

Hells Canyon Chamber of Commerce

Minutes for Meeting of August 6, 2019

Held at Pine Valley Lodge • Halfway, Oregon • 1:00-2:40pm

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

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

Present: Pres. Becky Kaaen, V.P. Tami Waldron, Sec. Bill Schuhle, Kat Davis, 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

Though Treasurer Lauri was absent, she did provide a written finance report which was discussed at the end of the meeting. Bill said he was unaware that the Chamber had a credit card and Becky said that it was obtained to enable boosting of Chamber ads on Facebook.

Old Business

4th of July: The pie auction this year took in approximately \$4,000, \$1,250 of which was on credit/debit cards. The top-selling pie was a coconut cream that brought in \$375! There were 20 more pies entered than last year and the auction went on quite a while. There were suggestions that maybe we could set up a “buy it now” table or offer a silent auction table to help handle the volume and keep the verbal auction to a reasonable length. This might not be a problem, though, as no one has complained of the auction length at this point.

It was MSA that Tami contact the Wasteland Kings about performing again next year, the sooner the better it was agreed, since it will be a Saturday night. Tami indicated that the local fireworks shooters have been licensed to do the “big ones” for next year’s Fourth.

Small Business Trainings: Kat indicated that United Community Partners (UCP) did not make any progress on finding out about bringing trainings to Pine Valley, but it is still on their agenda.

Becky said that the owner of Lavish Salon has told her that she is doing really well coming out to Halfway two or three days a week. Becky told her we could have a ribbon-cutting for her and she was excited about the idea.

Rush Hour Pizza: There was no definite word from Rachele Robinette as to when her new shop might be open. Bill wondered about the legality of the planned sale of Helen Denson’s baked goods out of the shop as well, given that they would be baked at her home in a non-commercial kitchen.

MainStreet Stage: Bill expressed his disappointment that the Arts Council, since taking over the MainStreet Stage, has not maintained the web site – it’s non-functional. Bill does maintain a Facebook page where he posts upcoming performances. Kat felt that between the FB page, the HCJ, and the Chamber web page, there really might not be a need for a Stage web page.

Timothy Bishop: Becky wondered if the major budget cuts at Baker County Tourism had affected Timothy’s work at all. Not to anyone’s knowledge.

“Creating Memories” Pan Fishing Tournament: Tami said it was a good turnout and that kids who were pre-registered got to go out in several boats before the actual event took place and had a great time. She said that, due to great supporters like Cabela’s, every kid who signed up by a certain date got a free fishing pole, tackle box, and tackle. Creating Memories also has a handicap-accessible campground for kids and their families in the Joseph area for events up there.

Pine Fest: Kat said that preparations are proceeding apace with over 100 volunteers lined up to make it all happen. Food vendors will be the Main Place, the Taco Bus from Baker, and the Lions will be providing coffee and pastries for overnight campers in the mornings. Beverages will be from Barley Brown’s, the Bev’rage Cellar, and VFW. Attendance-wise, Pine Fest is shooting for 500-700 people per day and are currently averaging 400-500. Tickets are available online at www.pinefest.org in addition to locally at the HCJ and the Bev’rage Cellar.



Halfway Mercantile: Word has it that the Mercantile hopes to be back in business sometime in September.

Phone Calls to the Chamber: Tami said the phone was busy around the Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally.

Chamber Membership Mailing: Becky said this would be going out shortly.

Wayfinding Signage: Bill said that the large blowups of the Visitor's Guide at the Hells Canyon Info Wayside need to be updated. A newly-discovered online sign provider could print both (slightly smaller than the current ones) for about \$50 including shipping vs. the previous \$100+. He estimated his computer time to do the revisions at about another \$50, so requested an expenditure of **\$100 total for the project. This was approved.** Bill also suggested the need to refurbish the pole-mounted "miles to various places" signs at the wayside to increase their readability. Kat said this would be a good project for which to submit a grant application to UCP. **Bill agreed to talk to Whitey Bloom about possibly assisting with this project.** Paul O'Brien, whose place is right near the wayside and who has a lot of equipment, might be willing to help out as well.

New Business

Pine Valley Fair Association: Melody Huff, current president of the Fair Association, came to give us an update on how things are going there. She said that though there have been rough times in the past, the current board gets along really well. They recently completed installation of new pumps for the fairground sewer system, just in time for the large horse-training group that rents the fairground facilities every year. The small shower building just inside the main fairgrounds entry gate is getting a new water heater and will soon be back up and running and available for use. This could be a option to mention to bicyclists passing through to complement the facilities also available at the Halfway Motel for a few dollars. It was suggested that it could become an income-generating facility with the installation of a coin-operated shower controller. Melody said the Fair Association will have a fair booth selling pins, hats, T-shirts, etc., and that like last year, there will be no admission charge to the fairgrounds itself, a policy which resulted in more folks attending the rodeo and buying concessions since they didn't have to pay twice to get there. She said their tri-tip meal booth was busy, but likely only about broke even.

Becky wondered if there might be a way to put a shade of some kind on the west end of the small stage on the fairgrounds so performers there aren't blasted with the brutal afternoon sun.

Melody hopes to have carnival-type rides in the future.

Her next project, after the fair, is to get the roof on the pavilion repaired as it has been leaking for years.

Before Melody left, **we agreed to once again kick in \$400 in purse money for the rodeo.**

Area Lodging Capacity: It was pointed out that at Fair time there just isn't enough lodging space in the area to handle the demand. Becky wondered if locals with spare rooms could rent them out to help take up the slack. Kat wondered if there was an up-to-date catalog of all available guest beds in the area. On finding out that none existed, she suggested that might be a good project for the Chamber to pursue. It was suggested that a good place to start might be the Transient Lodging Tax records.

ATMs/Funds Availability: It was noted that on various occasions the U.S. Bank ATM has been either down or out of money during critical busy times in town and Old Pine Market has even run out of change. One thing that can help in this situation is for vendors to be set up with a smart phone app and card scanner so they can accept plastic in lieu of cash.

Fairgrounds Entrance Ticket Booth: Becky had received an inquiry about getting the ticket booth repainted to freshen it up. It could be a PEUYF project, but Bob Taylor, groundskeeper, could take care of it as well.

Bev'rage Cellar: Becky noted that the Bev'rage Cellar has new owners – Luke and Tami Harriman. Apparently the "knick-knacky" items in the store are being replaced to more closely reflect Tami's taste.

Clear Creek Inn: It was mentioned that the Clear Creek Inn is closed down for the time being due to owner Vicki Jackson's inability to find sufficient help. There is an opportunity for employment there for someone willing to do the work.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on October 2nd, 1:00pm at the Pine Valley Lodge.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Schuhle, Secretary