This year's Fourth of July celebration was wildly successful. There were lots of pies for the pie auction and lots of generous people with more than 15 pies selling for over \$200 and 10 for over \$100! Having credit card processing available for the first time likely helped with larger sales. Bill reported that the Lions Den concession stand had really good sales. The fireworks went off without a hitch. Bill inquired about the use of "low-risers" instead of "high-risers" and Lauri said it was because the licensing of this year's shooters didn't allow them to fire off the big ones. They will be back next year. Lauri said businesses had been concerned about the 4th being mid-week this year, but ended up having good weekends both before and after. It appeared this was enhanced by the Junior Rodeo being the weekend following the 4th and folks coming for both. Junior Rodeo had expected about 20 participants. With only three pre-registered, they had over 200 participants show up which was overwhelming for them. They will definitely need more help next year and Stephanie Beard is the contact person for that.

Welcome Sign: Becky complimented Bill on the refurbished sign and thanked him and the other folks involved in getting that project done.

HCCC/BCCC Dual Memberships: Shelley reminded us of her recommendation that we offer joint memberships with the Baker County Chamber and asked that we place that on the agenda for our next meeting. **She will research possible paths of implementation to present.**

Cycle Oregon: Tami reported that all contracts are completed and that C.O. Events Director Tara Corbin will be in here on Aug. 14 to tie up loose ends. That meeting will be at 1:30pm at the Pine Valley Lodge. **Tami will contact George Gover regarding use of his field across from the elementary school for parking of RV's that are part of the C.O. entourage.**

It was suggested that we create a flyer to hand out to local businesses to let them know to prepare for this influx of 2,000 cyclists and to decorate their premises with a cycling theme. Fuel providers should be encouraged to be open appropriate hours to accommodate the needs of all the motor vehicles involved in the tour.

New Business

Lynette Hauptman's "Water to the Wise" Presentation: Lynette Hauptman of Canyon Outfitters, purveyors of float trips on the Snake River, related how they avoid purchasing and recycling thousands of plastic water bottles every year by taking on their trips Halfway's incredibly pure local drinking water. Halfway public works director Page Frederickson

told her that Halfway recently tied for first place for best municipal water in a comparison encompassing the entire three-state Northwest region. Lynette has been contemplating the possibility of Halfway taking advantage of this wonderful resource and at the same time becoming a plastic-water-bottle-free town. This would be accomplished by local markets no longer selling bottled water (Lauri said they'd be happy to oblige at Old Pine Market), but instead selling BPA-free, reusable water bottles and jugs which would then be filled at a public "filling station" which she envisions as being a cool, shady grotto-like area replacing the currently decaying concrete "floor" and old gas pump roof structure on the Three-Color Building corner. A bicycle repair station, which has been discussed for Halfway, could be part of the design as well. Lynette indicated that the dispensing equipment could be engineered to work in the wintertime as well as in warmer weather. She envisions it as a greatly enhanced town heart/town center.

She said that Oregon DEQ recently announced a huge grant program for small communities to help with recycling and waste reduction and there are other funding sources available as well, including a possible crowd-funding campaign. It was agreed that Lynette has the passion and drive and should head up the project with Shelley suggesting she have a person with economic development expertise as part of the planning committee and said that she, as Chamber head, and Baker County Economic Development, would be happy to assist the project in any way possible.

Lynette would be happy to host big fundraisers at their place annually, to raise money for both the initial project and for the necessary ongoing maintenance. Shelley recommended putting together a streamlined printed piece that would present the project easily to newcomers and Lynette indicated that she did have a landscape architect in Portland interested in doing conceptual drawings. Becky asked if we might call the project "The Watering Station" for now and Lynette was OK with that. She also asked if Lynette might be willing to be on our agenda regularly for bi-monthly updates and she agreed to that.

Hells Canyon Wild & Scenic River Designation: Lynette said this year is the 50th anniversary of the Canyon receiving official Wild & Scenic River designation and felt that a celebration was in order. She's willing to make the cake!

Info Wayside Signage: Bill requested a budget of up to \$150 for the preparation and professional printing of large blowups of the Visitor's Guide brochure panels to replace the fading and out-of-date versions currently greeting visitors at the Hells Canyon Info Wayside near the wigwam burner. **The request was unanimously approved.**

Paint Your Wagon Celebration: Shelley provided posters listing all the different venues where Hank Cramer & Carter Junction will be performing music from Paint Your Wagon on Aug. 10, 11 & 12. Bill indicated that the opening performance on the MainStreet Stage had been moved to the Presbyterian Church due to predicted 100°+ weather for mid-afternoon on the 10th. He related that an awning for the Stage had been devised two or three years ago that kept the performers in shade during setup and then could be raised for the performance. **He will contact Bruce Honeyman, who was instrumental in setting that up, to see why it disappeared.**

Cornucopia Mountain: Becky reported that she had talked with Sarah at the Cornucopia Lodge and found out that all of their group trail rides had been very successful except for the mother/daughter one which may have been too early in the season. Also, the Lodge is serving dinner Thurs.-Sun. evenings with advanced reservations and lunch those days with no reservations necessary. Lisa Steele said that the Cornucopia Mountain office in the Three-Color Building will have brochures and other information available on all the activities happening at the Lodge. The Lodge's web site, www.cornucopialodge.com, is also a good place to get up-to-date information.

Snake River Smokehouse: Lauri shared that this business, a part of Old Pine Market, has passed its necessary inspections and can now manufacture and sell retail meats and cheeses, including bison and grass-fed beef products.

Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally: Shelley said that it was a success with the turnout they were hoping for. It was the final rally to be totally organized by Steve and Kurt. Harley Davidson and High Desert Motorcycles of Eagle, Idaho, will be taking on the planning and promotion of future rallies.

Baker County Chamber Newsletter: Shelley shared that businesses in Halfway were the focus of last month's issue of their newsletter and this month's focus will be Richland. Folks who are not receiving the newsletter and would like to can email info@visitbaker.com and ask to be added to the mailing list. The newsletter goes out to about 350 recipients and welcomes the submission of printed inserts to get the word out about specific needs or activities of local chambers.

Vacation Rentals By Owner: Shelley said that this lodging option is exploding in Baker County which is good for tourism, but is seriously affecting the local housing rental market as properties are removed from that market for use as VRBOs.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on October 2, 1:00pm at a location to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Schuhle, Secretary