

August 27, 2020

Lebanon Chamber of Commerce Meeting Minutes

Present:

Atomy/Victorian, Missy Mitchell (President)	Lebanon Rotary Club, Jeff Thornton
Meridith Funeral Home, Brenda Pehle (Secretary)	LGP/Mermaid House, Len Adams
Atomy, Rebeca Gabel	Robin's Nest, Robin Schultze
Dairy Queen, Baron Rana	Rockin' R, Linda Reibold
Emerald Mound Grange, Mindy Schiefer	SBDC for Metro East, JoAnn DiMaggio May
Forward Motion, FOMP, Belinda McAllister	Tiadaghton House, Holly Lovell
Individual, Janet Schmidt	Visitor's Center, Joe Zimmerlee

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am via Zoom by President Missy. Joe gave the invocation. JoAnn DiMaggio May introduced herself as Director of SBDC of Metro East, located in Edwardsville. SBDC is a resource for small businesses, aimed at helping small business owners grow and succeed.

Reports:

Secretary's Report

(Attachment)

- July minutes were approved (Belinda/JoAnn).

Treasurer's Report

(Attachment and Notes)

- Property taxes have been paid.
- Over recent years the HVAC system has been nursed along, until this spring when it leaked through the women's restroom ceiling. Except for the \$500 deductible, the cost of the repairs will be paid by insurance.
- Installing new community welcome signage from all four directions into town has been a seven-year project; the latest one, with a McKendree motif, is behind schedule as a result of the pandemic.
- The digital sign located at the traffic light on the northwest corner offers all Chamber members 2 weeks of free advertising every year. Additional promotional time is available and is modestly priced.
- The frame of the marquee needs repairs for an estimated \$982. Since Chamber funds are lacking, these repairs are on the back burner; additional bids will also be sought.
- With lost income from May Market, rentals, and Fall Festival, it is imperative that we plan for offsetting our lost operating revenue.

Treasure's report approved (Brenda/Robin).

Visitors' Center

- Joe announced the shed needs a new roof: while it is not yet leaking, it's in sore condition. The shed is 8 x 10 in size, old shingles will have to be removed. Missy has enough new shingles left from a home project to donate. Enlisting the expertise of a professional and handful of volunteers are needed to tackle this job.
- Missy reported the Visitors' Center has lost the desk/hospitality help of five volunteers because of health-related issues. Fortunately, we have one new volunteer, but need more help to keep from stretching others thin.

City

(Notes Submitted)

- Trunk or Treat has been cancelled.

- City street crew is going to be taking lights down from the buildings on the Brick Street. In addition to the lack of available funds, there is concern about electrical fires and building safety. Victorian Holiday planning committee together with merchants and other Chamber members need to begin to reimagine the coming holiday season in light of COVID and focus more on window displays, perhaps with help of fundraisers and Beautification funds.
- To date, 182 Lebanon residents have contracted COVID 19, up six from last week. The number represents the 62254 zip code excluding the nursing home population.
- Foreseeing the possibility of a backward slide of re-opening phases, Linda asked for a conversation and plan with the City that allows for curbside service to store fronts without curbside space. Missy and Linda will discuss next steps for moving forward with City on this.

McKendree University

- No Report, but Robin made mention that McKendree students have been in shopping.

Merchants

- Farmers Market is next Wednesday, September 2, from 5-8pm. Because parking is so limited, Linda asked if the vendors could be set up in the City Hall lot and leave the southeast lot open for shoppers.

Website

- Rebeca said she's received good feedback about the History tab and asked Chamber members to visit the website to look for items that need updating, check out workable links, and let her know of other areas needing attention.
- Merchants are asked to double check open hours on the website for correctness for the benefit of shoppers. She also pointed out that members can add events to the calendar and offered a "how to" zoom tutorial.

Upcoming Events

- To the calendar changes (cancellation of Trunk or Treat above), note the Golf Tournament has been rescheduled for April 17, 2021.

