



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 2, 2008

1:00 PM

PRESENT:

Officers and Directors: Rick Herzog, Jeff Flaherty, Wendy Johnson, Carolyn Kolar, Kerri Schumacher, Lori Buck, Bruce Nelson, Frank Christopherson, T Janet Musgrove, Jan Carl, Julie Anderson, Mike Anderson and Jade Fedder.

Chamber Members: Mayor Jane Robbins and Don Howard, City of Pine City; Bonnie Menigo, Old Oak Inn; Paul Miller, Minnesota Energy Resources; Dr. Robert Musgrove, Pine Technical College; Chad Faur, Mac-Clair Mortgage; and Marcia Howard, Pamida.

Guests: Todd Cummings & Trevor Teich

AGENDA:

President Herzog called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

President's Topics

Lodging Tax Discussion: President Herzog opened the meeting with a presentation by Don Howard, City Administrator, regarding a possible Lodging Tax that the City is considering. The proposal would be a two-step process. The first being a referendum presented for voter approval in the November election. If approved, the second step would be to take proposal to the Legislature for final approval. Howard cautioned that if it were approved, it doesn't require the city to add the tax, simply allows the City to impose the tax when they are ready. What makes a Lodging Tax unique is that 95% of the funds raised by the tax would be required to be spent on promotion, marketing and advertising of Pine City as a community or tourist destination.

A motion was made (Johnson) for the Chamber to support the City's efforts in presenting the lodging tax to the public, seconded (Musgrove), and motion was approved.

Community Fundraiser Cards: The fall edition of the card is now available. The following groups will be selling the cards during the month of September: Senior Class Trip, Spanish Club, and German Club.

North Branch Chamber Meeting: Last month, Rick, Frank, Don Howard & Becky attended the North Branch Chamber meeting. The average attendance for a North Branch meeting is approximately 100 people. We visited the meeting to get an indication of what changes we might need to consider in order to increase participation among our members. We found that the meeting was catered each month by a different local business, the Chamber Directors gave brief updates on all of the things that are happening with the Chamber, they welcomed new members and gave them a few minutes to introduce themselves, and there was a speaker at each meeting that provided some valuable information.

We found that there were a lot of great ideas that we could draw from at this meeting, but need to evaluate some of our current practices and consider making some adaptations to generate more involvement from our membership.



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Executive Director's Report:

New Members: Since our August Meeting we have welcomed Living Hope Christian Center and Java Joe's Bistro as new members.

Chamber Seals: As a follow-up to last months discussion of the 2009 Chamber Seals, Becky contacted MINPACK, Inc. to determine if they would be able to produce the seals at a lower price. As previously reported, the cost of purchasing 200 seals for a single year from our previous supplier was approximately \$900. The estimate provided by MINPACK was for 200 seals for 2009 at a cost of \$1.38 per seal, totaling \$276. A motion was made (Schifferdecker) to approve the estimate and place the order for the 2009 seals from MINPACK, seconded (MAnderson) and motion was approved.

Treasurer's Report: General expenses for the month of August were submitted for approval. In addition to those expenses there are a number of Miss Pine City expenses that have been submitted this month. A check for \$400 was paid to Currie, Pangerl & Associates for the 2007 Tax Returns that were necessary to file this year due to the increase in income over the previous two years. It was noted that the cost is for the tax return for both the Chamber and the Foundation. It was recommended that Becky contact the Miss Pine City Committee to determine if they have the necessary funds to contribute to a portion of this bill. A motion was made to approve the treasurer's report (Fedder), seconded (Flaherty) and motion carried.

Executive Director Evaluation: (TJ Musgrove)

TJ reported on the recent performance evaluation that was conducted for Becky's personnel file. TJ spent the last several weeks compiling comments from various directors on their experience working with Becky and submitted those comments to her. The evaluation was a positive one with high performance marks from all areas of Becky's duties. The only concern that was raised are the consistency of hours of operation of the Chamber. This has been noted and Becky is working with the Executive Board to determine what needs the members have for Chamber office hours. On recommendation from the evaluation committee, a motion was made (Kolar) to approve a 50 cent increase in the current pay rate for the Becky, seconded (MAnderson), and motion approved unanimously.

Fall Business Tour: (Rick Herzog)

Plans continue for the Fall Business Tour that is scheduled for Thursday, September 11th. Businesses that will be participating include: Pine Technical College, Broekema Beltway, Product Fabricators, and Martin's Greenhouse. The tour schedule will begin at 1:00 PM and there are still spots open for anyone wishing to participate. The Business After Hours event will be held at Red Dog Billy's Bar & Grill at 5:00 PM. A \$5 cover charge will be required for attendance to offset any expenses for the event.

Business & Community Development Report: (Frank Christopherson)

Frank reminded those in attendance that the first "Coffee Break" networking opportunity will be next Tuesday, September 9th at 7:30 AM at Java Joe's Bistro.

The Planning Commission has approved the minor subdivision that was requested by the Lodge and Red Dog Billy's Bar and Grill. The proposal will now go to the City Council meeting tomorrow night (Wednesday, September 3rd).



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At the EDA meeting last month there was some discussions regarding the status of the former Pine County Courthouse. No recommendation or action was taken. The new Pine City water tower at the north end of town is up.

Citizen of the Year: (Lori Buck)

Three nomination letters have been received to date. The selection committee will need to meet this week to determine who will be the 2008 Citizen of the Year. More details on the reception will be available in the Chamber Chat next week.

Annual Meeting: (Mike Anderson)

Mike reported that the committee met last week to discuss the upcoming Annual Event. It was determined that the Business & Industry Banquet no longer seems to fit into the focus of our Chamber Members. The committee also felt that we needed to have an "Annual" meeting of our members every year and that changing the name of the event each year would develop inconsistent planning. So, the annual event will be referred to as the "Annual Chamber Banquet" and focus on a celebration of the accomplishments of the Chamber and Pine City.

This year's Annual Banquet will be held on Thursday, October 30th. The evening will begin with a social hour at 5PM, dinner at 6PM followed by the program at 7PM. Mike hopes to encourage a large number of businesses to participate in this annual banquet.

Other Items (Not on the agenda):

Rick reports that he is continuing to work with a Billboard company to create a billboard that will replicate the Blue Highway signs and point people to "Downtown Pine City". It was noted that there are many of our current members who are unable to advertise on the Highway signs due to the hours of operation and distance from the freeway restrictions.

President Robert Musgrove was in attendance today to talk about the Entrepreneur Program that the College is working on creating. The program would offer short courses on how to start a business, financing a business and focus on providing people looking to start a business with the necessary resources to make it happen.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: *Tuesday, October 7, 2008 at 1:00 PM*
Pine City Community Room, City Hall