

January 25, 2019

Lebanon Chamber of Commerce Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Spokes Market Hub, Missy Mitchell (**President**)
Christ Bros. Asphalt, Carrie Christ (**Treasurer**)
City of Lebanon, Cheri Wright (**Correspondence**)
Meridith Funeral Home, Brenda Pehle (**Secretary**)
Atomy, Rebeca Gabel
Cedars of Lebanon, Nichole Myers
Cedar Ridge, Ashley Huels
Dairy Queen, Baron Rana
Gateway East Trails, George Fero
Hangar 18/Merchants, Amanda Dontigney
Lebanon Historical Society, Mark Godwin

Lebanon Rotary, Jeff Thornton
Lebanon Winter Wonderland, Barbara Joy
Legendary Creations, Janet Schmitt
McKendree University, Michele Erschen
O'Fallon Weekly, Carol Goodnight
Rocking R, Randy Reibold
Visitor's Center, Joe Zimmerlee
Weil Services/TLWeil Prop Sup, Terry Weil
John Wright Realty, John Wright

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am at the Visitor's Center by Missy Mitchell, President. Joe Zimmerlee led invocation.

Prayer was followed with introductions around the room, and members were tasked with inviting/bringing someone to February meeting.

Reports:

Treasurer's Report

(Handout)

- Balance as of 1/22/19 - Checking: \$1,442.96; Money Market: \$29,880.01.
- The ongoing projects include the town entrance signage, stop sign, Square.
- Joe is carefully reviewing the 2018 figures, gathering financial info for six Chamber accounts. Tax forms were issued for Queen Joker winners and Grand Prize winner.
- Greg Kadell found the electrical on the south side of the street disconnected; he's working as a volunteer to assess the power outage issues.

Secretary's Report

- Minutes approved with additions (Rebeca/Janet).

Visitor's Center/Chamber

- 2019 Chamber member goal is 80; please pick up/return renewal form with dues.
- A new Illinois Tourism book is being spread around town. Extras are at the Visitors Center.
- Ribbon cutting for Lebanon Auto Parts will follow meeting; let's all support Grant in his re-opening of store that closed with his father's death.
- Visitors Center can always use more volunteers especially for special events.
- The basement has been utilized more: rental is \$60 for up to 4 hours; \$100 for time over 4 hours.

Merchants

- Chocolate Rendezvous is the next big event; the Visitors Center is receiving calls about the date, February 9, and collecting items for gift baskets.
- The webpage is available to promote the Brick Street Merchants.

McKendree University

- Christine Brewer will preface a big screen showing of *Doubt* at the Hett. The opera is being aired on PBS this coming Sunday at 3 pm.

City

- Numerous engineers are working on assessment of ongoing flooding issues on Roger/Merrill/McKendree Park neighborhood.
- An additional half acre land was purchased for the building of a new grocery store. Ground breaking is projected February/March.
- There will be no firework stand/sales in town this year as a result of the State Fire Marshall's enforcement of land space laws for shooting them off. Townspeople can still enjoy setting off novelty items without need for permit; these items are available for sale in area stores.
- The "Brad and Deb's" space is going through the legal process to make it available for sale. To clarify, the City does not own the property; it owns a lien against the property. When Brad failed to have the building leveled, the Court approved City demolition. The actual owner of the property is a tow company which may not be in operation. To date, the clean-up has cost the City \$40K.

Website

- Chamber membership will be updated in February allowing for current renewal period. Stephanie is maintaining the Facebook page, which has 1100 followers. Being part of the Chamber allows members to utilize both tools to boost presence, and membership cost is a business write off.

Upcoming Events

Dickens Fest on April 6 must have City approval 30 days prior to the event; Tim and Robin are on this.

May 4 is Tour de Stooges, which is same day as May Market. Participants are directed to park at McKendree, where the ride runs from Alton to Schuetz, across Hwy 4 and back up north of town. \$6-12K is net on annual bike ride. Coordinators for both the Bike Ride and Fair are encouraged to meet to discuss ways to enrich both events.

Cheri is looking for parking to accommodate the number of vendors that come to town for the Market.

DQs annual Free Cone Day is March 20; their collection goes to Children's Miracle Network. Cedar Ridge will host their Easter Egg Hunt on April 13.

Rotary Breakfast hours are 7am – 1pm. Please note it is February 16 (November Chamber minutes have incorrect date).

Old Business

Beautification

John is presently talking to two paving companies for the Veterans Memorial on the Square. Jerry Cornell is involved with preparing a bed of sand and gravel for the pavement, taking into account the preservation of trees. It was noted that the trolley is disintegrating rapidly; John will be attending a planning commission meeting and provide an update.

TIF

No change in status.

Prioritization

What are we doing to attract new business and support existing business? The work of every Chamber person is to reach out, to get involved and be deliberative in meeting people. Missy shared that she has joined a neighboring Chamber for the purpose of networking, promoting Lebanon, and seeing what they are doing. Each of us is encouraged to invite someone to come as a guest and collectively be giving thought to incentives we might offer to attract paid membership. Joe reported that he hand-delivered 45 applications and has gotten 25 back.

New Business

The Board will be tasked with discussion of reduced rates for Chamber members to rent the Visitors Center meeting room. Joe stated that he has done this on occasion.

Around the Room

- George Fero is looking for a venue to host the AARP Safe Driver Course.
- Cheri called attention a “must see” of the two finished houses on Indian Court, the start of the development of the “Cottages of Woodlands” on Perryman.
- Stephanie is doing chocolate covered strawberries for Valentine’s Day, February 13 and 14. Pre-ordering is required.
- Cedar Ridge continues to take pride in their 5 Star rating and recent partnership with BJC/Memorial Hospital for rehab.
- This week is DQ Appreciation Week: specials are \$3.99 chicken basket, BOGO Blizzard, and ½ off cakes and novelties.
- Rebeca is offering free facials during the Chocolate Rendezvous.

Meeting adjourned at 9:24 for ribbon cutting/reopening of Lebanon Auto Parts under ownership of Don’s son, Grant Evans.

//signed//

Brenda Pehle, Secretary

//signed//

Melissa Mitchell, President

Note: Chamber news and minutes are distributed via Constant Contact. Please add chamber@lebanonil.us to your contacts to ensure delivery, and contact Rebeca Gabel, rebeca.gabel@gmail.com, if you need to be added to our e-mail list. Share our Lebanon Chamber Webpage and Facebook Page so that we can get the word out on all events:

- ❖ Lebanon Chamber Webpage: <http://www.lebanonil.us/>
- ❖ Lebanon Chamber Facebook: [www.facebook.com/lebanonchamberof commerce](http://www.facebook.com/lebanonchamberofcommerce)