



Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 27, 2021 – 7:30 a.m. Zoom Meeting

Present: Allen Hendriks, Bobbie Jacobs, Rita Moyer, Mike Funk, Angie Eggum, Heather Lee, Ryan Langemeier, Jeff Woodside, Mike Chandler, Kevin Miland, Shari Jenson and Elaine Wallace

Welcome:

- Mike Chandler called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Reports:

City of Albert Lea (Ian Rigg, City Manager):

- Vortex Storage is locating here.
- Waiting on determination on phosphorus issues at the Treatment Plant.
- Lobbying funding for municipalities and infrastructure.

Freeborn County (Tom Jensen):

- Working with ALEDA on the new Small Business Relief Grant Funding Program which ended Jan. 22. Week of Feb. 1 will be handing out funds.
- Jan. 28 are the Hearings for The Interchange and Pour House.
- Working with the 3 new Commissioners that came on board.

CVB (Holly Karsjens):

- Big Freeze – Feb. 12 & 13 with medallion hunt, scavenger hunt, retail event, hockey and fishing tournaments.
- Main Street Program – looking for new Board Member.
- Working on 2021 events with food trucks and music.
- Continue to promote takeout from restaurants and shop small to help our small businesses.

ALEDA (Phillip Johnson):

- Attended the groundbreaking of Mercy One.
- Working with the County on the Small Business Relief Grant Funding which will be handed out the week of Feb. 1. Received approximately 100 applications.
- Vortex Storage will provide approximately 26 new jobs to the area.
- Remain working on the redevelopment of the former Marketplace location.

Committee Updates:

Chamber Foundation – No update

Ag Committee – Bobbi reported. No Luncheon because of COVID protocol. Feb. 19 deadline to receive nominations for 'Farm Family of the Year'.

Ambassadors – Kathy Leidal & Melissa Barr reported that the Golf Outing to be held on July 19 at Wedgewood Cove. Hoping to do New Member visits with smaller groups of Ambassadors present.

Business & Education Collaborative – No update

Governmental Affairs – No update
Worksite Wellness – No update
Employee Resiliency – No update

Consent Items:

- December 2020 Chamber Meeting Minutes were presented. No questions or comments. Jeff Woodside made a motion to approve the December Minutes. Seconded by Bobbie Jacobs. Motion carried.
- December 2020 Chamber Financial Reports were presented. No questions or comments. Kevin Miland made a motion to approve the December financials. Seconded by Jeff Woodside. Motion carried.
- Andy Bernau with Hill, Benda, Skov & Bernau PA presented a Draft of the Year-End Financial Statement dated Sept. 2020. Discussion was held on the Ambassador Funds column which states \$5,804 in the account. Mike Funk made a motion to approve the transfer of the General Ambassador Funds of \$5,804 to the Chamber Funds (which is only a bookkeeping entry). Seconded by Kevin Miland. Motion carried. (Note: The change in board designation was \$5,804 and the other \$9,000 is a previous year adjustment for those two years of scholarships.)

Chamber Financial/Membership Updates:

- Shari reported on the checking account balance being over \$20,000 higher than it was in January of 2019. She has asked the bookkeeper but hasn't received an answer as to why such a huge difference. She will continue to look into it.
- Staff bonuses (from December). Shari did not receive a bonus because the bookkeeper told her the director does not receive one. Mike Funk asked that Mike Chandler contact Bookkeeping Cents to fulfill Shari's Christmas Bonus.
- New members and Ambassador visits – will proceed to try and schedule (if businesses are comfortable).
- 2021 Letter to Members – Board received a draft of the letter. Should let Shari know if they have any changes; otherwise, letter is ready to go out with 2021 tab.

Community Updates and Partnerships:

- Collaborative Project with NAMI and Lou Rich – on hold
- Winter Gear Drive/Partnered with United Way - through January.
- Blood Drive is scheduled for Feb. 26 at the Northbridge Mall.
- Big Freeze – Medallion Hunt – Feb. 8 thru 12.
- Photo Contest (dates TBD)
- Working with Mayo on a marketing campaign for the COVID Vaccine.
- Future Forward – partnering with School District 241 and the Business Ed Collaborative. Working with local businesses and the school regarding the workforce.
- Leadership Program – Reevaluate in June/July whether to proceed with the program this year due to ongoing COVID issues. Angie Eggum suggested that we promote that we intend to keep the program, even if we are unable to hold again, this year. Need to make sure everyone knows it's not going away.

Conferences/Meetings to Note:

- Finding Purpose Seminar – thru Blue Zones
- SE MCCE – quarterly meetings

Marketing Initiatives:

Shari wants to make everyone aware of the marketing initiatives we have out there:

- Completed our COVID style ‘Annual Meeting Presentation’ which was emailed to our members and placed on Facebook.
- ALFC Chamber Facebook page – post and share for our members and community.
- New Facebook page – Pay it Forward Freeborn County
- Weekly radio program with KATE (Weds at 11:05 a.m.) and Power 96 (Tues. at 8:30 a.m.)

Articles in Tribune:

- Letter to the Editor – Chamber Bucks and Shop Local (Nov. 13)
- Mental Health Initiatives (Dec. 8)
- Letter to the Editor – Thank you for purchasing Chamber Bucks & support Shop Local (Jan. 12)
- Collaborative marketing ad with ALEDA, CVB and Main Street – Tribune’s Progress Edition.
- New signage on front of the building.

Adjourn: Motion by Kevin Miland to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Angie Eggum.

The next Meeting will be Wednesday, February 24th, 7:30 a.m. via Zoom.