

Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors Minutes – February 25, 2022 7:30am
Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce Boardroom/Virtual Zoom

PRESENT: Eric Beier, Leslie Blake (Zoom), Stacy Brown, Pierre Garcia, Dawn Gilman, Trent Gordon (Zoom), Matt Horist (Zoom), Suha Hossain (Zoom), Scott McKeever, Kathy Powell, Ken Pringle (Zoom), Kelly Roewer, Catie Schmit (Zoom), Randy Smith, Tim Urban, Mike Wheeland, and staff members Bill Eich, Wendy Pratola, Nick Kubiak, Lisa McLaughlin, Kristin Parkin, and guests Heather Maieritsch.

ABSENT: Gary Bonick, Cameron Hubbard, Josh Howell

CALL TO ORDER: 7:35 AM

CITY OF CRYSTAL LAKE/MAYORS REPORT: Heather reported that the city is ready for spring and the new developments that will begin in spring and summer. The city hired a marketing and branding company out of Chicago that has worked with other area municipalities to create a new marketing campaign “Clearly Crystal Lake” that is designed to show that Crystal Lake is the clear leader for business and a clear choice. It is a play off the water droplet from Three Oaks and Crystal Lake. The city rolled out a new website along with this marketing campaign and it is very visually friendly and inviting. It is designed to attract people to our community and contains testimonials, available properties map, it talks about the market, and 8-9 videos showing the community. Clearlycrystallake.com. McAlister’s Deli and Sushi U opened recently. Edge Fitness is looking to open next month. Some other businesses that are opening will be an art store, Froggy Jumps Bouncy House Rental, Advance Auto Collision, Pingree Auto, and CJM Roofing and Construction going into the Pink Building on NW Highway (they will be painting it). It will gradually take the place of I shop Crystal Lake.

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

DIVISION REPORTS: Nothing to report

FINANCE: Matt reported the Statement of Financial Position shows a big flip from other current assets to our checking and savings. The Chamber did collect the ERC from the IRS, that was received early February, and is now in our accounts. No questions on the statement of Financial Position. The Statement of Activities versus prior year overall shows we are a little behind last year in dues income. Some of that is due to the timing and change in dues structure with the big change being the ERC funds again. We are running close to break even, and we are running right on budget. Tim Urban asked if there is any concern over the change in dues revenue. Matt Horist indicated that it was expected, as it was budgeted to be less. He also noted that timing of activities has changed for some of our events, and it will be difficult to compare year to year until they straighten back out. Wendy noted that several of our enhanced members have paid since the report. The report will look much different next month. Kathy asked about the variance in activities is due to timing of the events. Example of these are Expo, Annual Dinner, and Golf outing. That were all moved to different months. Expo will not happen at all in this fiscal year. Office Expenses is much lower due to watching our expenses. We also changed our cleaning services from weekly to bi-weekly since Covid is better. Motion to accept financial statements by Mike Wheeland, seconded by Dawn Gilman. Motion carried.

MEMBERSHIP: Lisa McLaughlin reported that there were 9 new members and 11 dropped members. New members added are Bijoux Bride, Hickory Hall (rejoin), Kristine Ensor Writing, Majestic Glow Salon and Spa, Pinemoor Pizza, Powur Solar Power, Refuge for Women Chicago, Sun Run Solar, and McHenry County Detachment Marine Corps League. These members will all be included in this year’s community guide. The Community Guide creates a sense of urgency to get members to join, and it is a great benefit for our membership. Ken asked about why 27 members have dropped within the first year. Lisa indicated that some members drop out if it is not a good fit, if they do not use the benefits, have not attended anything, or do not have time to get involved. When members get engaged and attend an event they tend to stay. The ones that do not engage are the ones who tend to drop. Kathy asked if a buddy system might be needed. Kathy asked if the President’s Council reaches out to new members. Stacy Brown and Mike Wheeland indicated that they do invite them to an event or to have coffee, but some people do not respond. Lisa indicated that mission-based members tend to stay, and transactional members are the ones that tend to leave. The workshop is a great tool to get members engaged. Randy asked if there has been any feedback from transactional members regarding how they measure the benefits they are getting from their membership. Lisa indicated that they tend to measure by sales and not by the other benefits they can use or the marketing tools and events available. Stacy mentioned that she and Mike talked about the 3 buckets of the chamber at a recent business builders’ event. Personal, professional, and community involvement. They talked about that when you have all 3 buckets working then the chamber works. Lisa does communicate this when she sits down with new members, but they don’t always remember or understand it. More communication to shift the thought process would be good. Bill noted that there are tangible benefits that they do get when they join also. A banner from fast signs, a membership list, discounts from Office Depot and constant contact, and they go into an automated marketing list that goes out every 3 months that indicates things that members can be a part of to help them get involved. Randy suggested communication showing all new members that join each month with a “please welcome” note. Ken