Old Business

- July's BINGO game wrapped up in early August and a survey will be sent out to obtain feedback from chamber members and the businesses who participated to determine if the Bingo is an event that we should sponsor again in the future.
- The first issue of the 12-month advertising space in the O'Fallon Weekly was published this week with Tiadaughton House 7th Anniversary as our featured chamber member

New Business

- Nominations for officers and Class of 2021 are open through September. Presently, David Tate is running for President, Belinda McAllister will run for Vice President, and Tiffany Suydam and Rebeca Gabel are running for the Board seats. The full slate will be presented at the next meeting, September 24. Election will be held at the October meeting, with transition/handoff duties effective following the November 19 meeting.
- Board Meeting on October 29 will be devoted to membership growth and retention and budgeting for the next year.
- Missy asked for input and brainstorming ideas.
 - Len shared LGP has officially postponed season but to remain relevant, they are planning a 1940s Radio Show in September, exploring new possibilities for Haunted Happenings, and going to offer a choice of

viewing three filmed versions of A Christmas Carole recorded in previous years. Len will ask about use of promotional windows for these events or availability to the Chamber.

- With mindset of remaining relevant, Belinda suggested a meeting with JoAnn DiMaggio May from the SBDC at SIUE and urged more collaborative relationships and use of available resources so all our businesses can flourish and survive COVID 19.

- Joe said we need to be reaching out and advertising to Scott AFB folks all the time.

- Missy would like to see a few people take idea of Chili Cook-Off and run with it as it is an event that can be worked around the present-day restrictions.
- Revisions to the Lebanon Community brochure are almost completed for reprinting.

Around the Room

- Jeff announced the Rotary will have a drawing on September 12 to award a yearlong weekly supply of a gallon of milk from the IGA. In addition to the milk prize, there is a scratch off for other prizes, like a \$20 grocery gift card. He's enjoyed being at the IGA and noted a number of people putting the Food Pantry down as a recipient. He also shared that Lori commented on a recent highest sales day in her 35+ years in the grocery store business.
- Holly said that Tiadaghton's 7th year anniversary celebration will be spread over 3 days September 18-19-20 to meet store capacity safety rules. Door prizes will be given, and instead of having treats throughout the store, shoppers will be given a treat when they exit.
- Rebeca described Atomy's free online shopping mall membership as an alternative to Amazon shopping with availability of 123 high quality daily use items with money back to its members for referring friends. She also suggested it as a good second income opportunity especially for people who are part of the vulnerable service sector that have been impacted by job loss/income reduction.
- Belinda said Forward Motion is excited to be adding a third life coach, with the goal that they will be able to offer 24-hour crisis care. Friends of McAllister Park is going to be featured in an upcoming HeartLands Conservancy focusing on sustaining natural settings and resilient communities.
- Missy congratulated David Porter for his Ramblin' Man column in The Lebanon Advertiser which won first place for best humor column from the National Newspaper Association this year! It was the only first place award earned by an Illinois newspaper.
- Len added that the ghost stories always offer a lot of local history and McKendree students enjoy them. He proposed we all take a look at the progress on the trolley and announced that the Historical Society is officially inheriting The Advertiser building, and looking forward to taking possession in October to begin its transformation into a museum.

Last Things:

Rebeca suggested we look at pushing for 40 new Chamber Members this year to recover some of the lost income since Spring; Missy asked everyone to think of prospects.

Welcome Back ribbon cuttings may be planned soon for Edward Jones and Dr. Fisher's Chiropractic.

Meeting adjourned at 9:38am. The next meeting is scheduled for September 24, 2020 at 8:30am.

//signed//

Brenda Pehle, Secretary

//signed//

Missy Mitchell, President

Note: Chamber news and minutes are distributed via Constant Contact. Please add chamber@lebanonil.us to your contacts to ensure delivery. 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/lebanonchamberofcommerce