

Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors Minutes – December 17, 2021, 7:30am
Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce Boardroom/Virtual Zoom

PRESENT: Eric Beier, Leslie Blake (Zoom), Gary Bonick (Zoom), Stacy Brown, Pierre Garcia, Dawn Gilman, Trent Gordon (Zoom), Cameron Hubbard, Suha Hossain (Zoom), Josh Howell, Scott McKeever, Kathy Powell, Ken Pringle (Zoom), Kelly Roewer (Zoom), Randy Smith, Mike Wheeland, and staff members Bill Eich, Wendy Pratola, Donna Sather, Nick Kubiak, and guests Heather Maieritsch and Haig Haleblian.

ABSENT: Matt Horist, Tim Urban, Catie Schmit, Ben Volling, Lisa McLaughlin

CALL TO ORDER: 7:35 AM

CITY OF CRYSTAL LAKE/MAYORS REPORT: Heather reported that the city is in discussion with Amazon regarding building a 186,000 square foot facility that would create up to 500 new jobs. It is going to the city council next week. There will be 1000 new housing units going into Crystal Lake over the next two years which can add 1-4 people per unit. Aside from the two developments that are currently building, 95 Crystal Lake Ave. will be a mix of townhome and apartment rentals with retail. This will be located on the corner of Crystal Lake Avenue and Main Street. The development in the old Walmart space is still in the process also. The rents for the units will be market rates and will be affordable for young professionals. Eric Beier noted that there are traffic concerns on the Amazon project. Dawn asked what the limit of non-related people living in a unit for the city is. Heather will get back to her. Tasty Bistro will be going into the old 815 Chophouse location and opening in February. Sushi U will be taking over the old which wich spot and opening in late January. Haig reported that it was very cool to see 500 Santas running down Williams Street at the annual Santa run. Mike Wheeland beat everyone. The city council will meet regarding Amazon next week. The traffic issues should not be bad as the vans will be staggered after the morning rush around 10 am and returning around 7-8 pm. There will be a maximum of 50 semi-trucks. Crystal Lake is watching Palatine and other surrounding cities to see how they manage it. There will be 500 people shopping and buying gas and hopefully living and discovering Crystal Lake. Crystal Lake is in a good position right now. There is no real estate available in town. We only have a month and a half of inventory compared to the 6-7 months' worth that other communities have. As soon as something comes on the market it is gone. Values have gone up. The city is in good shape financially. The city is putting a bid in to buy the Metra station property in downtown Crystal Lake. Pingree station is not for sale. This will be a positive thing for the city as they will be able to control the station and the land around the station as well, including depot park. There was an investment firm interested in the property also, so the city feels it is in the city's best interest to buy the property. The city will have a year to do their studies and due diligence and if everything goes according to plan the city will be buying it. The State of the Community will be February 4th and Haig will be speaking about Crystal Lake along with The Village of Lakewood.

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to accept by Dawn, seconded by Mike Wheeland, and motion carried.

DIVISION REPORTS: Stacy Brown reported that WEW is thriving. It is an amazing group. They have met the first Tuesday of the month without fail even during the pandemic. They adjusted to Zoom during that time but kept moving forward. Instead of charging a membership fee they ask for donations. They have been meeting since August in person. Meetings have been consistently around 30-35 people. Prior to the pandemic the numbers were closer to 60 but the numbers are still strong. Men are welcome to attend the meetings. The philanthropy chosen to support this year was Girls on the Run. They have raised \$5500 so far this year. The goal was \$3500 so they have far surpassed their goal. WEW meetings can be a springboard for new members to the chamber. Sometimes women come to a meeting and end up joining the Chamber. WEW prides themselves in the fact that their monthly speakers are quality speakers that provide something attendees can come away with. The next meeting will be in January and the topic will be dos and don'ts of headshots. Tim Urban was out sick. Nick Kubiak reported that the YP's toured the Food Pantry in November then went to Duke's for a holiday social gathering. The YP's worked the lakeside fest again this summer and were able to donate some of the proceeds. They usually donate up \$4-5,000 per year. It is nice to see the groups interacting with the community and giving back as well. Bill Eich read the YP's PICA nomination for Erin McElroy. Motion to award the PICA for Q3 to Erin McElroy by Dawn Gilman and seconded by Mike Wheeland. Motion Passed

FINANCE: Matt was absent, so Wendy reported that looking at the Statement of Financial Position the Chamber is ahead of last year at this time which is good and to be expected. The Chamber is still showing a strong position overall, but currently our cash flow in our checking/operating account is low. Wendy expects that to change in January as 17 of our enhanced members renew between January and March. Wendy also noted that we are still waiting for Employee Retention Credits that were expected to come in months ago. The research Wendy has done is showing that the average time for refunds to come in has been 6-8 months. Wendy has tried to contact the IRS and was on hold for over 4 hours. She will try to call again next week and hoping the holidays will make the lines slower. The refund expected is \$45,000. The statement of activities shows that the revenue is positive for the quarter, and we are showing a positive net income number. We are ahead on dues. We had a bill come in extremely late that was from the golf outing. It was the bill for golf and

