

Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors Minutes – October 23, 2020 7:30am
Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce Boardroom/Virtual Go to Meeting

PRESENT: Leslie Blake, Gary Bonick, Dawn Gilman, Trent Gordon, Matt Horist, Jennifer Johnson, Randy Leggee, Doug McAllister, Scott McKeever, Mary Miller, Ken Pringle, Beth Repta, Catie Schmit, Randy Smith, Tim Urban, Mike Wheeland and staff members Bill Eich, Nick Kubiak, Wendy Pratola, Lisa McLaughlin and guest Heather Maieritsch.

ABSENT: Scott Block, Pam Bialas, Suha Hossain, and Kelly Roewer

CALL TO ORDER: Gary Bonick called the meeting to order at 7:33 AM

CITY OF CRYSTAL LAKE: Heather Maieritsch reported that the city is continuing to reach out to attract new businesses as well as work with current businesses to help them and keep them informed with regard to available aid and information on the PPE loans. The city has ramped up their media and social media presence and have shifted gears from in person conferences to more online marketing methods to attract new businesses to Crystal Lake. Crystal Lake got some exposure in Crain's and Biz Now and Nation's Restaurant News. The city still has some \$1000 transition grants available for PPE and safety needs for businesses so if anyone knows a business that could use some help please have them contact Heather. There have some local business expansions despite the situation and some new businesses that have come to Crystal Lake. Some of those are Gem Life Supplements on Main Street, Vic Auto on Terra Cotta, Nana's New York Deli in the Commons of Crystal Lake, a new smoothie shop in the YMCA, ThEvent Space on Williams, and Goldmax on Northwest Highway. We had a couple expansions recently also with Triple Berry Café and Heartland Home Medical both expanding into the spaces next to them. If you know anyone looking to open, move, grow, or expand please have them contact Heather.

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to approve minutes by Dawn Gilman, Doug McAllister seconded the motion and motion passed.

DIVISION REPORTS: No updates from Division Vice-Chairs

FINANCE: Mary Miller reported on the September financials. Statement of Financial position shows that cash is strong considering the pandemic. We are down only \$13,000 from last year which is good considering we have not been able to run events. The statement of activities also shows that we have not had events but the staff are doing a good job watching expenses. Statement of Activities are in line with the Financial Position. No Questions or Comments. Motion to accept financials by Doug McAllister and seconded by Randy Smith - Motion passed.

MEMBERSHIP: Lisa McLaughlin reported that we have 5 new members and 49 dropped members this month with a retention rate of 90.22%. Our new members are: A-Z interiors which took over Yours and Meyn. Bookkeeping by Samantha who was a referral from Mary Margaret Maule. Compass-Gassensmith is a local realtor who branched out with her own office with a partner. Fork the Man Productions is from Chicago and moved out here a year ago. He is an independent film and video company. Thevent Space is a multiuse space for adult and school age kid events. Motion to accept membership by Scott McKeever, seconded by Ken Pringle. Motion passed. Wendy spoke regarding the 49 drops and explained that many of the drops were businesses that we were holding over since January and February and when everything shut down and that each person on the drop list has had many paper and email communications as well as texts and phone calls prior to them being dropped today. Wendy reassured the board that this purge will save money and time for staff and that future drop lists will be much smaller. There were no questions or comments regarding the drop list. Gary noted that the staff has worked hard to save these folks and he appreciates all the hard work.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Gary reminded everyone to please make your board phone calls and how important it is to communicate with our members and with the possibility of another shut down please try and patronize your local restaurants.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Bill Eich reported the chamber is reaching out to our Enhanced members and asking them for letters of intent if their renewals are coming up so available open spots can be determined. Bill has been discussing professional development avenues with MCC and discussing the possibility of offering a certification to our LIA series. We have had a few ribbon cuttings and we have a few coming up so it is nice to see that we are still having those. We are planning for future events the best we can with the changing situation. Planning is difficult. The Annual Dinner committee is planning an event for December 3rd. Bill asked the Board for feedback on how they felt about having an awards show style virtual event with a dinner voucher versus live event versus pre-recorded event. In a virtual event situation, people would organize their own watch parties and local restaurants would provide the food through vouchers. The award winners would be with the staff at the venue to receive the awards and everyone else would be online watching. It would be a luncheon or a dinner event. It could be pre-recorded and would be able to be watched at any time. The President's Council felt

strongly about keeping it traditional, in person, and moving it to May. Gary was for having the virtual event. Randy Leggee was for a virtual event, but no to encouraging watch parties. Catie thought the local restaurant voucher is a great idea. Bill noted that we could do some fun things with the virtual event and could show different folks watching and responding. Dawn noted that a lunch might be better. Jokes about PBR were frequent and widespread. Bill noted that the overall response is that the board would like an event this year. Bill has been struggling with advocacy with the county health department. The county switched from counting the positive people to counting positive tests which is how the state does it. This metric does not change the totals by a lot, but it skews the positivity rate enough that it has pushed us into the range where restrictions will be coming. We jumped from 6 to 12%. Our threshold is 8%. We are reaching out to the health department and asking them to adjust our metrics to coincide with the new counting. There was an article this morning in the Herald about the health department having a tough time with contract tracing. People are not being cooperative. We are encouraging people to wear masks. We are also reaching out to businesses and reminding them of our compliance program and of our other resources available. Additionally, we are reaching out to businesses to see if anyone needs help creating an online presence or storefront and trying to partner with our local IT and website businesses to help create online storefronts for those businesses that might need it. We are trying to prepare for any upcoming restrictions. We have gotten some feedback from members that they might go against the restrictions. We reached out to members that have left us in the last year to year and a half and indicated that we would love to have them back and that our Chamber is stable. We got a list of businesses in the City from Heather also and will be reaching out to anyone who is not a member to offer membership in the coming months. The schools are going back to remote learning. There was discussion regarding the testing being valid but the methodology the state is using is inflating our numbers.

ITEMS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION: We have a job board on our website now and it is free to all members.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Donna is not here today. The Chamber is continuing the Maximize Your Membership webinars. Bill encourages everyone to attend the program. It will keep you up to date on our newest programs, changes to our website, and how to access and use the website and member portal. There will be a Women Empowering Women event on November 3rd. It is at the Mental Health Board because a lot of people are wanting to attend. The next Out to Lunch Event will be held at Andy's unless restrictions are imposed then it will be ordered into the Chamber. There will be a Ribbon Cutting on November 12th at 4:00PM. Next month's board meeting will be on November 20th due to the holiday.

HEARD AROUND TOWN: The community Harvest will still have a food and fund drive but will not be doing the sorting event on Thanksgiving morning. The pantry has seen a 55-60% increase in people coming in. If you can donate please do because it will help keep up with the need. Every dollar given is worth 8 dollars at the food bank. 99.7% of funds go directly to purchase food to feed our neighbors. Cash contributions have a tremendous effect. The Pantry has a new Executive Director.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Dawn and seconded by Randy. Motion passed.