

**Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**May 20, 2021**  
**5:30 - 7:00 pm**

**Attendees:**

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

**Call to Order**

In George's absence, Christy called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

**Review of Previous Minutes**

**VOTE:** Motion to approve the April minutes as presented was made by Paula. Cassie seconded the motion. The motion was carried without objections or abstentions.

**Financial Report**

Mark updated the Board on account balances from Umpqua Bank.  
Checking \$13,599.93  
Savings \$18,807.13 including \$17,300 EIDL funds

The first of three tri-annual payments from the City of Sweet Home for operation of the Visitors Center is expected to arrive soon. Payment of the EIDL funds were extended for another year with payments starting July 2022. Mark will check if interest payments may be made when the Chamber is able to make payments rather than when the interest payments are due.

Financials were provided by Tina Koopman.

**Nonprofit Status Update**

A notice was received from the IRS around the end of April stating the IRS has 90 days to review the filing and the Chamber should receive a response around the end of July.

## **Proposed Discrimination Policy**

**VOTE:** Motion to accept the Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation Prevention Policy into the Chamber as presented was made by Paula. Cassie seconded the motion. The motion was carried without objections or abstentions.

## **Executive Director Update**

Melody reported on the following:

- The current Chamber membership count is 92. Last month there were 86 memberships.
- Facebook page likes are 2917, compared to 2855 in April 2021. The Chamber's post reach increased by 209%, engagement is up 383%, and website visits are up 30% from last month. The rockhounding page is still in the top three most viewed pages.
- Melody is working on greater connections to Linn County. She and other Board members attended a special training with City of Sweet Home on May 19th, reporting it was a valuable training that listed many objectives that are in the Chamber's strategic plan.
- Melody started a job listing called Hiring in Sweet Home on the Chamber's Facebook page and the post was shared 194 times. Businesses have reached out to be added, which served as a gateway to new members.
- Melody partnered with Rebecca Grizzle of the Lebanon Chamber and delivered grant applications to Linn County restaurants today. The restaurants should receive checks next week.
- Cascade Gateway Leadership is scheduled to start in September. The Lebanon Chamber is working on the program and Sweet Home will be included more.
- The Lebanon Business Expo will be held Tuesday, July 27th at Cheadle Lake, and Sweet Home members will be included. The Chamber could have a booth with Visitors Guides, Artisan Alley flyers, tumblers, and Cut the Gut t-shirts.
- Sportsman's Holiday Weekend is moving forward. Half of the proceeds from the Icebox Cut the Gut Cruise will be donated to the Sweet Home High School Metal Fabrication program.
- Coffee with Colleagues held on May 11th had a good turnout.
- The first Business After Hours event will be held at the Valley View property on June 24th. There is one event available for hosting and Cassie has agreed to host it in September.
- The postcards from the Sweet Home photo contest have been ordered and are being shipped.
- The Visitors Center merchandise expenses were \$495 and \$372 of the merchandise has sold. The Chamber has an agreement with vendors to keep 20% of income from merchandise sold.
- Distinguished Service Awards nominations are due at the end of June. Melody will work on getting publicity for the banquet in the New Era newspaper.

- The Awards Banquet budget looks fine. Shirley Austin, owner of Little Town Celebration Catering will be catering this event. Shirley will send an estimate to the Chamber with the difference of last year's costs and losses, and expenses for this year.
- The Jamboree Artisan Alley will be on the Chamber's bark lot. Twelve booths will fit comfortably and six vendors and seven booths have been reserved. Karla noted that perhaps the Apple Tree Home Smart Real Estate Group's garage could also be used for booths.
- The Halloween decorations that are stored in the Chamber's garage could be donated to the Halloween Committee, Shirley Austin and Jan Hufford.

### **Princess Court Committee Report - Cassie**

Cassie reported there will be six participants on the court instead of five. All of the girls had great interviews. On May 23rd the girls will be taken to Eugene for clothes shopping and dinner. Cassie is working on events for the court to attend. The top sponsor is the Shelly Larson Family Foundation. Scholarships are to be earned which will reduce fundraising efforts. The court will sell t-shirts and offer five different styles of clothing for the Sportsman's Holiday Weekend. It was suggested to involve children with the court somehow, such as having pictures of kids taken with the court. Mark will add Cassie as a signer on the Princess Court KeyBank account.

### **Continue Member Voting Update Discussion**

It was decided that when the Chamber receives Nonprofit Status, the Executive Director will have the Chamber members vote on new bylaws stating the Board will vote on board members versus the membership voting. Melody will send the Executives the stats of the number of members.

### **LED/Updated Signage - Karla**

The proposal is \$40,000 for an LED double sided reader board. Melody shared that tourism money from local hotel tax could be obtained for funding the sign. Karla could arrange for logging members to help with the basic framing of the sign installation.

### **Other Business**

Melody will check if the attorney located in the Keesecker Building might be interested in joining the Chamber Board.

Mark is waiting for a response from the Secretary of State's Office to clarify if the Chamber Bylaws could be changed to Sweet Home East-Linn Chamber of Commerce, dba Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce. Currently the Secretary of State Chamber Articles are still registered as Sweet Home East-Linn Chamber of Commerce.

Marlene has submitted requests for insurance quotes to RKI, Rhodes-Warden, G and Jenny and Jamie Eriksen of Country Financial Insurance Agency. Travis Luttmmer of Country Financial Insurance Agency joined the Chamber, and Keesecker Insurance is joining the Chamber.

Melody shared that Ray Towry of the City reported on the potential business that is considering locating in Sweet Home, and Sweet Home has moved up in their search and is the top option in Oregon. The company is also considering Washington and Idaho. The employee count increased from 200 to 300+.

Paula shared that she will be absent from the next Board meeting.

The next Coffee with Colleagues is scheduled for June 8 at 8:30 am hosted by The Point Restaurant. The next Chamber Board Meeting is scheduled for June 17 at 5:30 pm.

Christy adjourned the meeting at 6:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Opperman  
Secretary/Treasurer

Shirley Selleck  
Recorder

