

Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors Minutes – December 18, 2020 7:30am
Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce Boardroom/Virtual Zoom

PRESENT: Pam Bialas, Leslie Blake, Scott Block, Stacy Brown, Dawn Gilman, Trent Gordon, Matt Horist, Suha Hossain, Jennifer Johnson, Randy Leggee, Doug McAllister, Scott McKeever, Ken Pringle, Kelly Roewer, Beth Repta, Catie Schmit, Randy Smith, Mike Wheeland, Tim Urban, and staff members Bill Eich, Donna Sather, Nick Kubiak, Wendy Pratola, Lisa McLaughlin, and guest Heather Maieritsch.

ABSENT: Gary Bonick

CALL TO ORDER: Randy Smith called the meeting to order at 7:33 AM

CITY OF CRYSTAL LAKE: Heather Maieritsch reported that the city has Grants available. The city applied for \$600,000 and added an additional \$150,000 of their own funds so there is a total of \$750,000 of funds available for tax generating businesses that are retailers or restaurants in Crystal Lake that have experienced lost revenue. The grant is based on the loss and can be \$5000 up to \$15,000. The application is easy and simple. The first round of grants spent \$200,000 and those checks are going out today. There is still a lot left to give. Round 2 of applications has 17 applications so far. \$600,000 of the money must be used by January 31st or it will be lost. The grant is designed for small businesses and they must have less than 3 units. Also, Visit McHenry County and McHenry County Restaurant Association is collaborating on a project that will have area restaurants offer \$50 gift cards for sale with the businesses donating a \$10 card to the food bank for each card sold. Please help spread the word about these programs! We still have new businesses coming to Crystal Lake. If anyone has questions, please contact Heather. Ken asked about whether the grants will need to be paid back or will be taxed. The \$1000 business transition grants and impacted business grants are straight grants so they will not be paid back but will be taxed as revenue.

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to accept by Dawn Gilman, Second by Ken Pringle

DIVISION REPORTS: Jennifer Johnson thanked everyone for attending the Annual Board and Ambassador Holiday Luncheon via Zoom. Tim Urban reported that the YP's will not be resuming meeting until the spring of 2021. Congratulations to The Urban family for the addition of their new baby son Henry. Pam from community service division reported that there is a people in need flyer attached for the board to view. Pam presented a nomination for Haisler's bootery to receive the PICA award. They have been a part of the community for over 100 years, have been heavily involved with the community, and exemplify the ideals of the PICA award. They have also been a member of the Chamber of Commerce for 80 years and were one of our first members. Kelly Roewer presented a nomination for Big Brothers Big Sisters. Big Brothers Big Sisters has been impacting the lives of children and helping them reach their potential and change their perspectives for over 100 years. For over 35 years Big Brothers Big Sisters of McHenry County has been providing local children in need with positive adult mentors and hosting activities that positively impact the children like reading, playing catch, going to museums, just talking, etc. This has created 69 percent increase in school attendance, 73 percent were impacted in a decision to go to college, 78 percent less likely to do drugs, and 58 percent less likely to use alcohol. With the help of volunteers, they have been able to impact the lives of many children. They have been Chamber of Commerce members since 2011. We have two great nominations. Motion to nominate Big Brothers Big Sisters for a PICA award by Dawn Gilman and seconded by Tim Urban. Motion passed and Big Brothers Big Sisters of McHenry County will receive the PICA award for this quarter. Leslie Blake graciously accepted and thanked the Board.

FINANCE: Mary reported on Finances. Statement of financial position shows that we are down \$33,000 due to the pandemic, which is not surprising. The statement of activities shows almost a break even and Mary thanked the staff is doing a great job of controlling costs. We are down from budget and down from last year but hopefully we will be able to recover some in spring. We had a good amount of cash going into the pandemic, so we are doing ok. There is a bill in congress right now discussing expenses against PPP loans which would make it not taxable. Also, they are including Chambers of Commerce in the next wave of PPP loans. Mary is hoping that will pass and it will significantly help us get through the rest of the pandemic. Jennifer asked about the spike in liability. It is from the vendors from expo that we are holding their money. This will affect expo cash revenue in spring. Motion to accept financials by Leslie Blake and seconded by Pam Bialas - Motion passed.

MEMBERSHIP: Lisa McLaughlin reported that we have 6 new members and 20 dropped members with a retention rate of 86.97%. Our new members are: BMO Harris location in Huntley was added as a new affiliate location due to a change in their membership level, Calco Controls Manufacturing in Crystal Lake near Eisenmann is interested in workforce development and our job board, Incredible Builders is a referral from Stacy Brown and looking to expand his reach in the county and the golf league, Jude's Cocktails and Nosh owned by Paul Leech from the Cottage and Hickory Hall, is across from the Raue and is beautiful and features small plates and Gin cocktails as well as a full bar, Schmidt Orthodontics in Cary is looking to expand their reach, and Bob Blazier was voted as a life member.

