

**Cut Bank Area Chamber of Commerce Minutes
September 6, 2015, Regular Monthly Meeting
Cut Bank Chamber Office – Noon**

Directors Present: Jeff Billman, Gail Hofstad, Steven Hjartarson, Pat Murphy, Adrienne Fritz, Sissy Nygaard, and Juanita Meeks, Calcie DeZort, and Pete Hetherington.

Executive Director: Amy Overstreet

Directors Absent: Matt Waller, LeAnne Kavanagh, all excused.

Guests Attending: None

Regular Business: The meeting was called to order by president, Jeff Billman. The minutes from the September regular board meeting were presented for approval. Steven Hjartarson moved to accept the minutes as emailed, and Adrienne Fritz seconded the motion. Being no further discussion, the minutes were approved as emailed.

The minutes from the Executive Committee meeting held on September 30, 2015, were presented for approval. Jeff moved to accept the minutes as emailed, and Sissy seconded the motion. Being no further discussion, the minutes were approved as emailed.

The financial reports from September were reviewed. See attached.

Balances were reported as follows: \$1,372.05 Chamber checking account; \$32, 734.14 Economic Development checking account; \$7,782.06 Gift Certificate account; \$7,418.99 Buckle account; Lewis and Clark Committee-\$8,020.00 (checking) \$11,185.67 (money market). Sissy and Amy reviewed the expenses noting the advertising expenses for the Bazaar will be reimbursed from the Montana Tourism Grant that we received and that also some of Amy's wages will be reimbursed from the Brownsfield grant. Others notes included that the visitor center is now closed, and no more expenses are anticipated for this season and also that tax returns are complete. Pat moved to accept the financials and Steven seconded the motion with all voting in favor of the motion.

Old Business

Committee updates:

Walking Trail Update/Okttoberfest Recap: Amy reported that the profits from the Oktoberfest banquet held on October 3 were approximately \$7000. Pat reported that the Coulee Trail portion of the easements were completed and that the last easement from Dr. Fultz was in the process and was close to being completed. Both the Coulee and Anna Jefferies portions of the trail are now fully funded and work will begin soon.

Economic Development: Amy reported the Brownsfield grant process was moving forward. The executive committee met to review the four bids for the QEP hiring. Jeff reported that Holly Stoltz with Windy Creek Casuals will no longer be renting the business front of 18 W Main Street as of October 31, 2015. Discussion was made about updating the flooring before a new renter moved in and possibly raising the rent due to increased property tax. A decision was made that rent will be accessed when property tax is issued at the end of the month. With approximately 1000 square feet of retail space on Main Street, the hopes of filling the space are hopeful. Jeff made a motion to start advertising for new renters and Steven seconded the motion. Being nor further discussion, the motion was approved.

Golf Tournament Recap: Jeff presented the preliminary report of income and expenses. The tournament's revenue was approximately \$3,125 with a rough estimate of expenses being \$1200. Fifteen teams were signed up for the tournament this year with four dropping out due to the cold weather the day of the tournament. American Pipe and Supply were the winners of this year's tournament by 0.2 strokes. Discussion of dates for next year's tournament were discussed, and Jeff will take into consideration whether the tournament should be held the weekend of Lewis and Clark Days or later in the summer.

Stage Cover Discussion: No new update on the stage cover and the process is waiting for funding.

Website Advertising Recap: Pete reported that we currently have four footer ads sold and 16 button ads. All of the business who advertised with us last year have once again renewed, and we have received payment from all but four. The final four have given verbal commitments to again advertise, and we are currently waiting for payment.

Shop Local Promotion: Amy reported that the letters have been mailed out, and businesses are in the process of signing up to participate. The event will begin the week of October 28 and participation is expected to be good this year with drawings being held every week. The chamber is excited about this campaign and feel that it is a great community event and an excellent way to give back to our chamber members.

Make A Difference Day: Renovation of the existing ice skating rink behind Anna Jefferies was discussed as the project for 2015's Make a Difference Day. The project has been in different phases for many years with different organizations discussing renovations. Concern for who owned the property was brought up and Wade Johnson, Superintendent of School District 15, was called and stated that the land that the existing ice skating rink located on is school property, but the City of Cut Bank has an easement. With permission to move forward on renovation the board collectively decided to move forward with the project as 2015 Make a Difference Day project and renovations will start on October 24, including dirt work and renovation of the warming shack that includes enclosing the shack and running electricity to run a heater. All volunteers are welcome and encouraged to join the renovation fun on Saturday, October 24, 2015.

Parade of Lights: Juanita reported that this year's Parade of Lights scheduled for November 14th and everything is going as planned. Jeff stated that the installation of lights will be scheduled for two weeks earlier than previous years in hopes to combat bad weather. Advertisements will be put in the paper and work night is set for October 29 at 6 pm at the Civic Center. Volunteers and donations will be needed once again for this year for a successful Parade of Lights.

Holiday Bazaar: Adrienne reported that planning for the Holiday Bazaar is well underway, and only 18 vendor spots are available. Our numbers are up from last year at this time, and we are anticipating a well-attended bazaar by both vendors and the public. We also officially received the Montana Tourism Grant, which will offset a large amount of the advertising costs. Ads are set to run in both Canada and Montana. Adrienne stated that volunteers are still desperately needed, and if anyone is available they should sign up for either volunteering the day of or

donating soup.

Festival of Trees: Calcie reported that The Crawford Brothers Band have been booked and also the date of December 5th has been booked at the Elks for the Festival of Tree. Food once again has been generously donated by Glacier Care Center, and Jen has planned an excellent appetizer menu for the night. Along with the appetizers that will be provided for the night, a French fry bar will be provided at 10 PM with toppings of gravy, chili, and cheese. We will begin asking for businesses to sponsor trees in mid-October.

New Business:

Approval of Slate of Candidates for Director Election Ballot: The nominating committee reported that the four incumbents, Jeff, Pat, Gail, and Calcie, will be running for reelection and that John Overcast has been contacted to see if he would also be willing to run this year but has yet to commit. Steven made a motion to accept the nominating committee's recommendation for candidates for Direction Election Ballot of Jeff, Pat, Gail, Calcie, and John Overcast (if so willing), Sissy seconded the motion, and it was approved.

Executive Committee Recommendation for QEP Hiring & Board Approval: Jeff reported that four bids had been received for a QEP for the Brownsfield renovation. With a good working relationship already established with Newfield, the Executive Committee recommends accepting their competitive bid of \$33,948. Gail made a motion to accept Newfield's proposal for QEP; Juanita seconded the motion, and it was approved.

Membership Drive: LeAnne was absent from the meeting, but the consensus was to keep the membership drive the same as last year.

Insurance Review: Juanita reported that our insurance was up for renewal and that we could include medical coverage at no cost. However, this medical coverage only covers 3rd parties and would not include our volunteers. Juanita will print out our Policy for further review at the November board meeting.

Port Authority Funding Request: A funding request to the Port Authority for the new stage cover was discussed. Sissy reported the estimated cost of the new stage cover to be approximately \$75,000 and that if funding became available construction could begin as early as June 1st. Steven made a motion that a funding request of \$12,000 match for the stage cover be made to the Port Authority. Sissy seconded the motion, and it was approved.

Comments: No further comments.

Reminders: Chamber Up-October 15 5:30-7:00 pm at Glacier Signs and Monuments.