food and beverage from the country club. Our tax returns and audit were already completed so we had a meeting with the CPA firm that completed our yearly audit and returns, and decided that we would make a journal entry to move the expense back to last year but not amend the tax documents. When they complete next year's audit, they will notate the prior year adjustment and account for it. They felt that moving the bill would not affect the returns and it would be cost prohibitive to redo all the documents. With the bill moved back into last year, our reports are more accurate. We are ahead of budget overall by 10%. Bill noted that the auditors meeting presented 2 options, the one we chose and the option of redoing all the documents which was several thousand dollars. We did choose the less expensive option. A question about dues was raised and it was noted by Bill dues have been staggered somewhat and also the structure changed last fall. Kathy asked about operating costs. Wendy noted that our expenses for two new computers as well as our operating software has brought some expenses up but overall, we are watching our expenses and doing a good job of keeping things down. We no longer pay for the expensive plaques since we switched to window clings. Last year we also had a large marketing expense when we changed our pricing structure which may account for the difference between this year and last year at this time. We also had a furnace repair last year. Leslie asked if the report the board gets could show the breakdown of which levels people are renewing at. Wendy indicated that it could.

Motion to approve financial documents by Josh Howell and seconded by Mike Wheeland. Motion approved.

Dawn requested the Board to vote to accept the yearly financials and tax returns. Motion to approve by Mike Wheeland and seconded by Scott McKeever. Motion approved.

Bill requested that the Board move \$20,000 from the money market reserve account to the operating account for a few months until the enhanced memberships come in and the ERC refund comes in. Dawn requested a motion to approve the transfer. Motion to move funds by Eric Beier, seconded by Scott McKeever, Motion approved.

MEMBERSHIP: Lisa McLaughlin was absent. Donna Sather reported that we have eight dropped members and 2 new members, with a retention rate of 98.99%. New members are as follows: Crystal Lake Social – which is a mobile bar company. You supply the alcohol and mixers, and they do the mixing for you. Looking for involvement and promotion. Baird and Warner – Capetillo looking for involvement. Motion to accept membership by Stacy and seconded by Dawn and Pierre. Motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Randy requested the Board to vote on adding Cameron Hubbard to the Board of Directors. Cameron Hubbard was approved by a unanimous vote. Randy encouraged the board to try a main number or a text or email if the contact number is not working. Also please encourage people to participate and let them know about upcoming events. Please attend ribbon cuttings and mixers and promote those events.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Bill Eich reported that it is an interesting time of year at the Chamber. We have completed all our events for the calendar year and are actively working on planning for next year. It is great to be able to schedule events at actual venues and to be able to have events with no restrictions. Donna is doing a great job getting events set up. The holiday luncheon was wonderful, thank you to everyone who set up and participated. The Board and Ambassadors raised \$500, and the Ambassadors matched those donations. \$1000 will go to Pioneer Center. Thanks to all who signed up to ring bells. Randy noted the buckets were full. They got a lot of feedback. Most of it good. They got one negative, but he still ended up donating. The December magazine is a printed version dedicated to our area nonprofit organizations. Many of our area nonprofits submitted articles. The Gems Luncheon is April 19 at Boulder Ridge. State of the Community Lunch is February 4 at D'Andrea. Leaders in Action will be starting January 27 and will be held at the Community Foundation, and it will be more intimate. We had a very well attended mixer at the Community Foundation last week. The goal was 100 and they surpassed that. Last year Leaders in Action was at the mental health board, and they were able to spread way out with covid and also have a wall for zoom. This year it will be in person only, there will be two more weeks, two more presenters, and it will still be recorded. We started a referral bonus program a few months ago and it has been interesting to see the interactions around that. We offer either a Chamber member gift card or free advertising through the Chamber. It has been a nice combination of both options. Randy noted that there has been a scam going around where someone takes Randy's name and creates a fake email asking for gift cards. Many board members have seen that or had it happen to them also. Randy did not request gift cards it is a scam. Wendy noted that if anyone gets one Nick has some fun JPEGs of fake gift cards with off color names that he created for her when she got one of those fake emails. See nick if you want one.

ITEMS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION: None

UPCOMING EVENTS: Donna updated everyone on the events. Donna thanked Mike Wheeland and Stacy Brown for presenting at business builders on being successful in the Chamber. There will be an out to lunch event held at Chingon, the new tex mex BBQ restaurant that went into the old rib house on 176, on January 19. Recap for the year we had 14 mixers in 2021 compared to 8 in 2020. We had 27 ribbon cuttings in 2021 compared to 13 in 2020. We are improving. We have the State of the Community on February 4 and registration is open. Donna asked Cameron and Heather about the parade date and if it was approved. Heather will call Donna. Donna would like to open parade registration. The Bell ringers raised \$993. Community Clean Up will be happening at the Chamber in person. The Golf Classic will be June 27. Registrations for those are not open yet.

HEARD AROUND TOWN: The pink building sold, and all are hoping it will be painted. It is a roofing company and they have already mentioned painting it.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 8:35 am on a motion by Cameron Hubbard and seconded by Mike Wheeland. Motion passed. Merry Christmas all.