

Hells Canyon Chamber of Commerce

Minutes for Meeting of October 1, 2019

Held at Pine Valley Lodge • Halfway, Oregon • 1:00-3:10pm

Present: Pres. Becky Kaaen, V.P. Tami Waldron, Sec. Bill Schuhle, Treas. Lauri Bryan, Whitey Bloom, Lisa Steele, Melody Huff.

Minutes of Last Meeting

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

Finance Report

Lauri presented a finance report which covered February through July of 2019 and included a list of Chamber membership renewals as well. The report was accepted as presented.

Old Business

4th of July: Everyone was flabbergasted (in a good way) at the dollars raised by the Pie Auction (approx. \$4,000). Becky said we had 40-50 pies and suggested a "Buy It Now" table to help handle the excess and for folks who want to buy after the auction is over with.

Rush Hour Pizza: Rachele Robinette is making progress on getting the shop open.

Pine Fest: Becky suggested we talk with the Arts Council about helping advertise Pine Fest and about the possibility of their partnering with Baker County Tourism on marketing to see about getting attendance up to their target of around 700. She also suggested that, if there's a problem with places for people to stay, maybe the marketing should target folks who live close enough to just come out for the day.

Phone Calls to the Chamber: Tami said the themes for the past month have been "Do you have a laundromat?" and "Can you get over 39 Road?" The latter has major construction going on and can involve some long waits.

Motorcycle Rally: Tami said that riders really like to get pins that commemorate the different places they've been. If we had pins available in Halfway, it would encourage riders to come into town rather than cruise on by on their way to Hells Canyon and Joseph. Bill suggested that the lady who designed the new Pine Fest logo could probably design a really nice pin. Tami will research possible sources and get back to us. Next year's rally is scheduled for July 9-13.

Fair & Rodeo: Melody said there was a pretty good turnout this year. She felt there could be fewer food vendors and more "stuff" vendors. She thought that not charging to enter the fairgrounds has been good for rodeo ticket sales and general attendance. The Fair Association is now selling hats, t-shirts, cup cozies, etc., which is making up for the loss of fairgrounds entrances fees. Getting an ATM for the fairgrounds is under consideration since so few people carry cash these days. She also mentioned the inconvenience of no longer having a night depository at the bank.

Becky asked how the Chamber could help with the Fair and advertising seemed to be one way, especially given that next year will be the Fair's 99th anniversary and then its 100th in 2021.

Lauri suggested our putting out, in the spring, a calendar listing all of the summer's upcoming activities and events.

Rodeo programs this year were designed by Mallory McKim and were stunning. Melody said she ordered 50 more than last year and still almost sold out. They are a money-maker for the Fair with about \$3,000 in ad revenue and \$800 in printing cost with actual program sales being just gravy.

The fairgrounds showers near the Grange Hall entrance were functional this year and plans are under consideration to begin replacing restroom toilets with commercial grade units.

Lauri wrote Melody a check for \$400 which is the Chamber's regular annual contribution to the Fair.

Melody said that K & E Excavating, which is doing a lot of work on the Bonanza mine project and is looking to get more involved in the community, was a Fair sponsor this year and will be looking for a house to rent for staff next spring.



Tami asked Melody to explain why the Fair Association charged groups like Pine Fest to use the Fairgrounds rather than just donating the use. Basically it comes down to the fact that there are a lot of expenses involved in owning, operating, and maintaining such a large facility and these expenses need to be covered. Bob Taylor, maintenance manager of the grounds, can be contacted for rental rates for the various facilities. Melody said he's doing a great job of keeping books, collecting rent from Pavilion users, etc., which used to be much more haphazard.

Chamber Membership Mailing: Becky said the mailing had been sent out and Lisa inquired, on behalf of Kathryn Moore, as to what the benefits of dual membership with the Baker County Chamber were. Becky said 1) educational workshop opportunities, 2) being featured on Facebook and in the Chamber's monthly newsletter, 3) a listing on the BCCC web site, 4) rack card display space in the Baker Visitors Center.

Wayfinding Signage: Concern was expressed that winter closure signage at the turnoff from 86 onto 39 Road was inadequate to keep folks from venturing further up than they should be going. Whitey said it was pretty rare that anyone did so and got into trouble.

Bill said he'd not yet updated the enlargements of the Halfway Visitors Guide at the info wayside, hoping for things in flux (Rush Hour Pizza, Halfway Market, etc.) to settle down first. Current plans are to take down the 'pointing finger' direction/mileage signs from their post in the wayside parking lot this winter and either re-paint or completely re-create them. Wix Covey has agreed to help with repainting. Becky said that years ago Kathryn Moore had expressed interest in updating info at the wayside and apparently Julie Stromer was interested in appearance and maintenance of the wayside as well. Suggested improvements to wayside accessibility included more signage farther up 86 as you're descending into the valley indicating the upcoming wayside and trimming the lower limbs of the evergreens that line the highway at the wayside so that the wayside actually becomes visible to motorists passing by.

Lauri mentioned that the "Welcome to Halfway, Oregon's Wilder Side" sign across from the Co-op is getting ratty. Bill said Wix had agreed to repaint that one, but had not yet done it.

Clear Creek Inn: The Inn is still closed, but is working toward re-opening.

Valentine Hearts: The total raised so far this year is \$1,615 with \$420 yet to collect.

New Business

Area T-Shirts: Lauri thought it would be cool to have a local-themed t-shirt that depicted the various places and activities that make this "Oregon's Wilder Side" and asked our permission to use that slogan in a design or designs that she might come up with. This was granted.

Christmas Lighting: Whitey said the shooting star lights for the downtown light poles are in good shape with one or two in need of new light strings. Also, a large tree has been lined up to go up at the Three Color Building as usual. Plans were made to host a tree lighting with hot chocolate on Friday, December 6 at 7:00pm.

Cornucopia Coffee House Info Rack: Becky said that Shelley Wilson is planning a visitor info rack for the shop to be paid for by the Chamber. No further word on that project at the moment.

Burnt Junction Restaurant in Huntington: Becky ate there recently and highly recommends it!

Souvenir Booklets: Melody suggested that money could be raised for the Chamber by the production of small history books of the area to sell.

Snowmobile Map on Web Site: It was suggested that having our snowmobile map as a downloadable file on the Chamber web site would be helpful. Whitey will talk with Cindy about it.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on December 3rd, 1:00pm at the Cornucopia Coffee House.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Schuhle, Secretary