

Marion County Chamber of Commerce

Board of Directors' Meeting

October 20, 2016

The Marion County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors met at the Western Sizzlin at noon on October 20, 2016. Board members in attendance were President Jamie Lawson, President Elect Patrick O'Hagan, board members Vicki Messer, Nick Holcomb, Patty Henry, Shelby Potterfield, Walker Henley, and Kathie Tierney.

Others in attendance included Spencer Wayne with Western Sizzlin, Andrew Lawrence with Colonial Chemical, Garret Faugot with Covenant Allergy, Pat Price with Jasper Lions Club, Sara Caffey with Relay for Life, Sonya McShan and Lisa Hudson with Erlanger Hospital, Marion County Mayor David Jackson, and Judy Blevins, administrative assistant for the chamber.

President Jamie Lawson called the meeting to order, recognizing guests and members in attendance with a special recognition of new board members Patty Henry, Shelby Potterfield and Kathie Tierney.

A motion was made by Patrick O'Hagan and seconded by Nick Holcomb to approve minutes from the September 15, 2016 board meeting. Motion was approved without dissent.

Financial Report:

In the absence of Treasurer Donna Sartin, Judy Blevins presented the "Income and Expense Report" for the month of September 2016 and "Account Balances Report" as of today. Copies were distributed to all present and are on file with the minutes. There were no questions from the floor.

Old Business:

A. TN Department of Tourist Development Co-op Grant

As was discussed last month, the chamber will be using the grant to revise and update the chamber's website. The website committee has met and is studying what changes and updates should be included.

There are grant requirements that are due in increments. The next deadline date is November 30, 2016. At that time we must provide to the Department of Tourist Development an updated list of board members, a marketing plan, a current logo, confirm that the industry partner page is up to date on www.tnvacation.com, confirm logo on partner's homepage, social deliverables, "The Soundtrack of America. Made in

Tennessee” ad in the organizations brochure/visitors guide, and a status update on the project.

B. Membership Renewal for 2016/17

Dues for the current fiscal year are due and payable at this time. Any member who is unsure if their dues have been paid should check with Judy Blevins.

New Business:

A. Membership Application

The chamber membership committee has reviewed the application submitted by Jasper Lions Club and recommends that the board approve membership in the chamber.

Walker Henley made a motion to accept Jasper Lions Club as a chamber members. Vicki Messer seconded the motion which was approved by acclamation.

Pat Price, president of the club, spoke about some of the club’s activities which include buying eye glasses for needy people, participating in the annual back to school backpack event, and planning the first Jack-o-Lantern Jamboree which will be held on October 29th on the square in Jasper.

President Lawson commented that when organizations work together for the good of the county, it strengthens all of us.

B. Board Member Training

Training for new board members is being scheduled. Other board members who would like to attend the approximately one-hour training are welcome to do so.

(Note that after the meeting, a date for training was scheduled for December 7, 2016 from 10:30 until 11:30 AM CDT. It will be held in the board room at Parkridge West Hospital.)

Mayor’s Report:

County Mayor David Jackson

Mayor Jackson addressed the recent “Marion County Travel Snapshot” provided by the TN Department of Tourism Development. Figures from 2015 indicate that Marion County was 42nd among the 95 counties in the state for tourism dollars generated. It shows the impact that

tourism has on the county tax income as well as income for individual businesses, particularly in the service industry.

Mayor Jackson also reported meeting with Jenni Veal from the SE Development District regarding a \$50,000 tourism grant for which the county plans to apply. It requires a 15% match. The application will request \$20,000 for a tourism plan for the county and to update campsites at Marion County Park. TVA has given the county permission to build a new pavilion at the park. The county may also acquire \$25,000 from TVA to build a second boat dock although this has not yet been approved.

Mayor Jackson stated that while local businesses and industries are growing, we have not been able to recruit new business thus far. Perhaps we need to focus not only on recruiting new industry but in maximizing the tourism opportunities the county has to offer.

On November 1st a project called “Denny’s Cove” will become a part of the South Cumberland State Park system. Located on 650 acres of land with entrance across from the Foster Falls Fire Department, it will have hiking trails and rock climbing, further expanding the outdoor adventures which the park already has available.

Mayor Jackson suggested that it would be beneficial to have more events that would draw tourists to our county. The recent outboard motor boat races and the bass tournament are two examples. With rivers and mountains and easy access from interstate and nearby cities, additional events and attractions would appear to be a good fit.

Mayor Jackson explained that somewhere in Southwest Virginia the federal government’s announcement of the ARC grant will take place on October 26th. It is expected that Marion County will receive an ARC grant to be used to build the second building at Chattanooga State in Kimball.

Miscellaneous:

Jamie Lawson reported that last week he met with Spike Hosch, Economic Development Coordinator for the Babson Center for Global Commerce, regarding a VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program at the University of the South in Sewanee, TN. They are looking for out- of- the box opportunities to help stimulate the economy. They are asking the chamber for non-monetary support in planning and developing things to boost the economy. Jamie will keep us informed as it progresses.

Patrick O’Hagan represented the chamber yesterday at an event at the Incubator in Chattanooga. Randy Boyd, Commissioner of the TN Department of Economic & Community Development, and other area local officials were there to celebrate tourism in the southeast region.

Patrick also reminded us of a job fair to be held at Chattanooga State Kimball on Thursday, October 27th.

Announcements

Announcements were reviewed as distributed. A copy is on file with the minutes. Additional announcements made from the floor included a fall festival to be held at Hales Bar Marina on October 29th and 30th.

The Jack-o-Lantern Jamboree will be on Saturday, October 29th, a correction from the date printed on the back of the agenda.

Spencer Wayne announced that veterans can eat free at the Western Sizzlin on Veterans Day. There will be a special celebration at 12:30 PM with the Marion County Honor Guard.

Trivia Question

Question: As seen on the "Marion County Travel Snapshot", if it were not for state and local taxes generated by tourism, how much more would each Marion County household pay?

Answer: \$296.04

Winner: Walker Henley (close enough)

Prize was a free lunch donated by Café 41 in Jasper.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Next monthly board meeting will be November 17th at noon at the Western Sizzlin.

Minutes submitted by Judy Blevins

Reviewed by President Jamie Lawson