

## **Marion County Chamber of Commerce**

### **Board of Directors' Meeting**

**January 18, 2018**

The Marion County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors met at the Western Sizzlin at noon on January 18, 2018. Board members in attendance were President Patrick O'Hagan, Vice-President Brett Del Balso, Secretary/Treasurer Shelby Potterfield , and board members Todd Mistrot, Kathie Tierney, Joyce Burkhalter, Walker Henley and Vickie Messer.

Others in attendance were Andrew Lawrence with Colonial Chemical, Terry Kerlin with First Choice Storage, Brice Burkhalter with First Volunteer Bank, Tina Green with City of Whitwell, Deanna Stott with Hospice of Chattanooga, Keisha Durham with Manpower, Jenny Holder and Heather Bearden with Resource MFG, Aricia Gallaher with Chambliss Law, Mayor Rex Pesnell with Town of Kimball, City Manager Gene Vess and Vice Mayor Paul Don King with City of South Pittsburg, County Mayor David Jackson, and Judy Blevins, administrative assistant for the chamber.

President Patrick O'Hagan called the meeting to order and recognized guests and members in attendance.

A motion was made by Vicki Messer and seconded by Shelby Potterfield to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2017 board meeting. Motion was unanimously carried to approve. Judy Blevins reminded the audience that minutes can be viewed on the chamber website.

#### **Financial Report:**

Shelby Potterfield presented the "Income and Expense Report" for the month of November and December 2017 and "Account Balances Report" as of January 17, 2018. Copies were distributed to all present and are on file with the minutes. Motion was made by Kathie Tierney and seconded by Joyce Burkhalter to approve the financial report as presented. Motion was accepted without dissent.

#### **Old Business:**

##### **A. Report from Events & Tourism Committee**

Brett Del Balso reported on contacts made regarding a chamber sponsored golf tournament, with a tentative working date of Friday, June 8, 2018. The tournament will be held at Sweetens Cove Golf Course at a cost of \$2,400 to reserve the course for one day. Mr. Del Balso recommended an eighteen hole morning and afternoon tee with nine foursomes each. The cost to participate would be \$140 per foursome or \$35 per individual. Business sponsors would be sought with a variety of prizes being awarded throughout the

tournament. Proceeds from the tournament would be used to fund community business grants and other chamber activities. More specific designation of proceeds may be determined as plans for the tournament develop.

During discussion, it was pointed out that the Rotary Club has a golf tournament which may be scheduled in June as well. A vote to proceed with plans for a chamber sponsored golf tournament as stated above was taken with the direction for the committee to confirm the dates for the Rotary tournament and to reconsider the June 8<sup>th</sup> date if the two tournaments appear to be too close together given that many business sponsors would be involved with both tournaments.

Motion to continue with a plan for a golf tournament was made by Kathie Tierney and seconded by Walter Henley. Motion carried without dissent. More information will be brought to the February board meeting.

#### B. Anti-Litter Committee

President O'Hagan reported that the cleanup of Sequatchie Mountain Road was successful in picking up not only roadside litter but tires and other large items that had accumulated through years of illegal dumping.

Committee Chairman Andrew Lawrence reported that the chamber anti-litter committee met earlier this week to look at plans for the year. He commended other businesses for joining in the anti-litter efforts in Marion County. The most recent example is Ply Gem's commitment to picking up roadside litter on Industrial Blvd near their business entrance. The chamber encourages other local businesses to consider participating in the Adopt-A-Highway TDOT program or to find other ways to help address litter in Marion County.

Mr. Lawrence stated that Colonial Chemical plans to sponsor billboards around the county with anti-litter messaging. Terry Kerlin, another member of the anti-litter committee, commented that he would like to address other local business and manufacturers in order to solicit their help.

Kathie Tierney shared with the group that Jackson County Chamber of Commerce had contacted her to inquire about our anti-litter program. The anti-litter ad's placed by First Volunteer Bank in "The Independent" had sparked their interest to consider a similar program in Jackson County. Perhaps a representative from Jackson County could attend one of our committee or board meetings.

#### **New Business:**

##### A. Nomination for President-Elect

President O'Hagan submitted the name of Todd Mistrot for the position of president-elect and opened the floor for nominations. When offered an opportunity to comment, Mr. Mistrot said that he was honored to have been asked to serve in this capacity. He further stated that he could see a lot of good things happening in Marion County including partnerships throughout the county.

Joyce Burkhalter made a motion that Todd Mistrot be elected to the position of president-elect and that all nominations cease. Kathie Tierney seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Walker Henley stated that the chamber might want to consider extending officers' term limits in order to allow for more continuity. Currently, the bylaws call for 3-yr terms for board members but a one year term for officers. Bylaws do not exclude being re-elected to subsequent terms for either board members or officers. President O'Hagan and Judy Blevins will review by-laws and revisit at a subsequent meeting.

#### B. Membership Application

A membership application from Dusty's Outdoor Media has been received. When submitting the application, Mr. Bobby Hart, representing Dusty's Outdoor Media, indicated that they would like to be more involved in the community. Vicki Messer reported that the chamber membership committee has reviewed the application and recommends the board accept Dusty's into chamber membership. Motion to approve was made by Todd Mistrot and seconded by Walker Henley. Motion carried without dissent.

