

## Minutes: September 2010

Fulton Chamber of Commerce

Minutes from September 14, 2010

Present: Heather Bennett, Patti Housenga, Deb Schaver, Jami Smith, Steve Owen, Phyllis Housenga, Greg Naftzger, and Kim La Shelle.

Absent: Bill Stoermer and Tim Wright

Guest: Mayor Larry Russell

Minutes: A motion was made by Patti Housenga and seconded by Deb Schaver to approve the minutes from August 10, 2010. Motion carried.

City Referendums: Mayor Russell addressed the board of directors regarding the city sales tax referendum. Mayor Russell stated the sales tax increase would assist the city with state funding shortfalls which would be earmarked for infrastructure improvements, including a downtown streetscape plan. The proposed sales tax would increase from 6.25% to 7%, matching Clinton, Iowa. The ¾% increase would bring in an estimated \$200,000 more a year for the city to earmark for city streets, water, sewer, and sidewalks. Several board members noted the ¾% increase would not be noticeable to most consumers as long as the city never went beyond what Clinton charges. A motion was made by Naftzger and seconded by LaShelle to support the sales tax increase, specifically if improvements could be made to the downtown area. Motion carried.

Mayor Russell also mentioned the opportunity for citizens and the city to purchase electricity from different providers. The mayor noted citizens could realize a 10% savings if they had the opportunity to shop around. If citizens did not prefer the electric provider chosen by the city, they could opt out of the program. The city would most likely enter into a 1 to 3 year contract with an electric provider so enrollment into the program would depend upon the contract length.

The Mayor believes Tri-County Economic Development Alliance (TCEDA) is the best group to represent Fulton with regards to a regional economic development approach. TCEDA represents Carroll, JoDavies, and Western Whiteside Counties. The mayor spends one day a week in Savanna as an in-kind match for Fulton's membership to TCEDA.

The Mayor is working to find a replacement for Bill Loerop's seat on the city council. The mayor would like to find someone that supports tourism.

Treasurer's Report: The August Treasurer's Report was provided: revenue as \$263.19 and expenditures of \$2,852.07 leaving an ending balance of \$6,604.82. Bennett noted this was the end of the Chamber's fiscal year (August 31). A motion was made by Phyllis Housenga and seconded by Patti Housenga to accept the August Treasurer's Report. Motion carried. Bennett provided a year to date budget to actual report, but noted it was only for 9 days because of the new fiscal year beginning September 1. Total revenue received \$2,190.30 and total expenditures of \$2,510.40 leaving a balance of (\$320.10).

Executive: The Executive Director's monthly meetings report was provided. The September E-Newsletter was emailed out to all chamber members, but was also available online. The annual membership dues letter was sent to 270 businesses. The deadline to renew is October 12 and then reminders will be mailed to past members with a deadline sometime in November. After the November deadline, board members will discuss contacting past due members.

#### Tourism & Promotions:

&bull;- City Tourism Committee - at the next meeting the committee will discuss goals for 2011. Fulton Association for Community Enrichment has two new board members, Dave Vogel and Jeanine Tufty. FACE is nearing completion on their "leaving a legacy" project which will be displayed in time for Fall Festival. The Volunteer Millers will host board members from the International Molinological Society. The Early American Crafters are gearing up for Fall Festival and the Beggar's Night Walk. Gift shop and flour sales at the windmill are going strong. The historical society is setting up their winter programs - the first two will include baseball history and Native American history. A full schedule of events celebrating the Reagan's 100th birthday will be released soon.

&bull;- Summer Night Review - Bennett will work on scheduling a wrap-up for the Summer Night events.

&bull;- Great Route 64/84 Shop Hop - A wrap up meeting with town coordinators will be held September 20. Bennett has heard Fulton shops were very pleased with the results, but shops in Lanark and Mt.Carroll may have not seen as much traffic. This was the first time Fulton was asked to join-in on the promotion.

&bull;- Fall Festival - the schedule of events for Fall Festival was provided. Many new activities have been added to the festival. A volunteer sign-up sheet was handed out for various duties.

&bull;- Highway 84 Sign - the sign has been printed by Visual Imaging. Public Works has been paid for materials to build the frame. Bennett requested PW have it installed by Fall Festival, but it may not be installed until later.

&bull;- Christmas Walk - is set for December 3 from 5pm to 7pm in downtown Fulton. Patti Housenga offered to help Bennett with the planning.

#### Government Affairs:

- The Complex - Per Colleen Wilkin, The Board of Directors has put a timeline in place to raise enough money to purchase the building. The goal is to raise a million before October 15 to keep the project going.

- Senior Services @ Robert Fulton Commons- The Senior Team and City of Fulton are working on an agreement with the Lee/Whiteside County Senior Center on operating a satellite facility in Fulton at the old fire station.

Member Relations: The semi-annual site tour at Agri-King had 25 participants. The tour was very informative. There will be upcoming ribbon cuttings for Dana Curley (massage therapist) and Lisa Pollard (storage units). As part of the USDA/NIU grant, there will be an Internet Marketing Workshop held September 30 @ 7:30am at Agri-King. Visual Imaging is hosting a Biz After 5 with the Clinton Chamber but has invited Fulton Chamber members to attend.

Downtown: Fulton Retail Development Group has installed a new roof on the theatre building. Upstairs apartment units (2) are both rented. Nancy Kolk's downtown newsletter can be found online under the "Shopping" tab at <http://www.cityoffulton.us/>.

Old/New Business: Community State Bank has offered their board room for the next Chamber board meeting. Bennett will contact the Fulton Meat Market about catering the meal.

Next Meeting: October 12 @ Community State Bank.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Phyllis Housenga and seconded by LaShelle to adjourn the meeting at 12:47 p.m. Motion carried.

