

**Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 18, 2021**  
**5:30 - 7:00 pm**

**Attendees:**

George Medellin – President  
Christy Duncan – Vice President  
Mark Opperman – Treasurer  
Karla Hogan  
Shelly Larson  
Paula Newman  
Marlene Peterson  
Cassie Richey  
Shirley Selleck - Administrative Assistant  
Melody Jordan – Executive Director  
Dylan Richards - City Liaison - absent  
Angelita Sanchez - City Liaison - absent

**Call to Order**

George called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm.

**Review of Previous Minutes**

**VOTE:** Motion to approve the February minutes as presented was made by Shelly. Christy seconded the motion. The motion carried without objections or abstentions.

**Financial Report**

Mark updated the Board on account balances from Umpqua Bank:  
Checking \$21,620.03  
Savings \$18,806.81 including \$17,300 EIDL funds

The financial reports January through February 2021 were reviewed by the Board. Marlene noted the December budget is used in the comparison report, per Tina Koopman. In March the revised budget will be provided and the correct budget numbers will show in the comparison report.

**Nonprofit Update**

Mark wrote a cover letter to the IRS explaining our journey. In 2017, the Chamber lost status for failure to file and pay taxes due to the crimes of the former executive director who was charged in 2019. Because most of the Chamber's paperwork and computer history was destroyed at the time of the crime, it has taken the Board several years to locate, file and pay for prior missing taxes. In the latest communication with the IRS, Mark was told that all past forms have been filed and the past taxes have been paid. He is asking that the Chamber be retroactively reinstated by the IRS. He updated the financials again and plans to mail the form and payment to the IRS soon and send a copy of the letter to the Board when he mails it.

## **Executive Director Update**

Melody reported Coffee with Colleagues held on March 9th at Radiator Supply House had 22 people in attendance. Brian Carroll, Director of Linn County Parks was the guest speaker and his report was well received.

The current Chamber membership count is 80, compared to 81 in 2020. Melody is still working with Blair Larsen of the City on resources for small business start-up in Sweet Home.

The Chamber's social media followers increased by 16 in the last month. The live Forum reached about 2,400 people. The Chamber's website views increased 20% since last month. The rockhounding page is the second most viewed page.

Ray Towry, City Manager and Melody announced winners of Localopoly on March 15th. A survey was sent to business and community participants asking for input on how to improve the game next time.

The Business Storefront Cleaning Contest is open through March 31st and Melody noted there has not been much interest. The visitor who may potentially set up business in Sweet Home, for which the contest is being held, has not come yet, as far as Melody knows.

Visitors Guide - Melody spoke with Miriam Swanson at New Era newspaper and there is no wiggle room with the cost of the Chamber's ad. The Chamber will continue with the ad for the cost of \$1200. The ad has been in the budget for the last three years. Melody checked into virtual visitors guides and presented a mock guide to the Board. The Chamber would pay just \$420 a year for the platform to publish. The Chamber could start to build it now, with possible release in the summer. Melody will research more and send out additional information to the Board.

Peggy Curtis of the Oregon Jamboree called Melody and asked if the Chamber would like to take on Artisan Alley. In 2020 the booths cost \$500 each. Melody is open to slightly reducing the price of the booths to help the artisans out, yet it is extra income for the Chamber. The Chamber could also do an application process and get approval for a certain number of vendors. An idea was shared to also have a rummage sale in another area. The Oregon Jamboree may be shortened to just Friday and Saturday.

Singing Christmas Tree - The new chair reached out to the Chamber wanting to be more involved. They usually do an Artisan Alley for Sportsman's Holiday weekend and plan to do that again. Michelle Knight from the high school will be involved too. Andy (last name unknown), the owner of the parking lot between The Rio and The New Era said the parking lot could be used for Sportsman's Holiday weekend and Artisan Alley event. He did not mention a charge for this. Melody asked Andy if the parking lot could also be used for the Oregon Jamboree and he and the Chamber will touch base a little closer to the date to discuss further.

Jen Casteneda, the new volunteer started this week and will be helping out at the Chamber several days a week. The cups from Magnum Metal Works are selling. Karla

Hogan from Apple Tree Home Smart Realty Group is donating a tablet for merchandise transactions in the Visitors Center and guest sign in.

The Photo Gallery opens Friday, April 9th, 12-2 pm at City Hall. There are beautiful submissions for the SHOCASE photography contest. The Board will vote for their five favorites to be featured on postcards for the Visitors Center. A suggestion was made to sell the postcards and cups at an Oregon Jamboree booth.

It was noted that Melody's report reflected the objectives in the Chamber's strategic plan.

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

#### **Princess Court Task Force - Karla, Paula and Shelly**

Shelly reviewed the Princess Court Committee Policy including the policy of treating others with respect. A signed Chamber's Code of Conduct will be required by the Committee as well.

Marlene noted the policy states the Board of Directors will approve an absence of a court member from an event, and suggested clarification be made as to who actually approves an absence. Shelly will make the change that the request must be in writing and approved by the Princess Court Committee chair. The new policy requires one Board member to be on the Committee and this can serve as the line of communication between the Committee and the Board of Directors.

The Committee will select five princesses instead of nine. So far there are a couple of applicants and others are assessing how much of a commitment of time will be involved to help in deciding if they will apply or not.

**VOTE:** Motion to accept the Princess Court Committee Policy with changes noted above was made by Christy. Cassie seconded the motion. The motion carried without objections or abstentions.

Summer events - Wes of Radiator Supply House made T-shirts and stickers and Chris Chapman of SHOCASE did the design work. The Cut the Gut application for the Sportsman's Holiday event was submitted. The Artisan Alley also has submitted an application, making three total businesses that have applied. The basketball event will be a 3 on 3 tournament modeled after the Strawberry Festival. Logger Olympics planning is on hold for now. There will be a meeting next Friday, March 26th regarding potential fireworks. Melody applied for a permit for a raft tug of war which would be on Sunday for Sportsman's Holiday weekend and the community pool have offered to help with this event. Melody is working with Shari Melcher-Smith on the summer Awards Banquet but there was not much information to report at this time.

#### **New Board Member**

There was a discussion about whether Chamber members should vote on Board members. The Board votes on Board members now. It was suggested the roll out could be after the Annual Forum when the Chamber has new nonprofit status. Changes will have to be made to the current Chamber's Bylaws. If the Chamber is restricted by law to

have members instead of the Board vote, it was discussed to have the Annual Forum as an annual meeting for the vote. George will call Vonnie Mikkelson and Melody will call Rebecca Grizzle at the Lebanon Chamber to verify if the Board is required to be voted in by their membership. There will be research and development of this before proceeding.

There is a limit of 13 Board members and no less than seven in the current bylaws.

**VOTE:** Motion to approve Trisha Van Eck as a new Board member was made by Karla. Shelley seconded it. The motion carried without objections or abstentions. Trisha is with the Sweet Home Community Foundation and School District.

### **Other Business**

Chamber Visitors Sign - Karla called Foress Signs today. It will be four weeks before they are available to do a site visit for measurements and electrical work for the sign. A QR reader costs \$119 and can link to the Chamber website or digital visitors guide. Miriam Swanson, New Era newspaper, reached out to Melody and Lagea Mull at City of Sweet Home to design a poster for kiosks in town. They are working on the design.

Melody reported the first Christmas in Sweet Home meeting is scheduled for March 19th. A grant application was submitted to the City for supplies, decorations, lights and window paint. Melody and Lagea will co-lead the Christmas Committees. Many community organizations and individuals are interested in helping with the events.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Opperman  
Treasurer

Shirley Selleck  
Recorder