Also please note that we actually had more new members this year than last year and that December is always slow. We do have a lot of drops, but we are working hard on our enhanced memberships and are sold out of all our top 3 levels. We only have about 9 remaining Engage levels left to sell and there are some folks that will be put into the Elevate level in the coming months. Jennifer asked for the limited levels to be noted on the report next month. Inspire has 1, Visionary has 2, Invest has 3, Engage has 12, and Elevate is unlimited. Wendy noted that many of those enhanced levels will be due in January so there will be an increase in revenue by the end of December or beginning of January. Also, our inspire level paid their \$10,000 dues on December 1 which is not reflected on our financial statements for November. Motion to accept membership by Kelly Roewer, seconded by Doug McAllister seconded and motion passed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Please make the calls on the Board call list. They are valuable, especially now, in providing relief or a chance to talk, exchange ideas, and speak about business in the area, and just knowing that others in the community care.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Bill Eich reported Leaders in Action will be Feb 4 through March 18 and ending with a panel discussion. The Home and Business Expo is being planned as an outdoor event, either at Crystal Lake South or MCC, and will be moved to late spring, possibly May. State of the Community will be held February 5 and is scheduled at D'andrea Banquets but may be virtual depending on the situation and, in that case, we will send out the booklets to everyone. Mark Solak has begun contacting folks and you may be seeing him shortly as we are actively working on the Community Guide. Some new features this year will include a more interactive digital version. The distribution for the paper copy will be the end of March. Please note that the McHenry County Department of Health changed their protocol for isolation from 10 days to 14 days for positive covid-19 cases. Also, the Chamber switched our database software over in the beginning of December to the Chamber Master program and the website went live this week. Everyone will have received an email to create a log in and password to access our info hub. It will come from info@clchamber.com and will be sent to the primary contact of each business. If you did not get the email check your junk file and contact Nick if you need help. We updated as much information for everyone that we could. The new directory is much improved and looks a lot different. We also added a separate domain explorecrystallake.com which will provide more information in an easier format including community links and will be attached to our member directory. It should be a one stop shop for everything crystal lake. Beth Repta commented that the website looks more modern, very nice and is awesome.

ITEMS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION: Mary recommended the board to designate \$10,000 to reserves for the FSA account. Finance committee opened a zero-balance sweep account for the FSA but in the event that all staff need their money at once we wanted to designate the reserve to ensure that those funds are set aside for that. Mary made a motion to approve the creation of board designated reserve for \$10,000 for the FSA. Seconded by Dawn Gilman. Motion carried.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Donna noted that we had a maximize your membership event yesterday and it was very successful. We are proceeding with some events in the new year. We have a few ribbon cuttings. Jude's will be having a ribbon cutting on January 12 at 11am. Strikers will be having a ribbon cutting and tour on January 14. Some year-end statistics. In 2019 we had 48 ribbon cuttings. In 2020 we had 13 ribbon cuttings. In 2019 we held 33 mixers. In 2020 only 8 mixers. Hopefully, next year will be much improved. Our new system is very nice, makes registration for events simple, and you can even add them to your calendar. Lisa asked that the board please let the Chamber know if they are not getting confirmation emails. Leadership tables will be getting access to the portals as well and we are working on that.

HEARD AROUND TOWN: Jude's is amazing. Check it out. Leslie wanted to let everyone know that the community outreach this season has been really great for all the NFP's. We are so lucky to live in this community. Dawn seconded that sentiment. This year the Salvation Army has been able to double their outreach efforts to nearly \$600,000 for rent, utilities, and car repairs to folks in need due to the generosity of the community. Bill is also seeing this at the food pantry also and even with the 55% increase in need they are still able to meet the needs due to the increase in donations. Ken Pringle is working with a manufacturer of N95 masks that are made in the United States and can be sold in smaller quantities low as 25 masks. He noted that the masks are well made with 4 layers and are comfortable and have no gapping and easier breathing. Some of the proceeds (5 cents per mask) of the sales of the masks may go back to charity. If the Chamber board members were to each buy a box of masks and donate them to area businesses, and some of the proceeds go to charity, it might be a good thing. Please contact Ken Pringle if you are interested. A box is around \$62. Boxes could be donated to area small businesses and restaurants. Ken will get more details for anyone interested and email it to the board and ambassadors via Donna.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 on a motion by Randy and seconded by Dawn Gilman. Motion passed. Merry Christmas all!