

Minutes, Monday, March 8, 2021, 9:00 a.m., On-line meeting
Glen Lake Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Action items highlighted

Meeting called to order by Co-President Connie Kroll at 9:08 a.m.

Attendance:

Connie Kroll and Sue Boucher, Co-Presidents; Larry Widmayer, Treasurer; Katy Wiesen, Brooke Haziel-Massieux, and Kathy Baarstad, Board members; Raquel Jackson, Marketing Director; Patricia Widmayer, Secretary to the Board

Minutes, Finances and Marketing

Minutes: The Board unanimously accepted the draft Board of Directors Minutes for the 02/08/21 Board meeting, with the amendment in the “Development of a long-range plan for the Chamber,” that it is Cottonseed, not Cottonwood, that should be included in the discussions.

Financial report. Treasurer Larry Widmayer reported that:

- Cash on hand is \$12,646 as of February 28th;
- An additional eight memberships and a featured member in the newsletter were paid;
- Accounts receivable include \$3,700 in unpaid membership invoices;
- The annual \$2,000 contribution was paid to the Township for Town Garden maintenance.

The Marketing Director was asked to post the new Friends of the Chamber rate of \$50, including non-profits, in the next newsletter, and to also post the member’s rate at \$175. The membership category SERVICES was dropped.

Membership renewals report

The Treasurer report that 73 membership invoices sent, most were either paid or cancelled/dropped. However, 19 remain outstanding.

After discussion concerning several businesses that may no longer be active, it was requested that the Treasurer send a snail mail reminder to everyone and divide/delegate calls to be made.

Marketing Report

The Marketing Director presented a DRAFT of the new Membership Packet, and requested comments/ edits. Discussion focused on the “Chamber Initiatives & Community Events” section where several items were changed or deleted to better reflect the Chamber’s involvement. The edits will appear in the final version to be posted/printed this month.

With reference to the four Wayfinder map updates for 2021, it was determined that – due to multiple changes in businesses – the final map will be produced after the May Chamber meeting when it is likely

all changes may be verified. The Wayfinder maps are on stanchions located on the corners at Boondocks, Cottonseed, M22 Store and the Township Park, and a BIG one on the wall at the Garden Kiosk.

Pending 2021 community happenings

Chili Cookoff. The reformatted Cookoff – “spread out” to the individual establishments for order/carry-out/scholarship donations -- earned more than \$5,000 for the fund (now administered directly by the school district). The event is likely to continue in 2022 as a “spread out” event – given its success this year – since the single-location format had become far too crowded.

The Ice Fishing Contest was a success on a different weekend, and had 62 participants.

Restaurant Week 2021. Brooke announced that Restaurant Week will be Friday, April 23rd-Saturday, May 1st, with the same \$15/\$25/\$35 menus. A least six / participating with a mix of carry-out and in-house dining (as allowed at the time of the event per Michigan dining safety/protocol guidelines).

Policies related to Restaurant Week 2021 were determined by the Board:

- No charge for participation; only Chamber expense is Marketing Director’s time
- Chamber post the dates on Website/Newsletters/Facebook announcement, and press release closer to the event, but no outside advertising
- Restaurants use their own websites/social media for any needed promotion
- Anticipated menus available by mid-April for guests’ information.

Requests for Letters of Support from the Chamber

Two requests were received and supported, with the Gateways Council request to be sent out to members, asking them to write as well:

- Steve Horne of Friends of the Sleeping Bear asked that the Chamber support a grant request to the Christopher Reeves Foundation to purchase 2 electric bikes that are configured to mount wheelchairs so that persons in wheelchairs can access the park trails more easily.
- Bill Wittler of the Sleeping Bear Gateways Council asked that the Chamber support a two-year \$90,000 USDA Economic Development grant to hire a dedicated project manager for their Seasonal Workforce Housing Exchange Project.

Pandemic updates, orders affecting businesses and the community, LPEF and vaccine availability

Sue reported that LPEF continues to coordinate information about vaccination sites and other distribution issues.

Development of a long-range plan for the Chamber

The Secretary to the Board provided “A Report Card on the Four Purposes and Specific Objectives” based on the Chamber’s 2015-2019 Strategic Plan. The report card (see Attachment A) noted considerable accomplishments, many ongoing initiatives, and a few items that remained pending or were dropped.

Extensive discussion resulted in decisions to limit a review and new input to the Board members and to delay the discussion to Monday, April 19th.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m..

Next regular Board meeting is Monday, April 12th, 9:00 a.m., with agenda to include:

- Approve minutes of March 8th Board meeting;
- Financial report;
- Membership renewals report and assignment of calls
- Marketing report;
- Updates on 2021 community happenings, including Restaurant Week;
- Pandemic updates, orders affecting businesses and the community, LPEF issues and vaccine progress/clinics;
- Issues/decisions related to Board's April 19th Strategic Plan review and new input.

Respectfully submitted

Patricia Widmayer, Secretary to the Board

Attachment A

Glen Lake Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan 2015-2019
A Report Card on the Four Purposes and Specific Objectives

#1. Support Members

ACCOMPLISHED

- Print information pieces e.g. walking map, etc.
- Update the Constitution and Bylaws
- Wayfare signage

ONGOING

- Improve the website, get involved in social media, expose members through the various media, and expose member to the use of the Chamber's media

- Sell members on the benefits of the Chamber through higher rates of communications with members including repetitive alerts
- Paid marketing staff overseen by the Board and working from a Marketing Plan
- Member to member purchasing incentives/inducements (e.g. SHOPtober)

PLAN/FUND OR DROP?

- Motivate members to be more active in communication, participation and volunteering
- Coordinate with banks, etc., for reduced credit card rates, discounts on health insurance, etc.

#2. Bring business to the community and enhance awareness of businesses

ACCOMPLISHED

- Promote free WiFi in town

ONGOING

- Promote SBHT to bring more business to the area
- Better align with NPS (Gateway Council?)
- Emphasize activities in community for guests e.g. GAAA, Conservancy, etc.

PLAN/FUND OR DROP?

- Do things in concert with other organizations
- Develop member to member benefits
- Investigate digital interfacing with guests
- Develop events for the shoulder seasons, e.g. skiing SBHT, tennis tournament, etc.

#3. Raise funds to support the Chamber's other purposes

ACCOMPLISHED

- Review our print advertising plan (Note: And dropped all)

ONGOING

- Create additional money raising events
- Sell website advertising

- Review existing events to improve profit margin
- Increase dues (\$175/100)
- Establish annual increase in small amount in dues
- Create different types of members e.g. churches, service companies, non-profits, friends of the Chamber, etc.
- Newbie membership incentive

PLAN/FUND OR DROP?

- Hold a raffle in the summer (e.g. pontoon boat)
- Develop a vacation package and have a country-wide raffle
- Solicit new members

#4. Sponsor and/or support community activities

ACCOMPLISHED

- Link parade responsibility to the Township for insurance coverage

ONGOING

- List all the things the Chamber now does e.g. Winterfest/Chili Cookoff, Holiday Marketplace, Sidewalk Sale, parade, Manitou Music Festival, support Garden Club planting, support with public garden/rest rooms, scholarships, Restaurant Week promotion

PLAN/FUND OR DROP?

- Do community banners
- Create a community character
- Do a smorgasboard like used to be done
- Find other organizations with whom we should connect

ALREADY DROPPED

- Bring Glen Lake, Empire and Leelanau County Chambers together (NOTE: Failed, no feasible common structure or financial interest)
- Find ways for Pure Michigan to help us more (NOTE: State funding reduced)