

Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors Minutes – January 22, 2021 7:30am
Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce Boardroom/Virtual Zoom

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

ABSENT: Stacy Brown, Trent Gordon, Mary Miller, Beth Repta

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

CITY OF CRYSTAL LAKE: Heather Maieritsch reported that the city still has Grants available. The city applied for \$600,000 and added an additional \$150,000 of their own funds so there was 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 city is winding down the grants and there is about \$150,000 left so businesses are urged to get their applications in asap. \$600,000 of the money must be used by January 31st or it will be lost. So far 69 businesses have applied for the impacted business relief grants and 22 for the \$1000 business transition grants. The city has lost some businesses this past year due to the pandemic but are encouraged to see a lot of recent activity with developers and brokers calling recently. New housing developments is underway for The Springs Luxury Rental Residences off Route 31 behind the Walmart. There will be 280 units with a clubhouse, pool, and dog park. They should be completed late spring/early summer. Development is still active for Crystal Court and 95 Crystal Lake Avenue as well. On the retail side, the city is starting to see interest in filling some of the vacancies in retail spaces and are encouraged at the interest they are seeing.

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to accept by Dawn Gilman, Second by Doug McAllister

DIVISION REPORTS: Jennifer Johnson reported that the Ambassadors are working on revisions to the Ambassador policy and procedures and are trying to encourage more proactive mentoring.

FINANCE: Mary was not available, so Bill Eich and Wendy Pratola reported on Finances. The Chamber applied for the second round of PPP and Home State Bank is working on that process for the Chamber. We applied for \$63,000 which would really help offset the losses from the previous year. The statement of Activities shows that we are ahead of budget on dues and overall revenue right now. Some of this is due to enhanced memberships signing up as of January 1. Some Enhanced members have chosen to change their renewal date to reflect their budget year starting January 1. Some were moved to January based on the combining of their previous enhanced membership renewal and regular renewal dates that were combined to 1 date. We are down \$40,000 from last year, mainly due to lack of events. Motion to accept Financials by Randy Smith. Jennifer seconded and motion passed.

MEMBERSHIP: Lisa McLaughlin reported that we have 6 new members and 23 dropped members with a retention rate of 84.61%. Our new members are: AJE Assoc, P.C. – He had a good year and decided to jump in. Charles Dunlop and Associates – rejoined after dropping out a few months ago. DJD Marketing – Thought the value was good compared to other chambers. DUI and Behavioral Health Counseling Svc – Wants to get the word out about their company and thought our chamber was a great opportunity. Lisa will connect them with Scott Block. Food Shed Coop – was a member for several years but dropped out when progress for their project was lagging. They have a location now and are moving forward so they rejoined. Hempstock Farms – is looking to expand their reach. Hempstock is a hemp grower and hemp product seller. Not CBD focused as of right now. Has an onsite kitchen and may do some baked goods, but mostly focusing on hemp product line. It was noted by Heather that nobody has applied for a dispensary license in our area. Lisa asked about vape places being candidates for dispensaries and Heather noted that the dispensaries are a different sales model mostly. Bill asked about registered agency status for places that sell product. Heather will get back to him on that. Motion to accept membership by Ken Pringle, seconded by Randy Leggee seconded and motion passed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Please make the calls on the Board call list. The calls let them know that we are there for them and that we appreciate their support.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Bill Eich reported that the Chamber has begun phasing to in person events slowly and are looking forward to eased restrictions coming soon. Leaders in Action will be Feb 4 through March 18 and ending with a panel discussion. The Chamber is grateful to Scott and the Mental Health Board for letting us use their space. WE have 25-30 participants and will be having the event both in person and via Zoom. Speakers for the event are listed on the website. We will be recording each session and the recordings will be available to the participants for one week after the original date. Sponsors will be listed on the videos.

State of the Community will be entirely virtual and will be presented on February 5. This is a break-even event anyway so it will not impact the budget by being virtual. The Chamber will combine presentations from the City of Crystal Lake and Village of Lakewood with sponsorship video in between and create one video with corresponding digital booklets that will be available online. The Chamber will print a few books out and have them available at the Chamber office. The video will be a YouTube video that will be able to be accessed anytime. The Home and Business Expo is being planned as an outdoor event at the Office Max parking lot. The Chamber is working on securing permission from the landlord and will be opening registration as soon as we do. The Expo will be held May 22, 2021 with a rain date of June 5. Vendors will need to provide their own 10x10 tents. On Angels Wings will be there and doing a pet adoption event. We will also have a community tent and offer spots for local groups to showcase their talents. We may also host a petting zoo. Mark Solak has been contacting folks and we are actively working on putting together this year's Community Guide. We are encouraging local businesses that are not current members to join and be a part of this year's guide. The City is considering allowing the Independence Day Parade. The Chamber is working with local police to determine any restrictions for this year. The Lakeside Fest may not be happening this year, but the parade is separate and will go on. The parade does not generate revenue, it is break even event. We are encouraging the local schools to participate this year and give the parade a real hometown pride feel as well as give the kids a chance to showcase talent that they did not get to do this year at school because of the pandemic.

ITEMS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION: no items for consideration

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Donna reported that we will be having a very successful Women Empowering Women event Feb 2 with many participants signed up. We also have a very big Business Builders event coming up with the topic being Mandatory Vaccines in the Workplace. The event will have many non-members in attendance so that is a great opportunity to market the Chamber. April 17 will be Community Clean Up. People will register online and pick up their kits at the Chamber of Nature Center the week before the event. The day of the event people will report directly to their assigned spot. The police will be doing a drug take back event that day with no limits. The Chamber is working to secure AMS to shred documents and looking for a dedicated truck for electronic recycling. Shredding and Electronics would be limited. We will be having mixers in late spring and over the summer. We have two mixers scheduled for August, one for April, and 5 people that are waiting to reschedule their events. Donna is going to try to put together a spring fling event at the Chamber in McCormick Park with possible food trucks. Board had discussion of food trucks and the advantages of joining the Chamber and having the trucks be able to increase their business by attending our events. Gary noted that the Monday Night Football event went well and had no virtual games. Donna projected profit to be around \$4000.

HEARD AROUND TOWN: Ken Pringle is working with a manufacturer of N95 masks that are made in the United States and can be sold in quantities as low as 25 masks the discounted price to Chamber is \$56 per box. %15 of the sales of the masks will go back to a charity of choice. \$8 per box will go to Charity. It was noted that the food pantry would be a good recipient. This program is not being rolled out to entire membership because the mask company is not a member of our chamber.

Big Brothers and Big Sisters is having their virtual event February 26. There will be a video presentation and silent auction.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 on a motion by Jennifer and seconded by Dawn Gilman. Motion passed. Next Meeting will be February 26, 2021 at 7:30am.