

Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors Minutes – September 24, 2021 7:30am
Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce Boardroom/Virtual Zoom

PRESENT: Eric Beier, Scott Block, Gary Bonick, Stacy Brown, Pierre Garcia, Dawn Gilman, Trent Gordon, Matt Horist, Josh Howell, Scott McKeever, Kathy Powell, Ken Pringle, Kelly Roewer, Catie Schmit, Randy Smith, Tim Urban, Ben Volling, Mike Wheeland, and staff members Bill Eich, Donna Sather, Nick Kubiak, Wendy Pratola, Lisa McLaughlin, and guests Heather Maieritsch and Mike Splitt.

ABSENT: Leslie Blake, Suha Hossain, and Beth Repta

CALL TO ORDER: Randy Smith called the meeting to order at 7:37 AM

CITY OF CRYSTAL LAKE/MAYORS REPORT: Heather reported that Crystal Lake is seeing a lot of momentum. We have a lot of movement in the housing market to spur growth in the community. Woodlore Estates was a catalyst to start the growth and is continuing to grow along with other developments such as the Springs, Redwood, and Main and Crystal Lake Avenue as well as Crystal Court mixed developments. There will be over 1000 housing units coming into Crystal Lake over the next year or so. Casey's will be opening off Sands Road and Thorntons will be opening on route 31 across from the hospital. There is interest in some of the out lots near Walmart and the entire corridor of route 31 is becoming a hot area. Cantina 52 is opening downtown today. Abalabax Books is opening as well and will have online as well as storefront book sales. Johnny Appleseed is this weekend and there will be a lot of activities. Sushi U is moving into the old Which Wich space. Andy's Burrito Express is moving into the old Galloway's subs on Randall. An Asian restaurant is taking over the old 815 Chophouse space and opening in January. Raising Cains will open in the end of October and McAlister's Deli will be opening by the end of the year. A new Mexican restaurant concept will be taking over the old Rib House location on 176. The Gas station on the corner of Dole will be a convenience store. Ralph's General Store by West Beach has a new owner. The City of Crystal Lake has created a "Clearly Crystal Lake" campaign and is working on some new videos to market to developers and both manufacturing and retail/restaurant businesses. This past week the city was featured in the Heartland Realtor Magazine. Next week we are going to be featured in Crain's and Biz Now. Dawn Gilman asked about VRBO opportunities in Crystal Court. Heather noted that there is a possible hotel concept going into that space, but it is all in the planning stages.

Haig noted that Heather covered most of the new news. Haig feels that there is tremendous momentum going on right now and he is very pleased overall. With all the energy going on, Haig's goal is to enhance the aesthetic of the community and the arts and entertainment offerings in our community. Haig thanked the staff for all their hard work. Haig went to Cantina 52 last night and it was incredible. The Dole Market was rated number 1 in Illinois by the American Farmland Trust and Farmers Market Coalition. They were in the top 3 in the Midwest and top 12 in the nation in under a year. If you make it cool, people will come. The staff over there has done an incredible job.

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to accept by Tim Urban, seconded by Dawn Gilman, and motion carried.

FINANCE: Matt reported that our cash position is strong. We are holding some funds for the network groups. Statement of Activities is tough to compare year to year because there is not much to report as it is the beginning of the fiscal year. Also a few of our events were moved between the last two years. So, the timing of activities has affected our statement of activities. We collected a lot of dues the last two months and had quite a few new members join so it makes it look like we are way over our budget, but it will level off as the year moves on because our dues are evenly divided by 12 months. Motion to accept financials by Ken Pringle, seconded by Mike Wheeland. Motion Carried.

DIVISION REPORTS: Tim Urban reported on the Young Professionals. The YP's have had a struggle since covid but they have finally started to get some traction again. They are planning a grow event on the 20th; it will be a professional development type of event. In November the YP's will be working with the food pantry again and will follow up with a holiday dinner. December is an off month. The YP's are looking for some new members and looking to increase their numbers. It is a great way to meet people and get involved. It is a very social group. Please encourage your staff to come check YP's out.

Stacy Brown reported on Women Empowering Women. The WEW group is back to in person meetings. WEW has done a great job during covid, and we have had a strong showing throughout. We have been having over 30 in person each month. WE have had some new women join and some of them have in turn joined the chamber. Men are welcome to attend WEW. The philanthropy for this year is Girls on the Run and they have already exceeded their goal. In Lieu of a scramble they did an online auction, and it was successful. They raised over \$1400 at that event. They have been creative with how to keep folks engaged. Its going great and growing. We have a lot of people registered for October.

