

Minutes: July 2011

Fulton Chamber of Commerce

Minutes from July 12, 2011

Present: Chuck Dykstra, Heather Bennett, Jami Smith, Edie Lenz, Greg Naftzger, and Phyllis Housenga.

Absent: Patti Housenga, Marsha Norman, Steve Owen, Tim Wright and Kim LaShelle.

Minutes: A motion was made by Dykstra and seconded by Lenz to approve the minutes from June 14, 2011. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: The June report was provided by Treasurer Linda Hollis and reflected revenue as \$1,331.63 and expenses of \$1,251.33, leaving an ending balance of \$7,173.93. A motion was made by Lenz and seconded by Smith to approve the June report. Motion carried. Bennett provided a year to date budget to actual report - total revenue received \$31,523.74 and total expenditures of \$30,983.76 leaving a balance of \$539.98. While the Chamber operates on a zero-balanced budget (revenues equal expenses) Bennett mentioned the fiscal year will end in the red because all the revenue (donations) for the Reagan historical marker was deposited in the previous fiscal year, but the expense for the maker would be deducted in the current fiscal year.

Donations for the Executive Director position have not been coming in from the membership the last several years. Each year the Chamber must give the city \$5,000+ with a 5% increase annually as part of a salary stipend for the Tourism/Executive Director. The Chamber Board has always been able to pay this expense, but most of it does not come from the donations received from the membership. A couple of board members suggested a three-year pledge campaign be started again, mid-year, with personal follow-ups. More discussion will follow at upcoming board meetings.

Executive: The Executive Director's monthly meetings report was provided. Board members thought the Annual Dinner went well and it was a nice evening. Nearly 70 chamber members attended the event. While some people did not care for the menu, most comments were positive and the menu coincided with the dinner theme (Luau). Board members mentioned it is difficult to provide a meal that 70 people will all like. The menu was listed on the invite ahead of time and some options were provided (chicken kabobs, pork ribs, sweet potatoes, rice, etc.).

Tourism & Promotions:

• City Tourism Committee - Naftzger reported the monthly miller programs at the WCC have been going well, Bill Blecha and Greg Naftzger plan to meet with some Albany officials regarding their boat dock improvements, the Reagan Trail Committee is working on packaging Reagan Bus Tours and revamping their website, the IL Lincoln Highway Coalition will have their annual meeting in June and there will be an open house to review downtown streetscape plans.

• Bridal Walk - registered brides were down from the previous year, but the vendors that attended seemed positive because the brides were genuinely interested. Smith recommended a survey be sent to the vendors to see if they would participate again and this will help determine if the Bridal Walk should be continued.

• Whiteside County Barn Tour -was wonderful! 675 people registered for the tour and the first stop (registration) was at the windmill. Many people came from the suburbs of Chicago.

• Shop Hop - set for November 4 & 5 and November 11 & 12. It will include Lanark, Mt.Carroll, Savanna and Fulton. Eight businesses in Fulton will be participating.

• Lincoln Buy-Way Sales - scheduled for August 5 & 6, 2011. Helen Buikema has offered to help with registering sales on July 18 & 19 but reported she is unable to do registration on July 21 & 22. Bennett was seeking volunteers to work 2 ½ hour shifts from either 9am to 11:30am or 11:30am to 2pm on July 21 & July 22.

• Summer Nights - June 9 (Second Reformed Church), July 14 (First Reformed Church and Fulton Presbyterian Church), and August 11 (Fulton Chamber, Fulton Kiwanis, Mor-Huiz and Community State Bank.) The events will be held near the windmill from 6pm to 8pm.

Government Affairs: The next Legislative Luncheon will be scheduled with Senator Jacobs in August. Bennett is awaiting a response from his assistant for a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday luncheon.

Member Relations: The July E-Newsletter was emailed out to all chamber members and is available online. The

USDA/NIU Grant is still accepting grant applications for website development. The committee will meet to decide on another workshop possibility for the end of August or first part of September. Economic Development personnel from Clinton Regional Development Corporation, Morrison Area Development Corporation, and Blackhawk Hills RC&D have been added to the Western Whiteside Management Team (Morrison Chamber, Fulton Chamber, Whiteside County ED, and Prophetstown Main Street). The group hopes future initiatives will surface soon.

Downtown: Fulton Retail Development Group meets quarterly. Nancy Kolk's downtown newsletter can be found online under the "Shopping" tab at <http://www.cityoffulton.us/>.

Old/New Business: First Reformed Church will host their second annual Back to School Car Show on August 20 @ from 9am to 3:30pm. Pastor Lenz is seeking donations for door prizes and or fillers for the goody bags. Phyllis Housenga reported First Gateway Credit Union is accepting school supply donations. Dykstra was going to ask his tour group operator friend what it costs to be a member of his tour group association and how much they charge for businesses/organizations/attractions to rent a booth at a tour group operator's trade show. Bennett has sent mailings as recently as last fall to some tour group operators and has just acquired a new listing of more operators from Sherry Luchies from Central Bank.

Next Meeting: August 9, 2011 @ Noon @ Corner Treasures & Treats.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Smith and seconded by Housenga to adjourn the meeting at 12:45 p.m. Motion carried.