suggested having groups come in and do a round table based on years of membership and have them give feedback on their memberships and where we can improve. Tim also thought giving new members network group recommendations might help. Lisa recommends that new members try every group. Tim suggested the Chamber ask the groups who they are looking for to join and then suggest the new members that are in that industry go try that group. The know, like, trust model works when they use it. Motion to accept membership by Stacy and seconded by Tim Urban. Motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Randy discussed that the call report is very important, as we just discussed in the membership report with the communication, feedback, involvement, and engagement of these members. It is important that we speak to them before they decide to renew or not. Randy also mentioned that a room has been reserved at the Community Foundation for a springboard meeting in April for a strategy session from 7:30 – noon on April 22. There will be a facilitator. Randy feels this is very important and would like to see everyone commit to be there. The Chamber has not had a springboard in several years and Randy feels it is critical that we do have one this year, looking at the finances and with Covid coming to an end. We are at a reflection point and we need to look at where we are as a Chamber and where we want to be. We need to have some more ideas and discussions on how to move forward as a Chamber.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Bill Eich reported Leader's in Action was amazing yesterday, Louis Sharp was a great speaker, and we have 3 more weeks to go. It has been nice having a big attendance in person. The attendance has been around 20-25. We have 32 registered. There have been some new speakers this year as well, which is nice to have the variety on topics and in different fields. Randy noted that Louis Sharp was yesterday, and he was fantastic. Bill noted that the State of the Community went really well aside from the sound system problems. It was very well attended. The video and messaging were well done. You can see the video on the Clearly Crystal Lake site. There are a lot of good things happening in the city, The Village of Lakewood, in the schools, and around the community. We had 178 people in attendance.

The Chamber is in planning mode for the parade, and registration is open. We are making a few changes to our entertainment acts this year. We are adding Volo Auto Museum among others. We may have a different route for the parade in 2023 due to road construction projects coming up, but this year will be the same.

The Community Clean Up event is moving back to the chamber and will be done as it was prior to COVID. We will have breakfast, sign ups, and a hot dog lunch afterwards. We will have shredding and prescription drug take backs at the Chamber. There will be no electronics recycling. We will not do that again. April will be busy. The Gem's luncheon is the 21st, The Springboard is the 22nd and Community Clean Up is the 23rd. We are getting a lot of mixer interest. We have one the end of March, and a lot of interest for May and June. YP's are co-hosting a March Madness event at Georgio's Friday March 18th that is a fundraiser for Independence Health and Therapy. \$20pp from 3-6.

We are considering offering the network groups booths at the golf outing and at EXPO.

The Community guide is changing a lot this year. It will be divided by sections this year. We are adding a map as well. The Chamber staff are working on that right now and the deadline was this week. Manufacturing pathways is doing a summer internship program this year as well as D155 career exploration programming. Information will be going out to all the businesses about these programs soon. Randy mentioned that there is a grant going out from McHenry County that will pay a portion of the intern's wages. It is a great opportunity for the kids and the companies.

The Chamber is considering having the EXPO at Three Oaks instead of in front of Office Max.

Diana Kenney will be leaving the Downtown Association.

ITEMS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION: Ken has received inquiries from people wondering who won the Justin Fields jersey. Nick noted that the video is done but exporting it has been problematic. Nick is working on it.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Kristin reported March 22nd is the first mixer of the year at Northern Illinois Recover Center which is in the old Dorian Gray building. They want to showcase their new building. They have no parking so parking will be at Snap On and there will be shuttles. Bill went over all the other events.

HEARD AROUND TOWN: April 9th the Lion's Club Steak Fry will be at D'Andrea Banquets. He is opening the venue for one night only, even though they are closed. June 10th will be the Pioneer Center golf outing. Big Brother's Big Sisters will be having their bowling for kids' sake March 19th and 20th. The 19th is at Side outs and the 20th is at Kingston's in Woodstock. There are still sponsorships available for the GEM's luncheon please contact Lisa if you are interested.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 8:38am on a motion by Scott McKeever and seconded by Dawn Gilman. Motion passed.