Ben Volling nominated Patti Lutz for the PICA award for Q2. Patti has been a business banker at Home State Bank for over 40 years. She is an ambassador, a very active member of the community, is on the board of the Dole, and she has helped a lot of businesses in Crystal Lake. Ben is looking for some more members on the Business Development Committee. Motion to nominate Patti Lutz by Stacy Brown and seconded by Dawn Gilman. Motion carried. Wendy passed out division descriptions to all present board members.

Divisions were discussed and Randy noted that they are an important piece of understanding what is going on with the community and the membership and are a great tool for engaging folks that are members and are not on the board. It can also really increase the presence of your business and our Chamber, as well as build the connections that are so important.

MEMBERSHIP: Lisa McLaughlin reported that we have 17 new and reactivated members, and 8 dropped members with a retention rate of 99.10%. New members are as follows: Envirosip/Boss Straw is an environmentally safe straw manufacturer out of Woodstock, Algonquin Township, Carmel's Creative Corner, Helzberg Diamonds rejoined, Heartland Payment Systems, Pique Technologies, Atlas Spinal Care, Gallant Construction Co., Crystal Lake Girls Fastpitch Softball, The Northstar Foundation, @Properties, Take 5 Oil Change, Arden Rose Home Care, M'Lady Nissan, D'aprile Properties, Midwest Lending, and Education to Empowerment was dropped and put back in as a subsidiary of MCC. It was noted that looking at the reports that we seem to lose the majority of our drops in the first year of their membership. Communication with the new members is very important. We have a new member breakfast coming up next week. The chamber has not been able to have that event in the past year. The new member webinar is open to all. Ken suggested sending out a survey to find out who is interested in getting involved. We need to increase the number of members that are involved in the Chamber in committees and leadership tables and generally involved. It was suggested to start a growth campaign. Stacy Brown is going to have a business builder with the topic of how to be involved and successful with engagement and networking. We need to encourage and help people learn to take advantage of networking opportunities and opportunities to get involved. Nick is working on a welcome campaign with communication introducing them to the staff and the benefits and opportunities within the chamber over a period of time so that they feel welcome but not overwhelmed. Ben asked about how the board can help the Chamber make our new members feel more welcome and help them get engaged. Bill mentioned that the board call list is a great way to try to engage our members. The Chamber is working on letting businesses know that their Chamber benefits extend to all their employees. Randy also added that we should put a personal goal for your calls each month. Maybe get one person on your list to attend one event. Invite them to try a committee, a group, or an event. We need to listen to them and try to help them. Motion to accept membership by Stacy Brown and seconded by Catie Schmit. Motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Randy hopes the revised call list will be easier to read. Please listen and get them engaged. It was noted that if you don't get any luck with the calls try a text or email. Some folks follow a form for each call. Encourage connections. The members in motion event was a great event for connecting.

Randy recognized and thanked our retiring board members Scott Block and Beth Repta for their service to the Chamber and the community. They did not attend in person. Their awards will be sent to them.

The Leaders in Action committee will be meeting in September. District 155 called and they are looking to kick off the Made in Your Own Backyard event in November. It was very successful in the past and we are looking forward to another great event. It is a great way to introduce these careers and fields not only to the kids but to the parents as well.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Bill Eich reported that the Chamber has had a bunch of ribbon cuttings and an out to lunch at Moontime BBQ this past week. It has been nice to see the excitement as we celebrate with them. The Chamber is offering a referral program to recognize the folks that help us out as well as support chamber businesses with the gift cards that we purchase for the referring members. We have a Chamber private Facebook member group. Please join, share, and interact there. Bill will create a survey as Ken suggested. The Covid metrics are interesting right now. The numbers are down but the hospital beds are up. It has been indicated that our hospitals are being utilized for things other than covid now. There has been a big outbreak of RSV in our area.

ITEMS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION: None

UPCOMING EVENTS: Bill reported that there will be a ribbon cutting and mixer for boss straw. The mixer was left off the events sheet. The President's Council will be hosting a new member breakfast at the end of September (30th) for all new members that have joined in the past year.

HEARD AROUND TOWN:

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 am on a motion by Kathy Powell and seconded by Ben Volling. Motion passed