#### C. Training/Seminars for Small Business

President O'Hagan reported that the seminar recently provided by Consultant Donny Case had a small turnout but was well received by those in attendance. The chamber would like to provide other seminars or training as needed.

The State of TN has powerpoint presentations available. The topics are 1) the scourge that illegal drugs and alcohol create in the workplace and 2) improving your company's workers' compensation culture. An email sent by the chamber to our email distribution list, showed that there are at least three businesses interested in those topics. Members present at today's meeting were asked to go back to their businesses and to inquire as to additional interest. The chamber would be happy to coordinate with the State of TN in order to bring the programs to Marion County. Mayor Rex Pesnell offered the Kimball Town Annex as a location for the training. Mr. O'Hagan also encouraged us to offer suggestions for topics that might be of interest.

#### D. Requests for Sponsorship & Advertisement

1. 2018 Regional Travel Guide – Walker Henley made a motion that the chamber sponsor a full page ad as we did last year in the amount of \$500. Motion was seconded by Todd Mistrot and carried without dissent.
2. Marion County Distinguished Young Women (Formerly Junior Miss) – Todd Mistrot made a motion that the chamber again be a platinum sponsor in the amount of \$150. Motion was seconded by Walker Henley and carried without opposition.

#### **Mayors' Reports:**

City of South Pittsburg – Reporting for the City of South Pittsburg was City Manager Gene Vess. He began by stating that unfortunately there was a house fire last night in Richard City, but the good news is that it was a vacant house and no one was hurt. The city is planning to install seven greenscape garbage receptacles in the downtown area between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets.

Town of Kimball – Mayor Rex Pesnell stated that Kimball is ready to start the first phase of a LPR (local parks and recreation) grant. This will include the addition of a maintenance building and bathrooms for the soccer fields. Soccer signups will be the last Saturday in January and the first Saturday in February. For the first time, a girls softball team will be offered with signups through February 17<sup>th</sup>.

City of Whitwell – City Manager Todd Mistrot explained that the city is beginning the next phase of a multi-path project with construction scheduled to begin October 30, 2018. The city is also in discussion as to developing 24– 30 unit apartments. Also underway is discussion with a retail prospect which may come to Whitwell. The city has had a public hearing in connection with a CDBG grant. A recent discovery of a 4-wheeler path from the Coke Ovens may lead to further development as a recreational site. Finally, Mr. Mistrot, reported that the Thrive Community Team visited Whitwell last Friday to tour the city, report of a preliminary study, and to gain feedback from community partners. A final plan has not yet been determined, but it will be devoted to maintaining cultural heritage of the area.

Marion County – County Mayor David Jackson gave an update on phase 2 progress being made at Chattanooga State Kimball Site. Despite weather conditions, by the end of the month the project is projected to be 65% completed.

Regarding prospective new business, there are several possible new businesses which have been in contact with the county. The county remains hopeful that Project Steel will make the decision to come to Marion County at the Port Authority site. County and other business officials have been working with Project Steel since July. Representatives from the company have visited twice, but there has been no indication since the last visit one way or the other. Marion County is known to be one of three sites under consideration with the other two being in Mississippi and Missouri. The mayor has also been contacted regarding the possibility of parts suppliers locating in the county as a result of a new Toyota/Mazda car factory coming to

Huntsville, AL, Honda and Kia in other Alabama sites. Information packets have been submitted regarding Marion County land options available. Mayor Jackson also pointed out that Nashville remains a prospect for a new Amazon plant and stated that this would be good for Tennessee.

The county has applied for a CDBG grant to extend water to the Copper Switch area in the Northern end of the county to connect with Dunlap and has also discussed connecting with TN American Water.

According to the mayor, the county budget is looking at the halfway point of the fiscal year. There are a few line items that are unavoidably over budget such as medical expenses at the jail.

At the county commission meeting on Monday night, an architect is expected to be approved to work on an expansion of the Marion County Health Department. The expansion will be funded in part by a \$25,000 grant from the TN Department of Health. The addition will include a kitchen and a community room.

Mayor Jackson was pleased to report that the Development District has put together a packet of demographics about the county. This packet can be sent out to developers and prospective business and manufacturers.

Mayor Jackson said that today at 3:00 PM at the county commission building, Shannon Gray will be presenting a tourism report for Marion County. The public is invited to attend. At 5:00 PM the report will be presented to the county commission. Mayor Jackson stated that the county will be applying for another tourism grant.

#### **Miscellaneous:**

Patrick O'Hagan reported that on January 11<sup>th</sup> the American Career Center hosted a very successful job fair. Approximately 150 job seekers met with 18 employers. President O'Hagan thanked the chamber for their sponsorship and thanked participating employers.

#### **Announcements**

Announcements were reviewed as distributed. A copy is on file with the minutes. Two additions not included on the printed sheet include a half-mile marathon at the Mountain Goat Trail in Sewanee on April 8<sup>th</sup> and a dedication of the pavilion at Marion County Park on January 24<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM CST.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Next monthly board meeting will be February 15, 2018 at noon at the Western Sizzlin.

Minutes submitted by Judy Blevins

Reviewed by President Patrick O'Hagan