

September 26, 2019

Lebanon Chamber of Commerce Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

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| Visitors' Center, Missy Mitchell (President) | Lebanon Rotary, Jeff Thornton |
| Christ Bros. Asphalt, Carrie Christ (Treasurer) | Lebanon Winter Wonderland, Barb Joy |
| Meridith Funeral Home, Brenda Pehle (Secretary) | Legendary Creations, Janet Schmitt |
| City Board, Cheri Wright (Correspondence) | LGPlayhouse/Mermaid Inn, Len Adams |
| Atomy, Chamber Website, Rebeca Gabel | McKendree University, Michele Erschen |
| Dairy Queen, Baron Rana | State Farm Ins., Jessica Zurliene |
| Farmers & Merchants, Michaela Johnson | Sure Shot, Tony Barrale |
| Farmers & Merchants, Nathan Parchman | Tiadaghton House, Holly Lovell |
| First Federal, Tiffany Suydam | Visitors' Center, Joe Zimmerlee |
| Hangar 18/Merchants, Amanda Dontigney | Visitors' Center Volunteer, Bob Lee |
| John Wright Realty, John Wright | Guest: Mayor Rich Wilken |
| Keller Williams, Barry Schulhofer | |
| Keller Williams, Erica Lawrence | |

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am at the Visitors' Center by Missy Mitchell, President, with a note of thanks to First Federal for providing donuts and pastry.

A moment of silence was observed for personal private prayer and preparation, and was followed by introductions.

Mayor Rich Wilken shared that the new grocery store groundbreaking will be Monday, September 30, and that he is to be interviewed by the BND later in the day. He also said he has a meeting scheduled to discuss clock repair at the Town Square. Mayor Wilken then said in his six and one-half years of holding office, the time and talent Carrie Christ continually gives to the City really stands out. To her surprise, and to great applause, he presented Carrie with a key to the City for her generous dedication and service.

Barry Schulhofer and Erica Williams gave an overview of Keller Williams services, from raising money to assist realtors when a crisis strikes, to listing of residential and commercial properties. With handouts, Barry showed the uptick of activity in Lebanon in the last couple years, demonstrating a stronger, growing market that Keller Williams wants to be part of. He has business cards to share for buying/selling referral and made special note that a home purchase in Lebanon brings about \$60,000.00 into town.

Reports:

Secretary's Report

- A thank you was read for the Chamber's Hole Sponsorship in the Lions Scholarship Golf Classic.
- August Minutes were approved (Joe/Carrie).

Treasurer's Report

(Handout)

- Account balances were approved (Bob/Barb).
- Carrie and Joe are working on next year's budget. Missy suggested a sub-committee to brainstorm advertising ideas for budgeting. O'Fallon Weekly's Lebanon page is perceived to be very positive promotion. BND, however, is more difficult to work with to promote Fall Festival.
- \$200.00 was given by merchants toward the new parking lot landscaping cost of \$380. The next project is to frame the space with intermittent wrought iron fencing for a price of \$2400.00. The design has been approved by the Beautification Committee; the Planning Commission has confirmed that it is not necessary to bring the proposal to City Council.

- Regarding new sign/design (illustration passed), Cheri suggested using College Hill Cemetery signage as a model.

Visitors' Center

- Visitors' Center has new volunteers: Bonnie Wright, Tommy Midgely, and Melanie Coching
- The Center will also be open for Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat, and other upcoming events.
- Upcoming events may be promoted on the marquee; Tammy Wilken manages this media. Guidelines were recently reviewed and updated: Chamber members get two free weeks free advertising and reduced rates per additional use. Holly suggested this be posted and sent to Chamber members by email.
- Center "TO DO" upgrades, i.e. A/C, doors, should be noted and prioritized for budgeting.

Merchants

- Witches Night Out is in final planning; Sure Shot has something in the works. Cheri later mentioned that Sure Shot is certain to be a lot of fun (could it be witches throwing axes?!)
- Tiadaghton celebrated their 6th year of presence in Lebanon in a big way on September 21.
- The new baker will have a soft open Fall Festival Weekend.

McKendree University

- The Gallery will host "Get Out – Paint Out" October 3, from 5-7pm with refreshments.
- October 4-6 is Homecoming and there is a change of parade route.
- Preview dates are October 9 and 14 (prospective students and families)
- A search committee is being formed to find a new president and there is a sock campaign to commemorate Dr. Dennis' 26 years and as longest serving president (\$26.00 per pair).

City

- Alderpersons are canvassing the community to look for bad sidewalks and tree problems for future planning, especially where trees were planted between the sidewalk and curb. Suggestions for alley work can be submitted to Jodi McNeese.
- The new code enforcer has started with Joe Dilaberto's help producing spread sheets

Website

- Peek at the website for updates, sales, events, and news posts. If you have Facebook posts to share, forward them to Rebeca for linking on the Chamber site.

Upcoming Events

- Fall Festival is sold out. Some of the new additions include *All About Sweets*, a new specialty order bakery operated by Tabitha Bennett – one of which is macaroons; a crafter with puzzle lights; a water color artist that uses wine base instead of water; a lot of food. A dozen or more 2nd string men's soccer players are helping set up. About 5:30pm, the Chamber will hold ribbon cutting with new owner/management at Ron's.
- October 17, 8am, the Board will meet to continue revision of the Chamber Constitution.
- LGP Haunted Happenings runs from 6-10pm.
- Trunk or Treat begins at 6pm.
- Set up for Witches Night Out starts at 4pm.

Old Business

- Victorian Holiday/Christmas Committee is working with merchants on Brick Street for lighting; Father Christmas will be walking street and sitting for pictures during Victorian Holidays; Horner Park will have cookies with Santa.

- Rebeca presented Slate of Officers and asked for additional nominations from the floor. She will send to Chamber members, with distinction between elected and non-elected positions. Nominations continue to be open until election at the October meeting.
- Advertising - mentioned during Treasurer's report.
- Membership Drive will kick off with breakfast at the November Chamber meeting.

New Business

- Outreach possibilities for further discussion and development - in a minute's time, there was brainstorming for consulting workshops: "start-up" seminars for prospective business owners; financing workshops; First time home buyer.

Around the Room

- Joe has updated Lebanon brochures that include Grit & Tonic and the new bakery. He attended a soft opening at Grit & Tonic recently that was wonderful.
- Janet announced that Legendary will officially be closed at 5pm on October 5.
- Barb said Winter Wonderland got a truck full of new light displays and that set up will start October 12 and will likely occur every Saturday up to opening day. Volunteers are needed for set up and then working the evenings when the lights are on.
- Michaela spoke of being glad to be part of the community.
- Len shared: Matilda is in its second week; he is looking forward to Haunted Happenings; thanks for all the Playhouse advertisers; Historical Society will be open Fall Festival with banner display; meetings are now the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 at Mermaid House, where they are working on sprinkler system and reinforcing floors; *The Advertiser* building transfer to the Historical Society is in the hands of attorneys; and he will have a booth at Witches Night Out.
- Tony said they are presently offering archery for bow hunting and hosting a contest.
- Jessica encourages local merchants to use State Farm's free ad for advertising.
- Bob is working with McKendree's athletic director to broadcast away games.
- Mayor acknowledged Rhonda Sauget's contributions in economic development.
- Holly thanked everyone for supporting her business these past six years.
- Cheri announced that applications for paid census positions will be available at Fall Festival; some jobs pay \$19-20/hr and are starting now. She answered that door knockers are last contact for non-responders to mail forms.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 24, 2019 at 8:30am in the lower level of the Visitors' Center. Rhonda Sauget will be guest speaker.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40am.

//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)