



*Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce*

**Board of Directors Meeting**

Wednesday, October 23, 2019 – 7:30 a.m.

Chamber Board Room

**MINUTES**

Present: George Gonzalez, Tricia Dahl (via phone), Mike Funk, Kim Nelson, Mike Chandler, Angie Kolker, Geri Jensen and Liz Johnson

Ex-Officios Present: Phillip Johnson, David Todd

Absent: Angie Eggum, Kevin Miland

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**Welcome:**

- George Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**Reports**

**City of Albert Lea (David Todd):**

- The City hosted the House Bonding Committee for the bonding tour this week. The three projects they presented were the Blazing Star Trail, Blazing Star Landing and the East Main Street Flood Mitigation Project. The City's top priority is the East Main Street project.
- Albert Lea was accepted into the Main Street Program this week.
- They are working with a few new businesses on business loan applications. One of them is a glass recycling center which is a segment of Watson Recycling.

**ALEDA (Phillip Johnson):**

- Strategic Planning has begun. They held their first event this month where over 50 local businesses were represented and over 70 people attended. Currently they are compiling market data which includes an industry analysis. This will all be included in the interim report presented on November 12<sup>th</sup> at Wedgewood.
- Making it Home is underway. There are ten home groups meeting to compile ideas for Albert Lea and what they'd like to see in the community.
- ALEDA and the Chamber have moved into the new location. Signage and awnings still need to be chosen and approved through the HPC.
- Karen outreach program is going to be ran out of ALEDA's incubator office.
- Market rate rental developer is coming to tour Albert Lea next week.

**CVB:**

- None

**AL Schools (Mike Funk):**

- None.

**Riverland (Kim Nelson):**

- Enrollment is up 5% this year. Part of that increase is due to the Hormel Foundation Assurance Grant. Riverland is one of three Minnesota State Community and Technical Colleges that has a growing enrollment.
- Riverland is beginning their 5-year strategic planning session.
- Demolition for their campus improvements has begun on the Albert Lea Campus.

#### **SRRWD:**

- None

#### **Consent Items:**

- The October 2019 minutes were presented. Kim Nelson made a motion, seconded by Chandler to approve the minutes. Motion carried.
- The September 2019 Financials were not presented as they are not completed yet.

#### **Election of Officers:**

- Kim Nelson made a motion, seconded by Kolker to elect Beau Hartman as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair. Motion carried.

#### **Chamber Committee Updates:**

- Business Education Collaborative (10/4/19)
- Worksite Wellness (10/18/19)
- Ambassadors (10/16/19) – Kim attended this meeting; the group is excited to support the Small Business Saturday campaign.
- Assessment of Committees – more discussion will be had regarding committees.

#### **Old Business:**

- Albert Lea has been accepted into the Main Street Program.
- Speed Networking survey results were very positive – we will plan on hosting this event quarterly.
- Board member applications were reviewed. There are 3 open positions to fill. Kim Nelson made a motion, seconded by Hartman to accept Bobbie Jacobs and Heather Lee as new board members. Motion carried.
- Chamber Foundation is still solidifying recommendations for board members. Will revisit this next month.

#### **New Business:**

- Budget 2019-2020 will be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting.
- Noelle Hagen presented the Small Business Saturday Passport program ALEDA ran last year. This year ALEDA and the Chamber will team up and run this program together. Chamber members will be able to post their specials in this passport. Chamber Board members endorsed involvement and directed Noelle and Liz to administer it.
- George Gonzalez will be helping this week to move out the remaining furniture at the old Chamber location. The Ambassadors will be moving the last of the tents and event materials on October 30<sup>th</sup> to our new location.
- Kim Nelson reported she has heard nothing but great things about this year's Annual Meeting. She thanked everyone for stepping up and helping with it. Special thanks and a job well done to Tricia Dahl as well. The Ambassadors have shown an interest in helping out with the Annual Meeting in the future.
- Geri Jensen reported there were complaints on our social media about the School District receiving our Large Business of the Year award. Going forward we will think about retitling the award to Member of the Year to reduce confusion on what the award is.

- Conversations were had about rebranding the Chamber, who we are and what we represent. It's a great time to rebrand and spread positive awareness about the things we are doing.
- Kim Nelson reported there are quite a few outstanding membership dues that need to be followed up on. Geri will make phone calls to the outstanding members to check on their intent. Kim will send Geri some talking points.
- Tricia Dahl reported that Elaine Wallace will be starting Monday as a part-time receptionist. She will be working primarily from 9AM-1PM with the ability to be flexible. Phillip Johnson will help with her onboarding paperwork.
- The Executive Committee will be meeting to talk about staff and the transition moving forward. Staff needs more direction in the absence of an Executive Director.
- Angie Kolker asked about Board Member and Staff boundaries. Beau Hartman mentioned the Board needs to read the Bylaws and if there is a process in the absence of an Executive Director.

**Adjourn:** Motion made by Kim Nelson and seconded by Chandler to adjourn the meeting.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, November 20 @ 7:30 a.m. at Chamber Office Board Room.