

Minutes: April 2010

Fulton Chamber of Commerce

Minutes from April 13, 2010

Present: Linda Hollis, Heather Bennett, Greg Naftzger, Deb Schaver, Bill Stoermer, Kim LaShelle, Bill Wilkin, and Guest Dr. Norm Walzer.

Absent: Steve Owen, Paula Rogis, and Phyllis Housenga.

Minutes: A motion was made by Stoermer and seconded by LaShelle to approve the minutes from March 9, 2010. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Hollis reviewed the March Treasurer's Report: revenue as \$997.99 and expenditures of \$2,985.11 leaving an ending balance of \$9,827.24. A motion was made by Schaver and seconded by Stoermer to accept the March Treasurer's Report. Motion carried. Bennett provided a year to date budget to actual report.

Presentation: Dr. Norm Walzer from the Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies reviewed a grant project that would assist Western Whiteside County: Morrison, Prophetstown, and Fulton. The grant was awarded through the USDA Rural Development Office. The project is intended to provide technical assistance to small businesses and community development practitioners by retaining or expanding small businesses through boosting their marketing efforts over the web, examining economic development options, setting a course to market the area better, and building a stronger customer base. The project is designed to be conducted over 36 months. Some of the activities will include website development, economic impact studies, and possibly bringing in a professional speaker for customer service

training or e-commerce. The role of the Fulton Chamber would include a member on the management team; identify businesses that may be interested in the technical services, and communicate with the businesses about the opportunities. There is no financial commitment from the Fulton Chamber, only in-kind labor. A motion was made by Stoermer and seconded by Schaver to take part in the NIU project. Motion carried.

Executive: Attached was Bennett's monthly meetings report. The April E-Newsletter was emailed out to all members but is also available online. The nominating committee consists of Susan Many, Heidi Kolk, and Chuck Dykstra. They will have their three nominees to replace Linda Hollis, Paula Rogis, and Bill Wilkin by the next chamber board meeting. As a reminder, the board does not approve the nominees they are voted upon at the annual dinner by the entire membership. In early June, a right of petition is mailed to all chamber members, but Bennett does not recall there ever being a time when someone petitioned to be on the board.

Tourism & Promotions: The Lincoln Highway Association will host their annual conference in Dixon, Illinois, this year on June 23-June 26. Fulton will have an opportunity to provide visitor guides for their goody bags and be a tour stop for their attendees. The Windmill Cultural Center will host their public open house on Saturday and Sunday, April 23 & 24, 2010. The KROS Trivia Night Fundraiser brought in \$1,300 for the Windmill Cultural Center which will be used for the private reception for the Windmill Cultural Center. A senior Girl Scout is doing her Gold Award Project (equivalent to Eagle Scout Project) on landscaping the area around the Lincoln Highway Gazebo. The Fulton Chamber of Commerce Summer Night event is July 8 and board members will be needed to assist with the evening. The theme for the July 8 event is "Happy Birthday Fulton." First Reformed Church has also agreed to be a cosponsor of the evening and will assist with games.

Planning Session Goals:

Public Art - The tin cup design is nearing completion. Order forms will be mailed soon with an order deadline of May 1.

Hwy 84 Sign - the mayor will be visiting with the American Legion regarding their property located between Dr. Wilkin's office and Cousins Subs. The mayor initiated discussions with Gus Sims (Commander) several months ago and will follow-up with the Legion at their next meeting. Bennett doubts, if the property is for sale, that the city will have funds to purchase based on recent budget workshops.

Group Travel - Bennett has acquired a contact list of 100 tour group operators throughout the 4 state area. Information will be sent to the tour group operators on Fulton.

Welcome sign plantings - the Fulton Kiwanis Club has agreed to plant flowers beneath the four welcome signs. Thank you Kiwanians!

Tourism Inventory Spreadsheet - was updated and provided to businesses that cater to visitors and tourists.

Thomson Prison Initiative - the Federal Bureau of Prisons will host an informational meeting, by invitation only, for community officials later this month.

Bus Trips: Chicago Cubs vs. Los Angeles Angels scheduled for June 19, cost is \$75/person. The trip is nearly sold-out already. Amana Colonies with dinner and theatre is scheduled for July 7, cost to be determined.

Historical Marker: Thus far, the Chamber has secured \$2,000 for the marker project, and \$3,500 is needed. The most recent donation came from Immaculate Conception Church. Additional requests pending Whiteside County Republicans and River Bend School District. The superintendent suggested a request be given to the school principals. Because the end of the school year is near, Bennett can make a request in August.

Bridal Walk: 275 letters were mailed out to potential vendors. The bridal walk is held the 4th Thursday in June - June 24, 2010 from 4:30pm to 7:30pm. Assistance will be needed the day of the event to prepare the room at Manny's Too and the Masonic Lodge as well as move the tables and chairs back after the event.

Summer Nights - the chamber night is July 8, 2010, from 6pm to 8pm near the windmill and Den Besten Park. The theme for the evening is "Happy Birthday Fulton." Board members will be needed to assist with set-up and activities. If you plan to volunteer, t-shirt orders need to be into Bennett by May 17 - cost of t-shirts (list summer night sponsors) - \$5.00/each or \$7.00 for extended sizes.

Dutch Days Float - Paula Rogis, Deb Schaver and Heather Bennett will decorate the float and Bill Stoermer has agreed to pull the float. Three board members are needed to ride in the float dressed as Dutch Masters. Greg Naftzger and Bill Wilkin agreed to ride in the float. Bennett will inquire with Steve Owen.

City Tourism Committee - held their March meeting at The Complex. Most of the items discussed were already mentioned above.

Government Affairs: Legislative Luncheons with State Representative Candidates were held March 18 (Morthland - R) and March 25 (Ahern - D). Attendance at both events was minimal. The City Riverfront Corridor Action Team has not met since October 2009. The Complex has hired a new manager to replace Colleen Wilkin. Colleen is comfortable with the decision. Another senior meal will be provided by the Senior Services Action Team soon.

Member Relations: A site tour needs to be coordinated with Agri-King in July. Bennett is waiting to hear back from the Red Cross regarding a CPR Training Class for July or August. The Mayor is trying to coordinate a meeting with Sauk Valley Community College about hosting some classes in Fulton for residents and businesses. There will be a ribbon cutting for BPI Pool Supply on Thursday, April 29, 2010.

Downtown: The Fulton Retail Development Group - no update. As an FYI, Nancy Kolk's Downtown Newsletter is available for viewing online at <http://www.cityoffulton.us/> under Fulton Shopping.

Old/New Business: None

Next Meeting: May 11 at Noon at Golden Wok.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

