

Minutes: October 2010

Fulton Chamber of Commerce

Minutes from October 12, 2010

Present: Heather Bennett, Patti Housenga, Jami Smith, Greg Naftzger, Kim La Shelle, Tim Wright and Phyllis Housenga.

Absent: Bill Stoermer, Steve Owen and Deb Schaver.

Guest: Allen McCaulley, University of IL Extension Office.

The October 2010 Board meeting was held at Community State Bank and catered by the Fulton Meat Market.

Minutes: A motion was made by Phyllis Housenga and seconded by Patti Housenga to approve the minutes from September 14, 2010. Motion carried.

U of I Extension Office: Due to state budget cuts, the extension offices throughout Illinois will be reorganizing. Funding for the extension offices comes from both the county and state governments. Many offices are considering consolidation, as is the case with Whiteside County, Lee County, and Carroll County Extension offices. They will still provide the same services, but the main office may be moved to Sauk Valley Community College. Combining three offices into one will help minimize the cost of staff and general operations expenses. The consolidation of the three offices will take effect July 1, 2011. There is a possibility some satellite offices may be set-up.

Treasurer's Report: The September Treasurer's Report was provided: revenue as \$5,732.41 and expenditures of \$5,406.95 leaving an ending balance of \$6,930.28. Bennett provided a year to date budget to actual report - total revenue received \$11,842.68 and total expenditures of \$6,188.95 leaving a balance of \$5,653.73.

Executive: The Executive Director's monthly meetings report was provided. Annual dues are coming in as expected but will require email reminders, mail correspondence reminders, and then personal contacts in December with those that have not renewed.

Tourism & Promotions:

• City Tourism Committee - the committee started brainstorming goals for 2011. The Reagan brochure and DVD highlighting Fulton is complete. The DVDs are on sale at the Chamber Office for \$10/each. The Martin House has released their annual programs schedule. The outdoor movie "The River is Life" was well attended. The Millers and Friends of the Windmill are planning appreciation dinners.

• Great Route 64/84 Holiday Shop Hop - Due to a successful fall shop hop, the organizers are planning a holiday event for November 12 & 13. Fulton businesses would like to participate and the cost will be \$25/each. Each town is responsible for scheduling their own advertising. Maps and listings for all four towns will be created by Heather Bennett since the other chambers do not have full-time staff or the capabilities to make maps.

• Fall Festival - was a huge success. The streets were packed with people and the committee received several positive comments from attendees. 250 pumpkins were gone by 1pm, 400 people went through the hay bale maze, and 80+ participated in the scavenger hunt. The food vendors were very pleased and the car club cruise-in had 30 vehicles.

• Highway 84 Sign - Public Works thought the sign would be installed by the end of October or first part of November.

• Christmas Walk - is set for December 3. The last several years the walk was held from 5pm to 7pm, but Bennett inquired if the walk should be extended by another half hour or hour to accommodate people getting off work and the

run/walk participants. A motion was made by Smith and seconded by Phyllis Housenga to extend the Christmas Walk to 8pm. Motion carried.

•- Reagan Marker - no update on funds, but Bennett plans to submit the application to the Illinois State Historical Society in November. There are enough funds to acquire a smaller marker and directional signs.

Government Affairs:

- The Complex - no update provided.

- 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. Volunteers have been cleaning and painting the inside of the facility.

Member Relations: The October E-Newsletter was emailed out to all chamber members, but was also available online. A ribbon cutting was held for Nada Therapeutic Massage but attendance was very low. President Naftzger reminded board members about the importance of attending a ribbon cutting, even if only for 15 minutes. The Internet workshop funded through NIU/USDA Rural Development grant held at Agri-King was fantastic. Attendance from all three towns was minimal but the ratings on the workshop were "Excellent." Several attendees felt it was important to offer the workshop again for those that did not attend. The information was useful, timely, and easy to comprehend for both small and large businesses. Website grant opportunities still exist but are based on first come, first serve.

Downtown: The Fulton Retail Development Group will hold their annual shareholders meeting in November. No recent repairs have been made at the theatre building and it still remains for sale. At this time, no other buildings are financially feasible for the group to consider purchasing based on listed prices and what it would cost to restore. Nancy Kolk's downtown newsletter can be found online under the "Shopping" tab at <http://www.cityoffulton.us/>.

Old/New Business: Bennett reported the D.S. Flikkema Foundation is accepting letters of inquiry for grant funds. The Ronald Reagan Temporary Exhibit which travels to various community festivals along the trail has an empty space for communities to promote their town. The cost to acquire a removable sign for the exhibit is roughly \$500. Bennett inquired if she could write a grant to the D.S. Flikkema Foundation for funds to purchase a removable sign for the temporary exhibit. Bill Blecha has offered to staff the temporary exhibit at least 6 times a year at various community festivals outside of Fulton. During those times, the Fulton sign can be placed on the temporary exhibit. A motion was made Wright and

seconded by Patti Housenga to submit a letter of interest. Motion carried.

Next Meeting: November 9 @ Cousins Subs.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Patti Housenga and seconded by LaShelle to adjourn the meeting at 1:08 p.m. Motion carried.

