

MINUTES – NEWBERRY-JONESVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
April 7, 2009

Style Definition: Normal

Members Present: Anne Alfano Keri Moore
Ryan Beacher Susan Parker
Bill Brant Rocky Voglio
Christy Finnegan
Barbara Hendrix
Sophie Lancaster
Jeff Leivonen

Guest: Kim Stinton, Watermelon Festival representative

Meeting was called to order by President Alfano at 8:35 a.m.

A motion was made by Susan Parker that none of the absent directors be charged with an absence due to the change of meeting time. Motion was seconded by Bill Brant. Passed.

A motion was made to approve the minutes by Patricia Yates. Motion was seconded by Barbara Hendrix. Passed.

A motion was made by Susan Parker to approve the April agenda, seconded by Rocky Voglio. Passed.

A presentation was made by Kim Stinton of the Watermelon Festival. Kim thanked the Chamber for the \$300 donated last year. The money was given to the Watermelon Queen, Leslie Torres, to use toward going to State. She didn't place at State but represented Newberry very well during her term. This year's Watermelon Festival is May 16. Kim is requesting money toward helping our Queen go to state again this year. This year the Watermelon Festival is working with Norfleet Construction to have a rodeo to benefit Hospice in conjunction with the Newberry Festival. The Hospice Rodeo will be May 15th and May 16th and the same carnival as last year will be here on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 15-17. Barbara Hendrix made a motion that we give \$300 to the Watermelon Festival for the Queen and the motion was seconded by Keri Moore. Motion carried.

Susan Parker brought up the matter of board absences and a discussion ensued. Susan acknowledged that board members are involved in different organizations or programs that are in line with the work that we do as NJCC members that should not be counted as absences. An example was Leadership Gainesville. This type of program helps us to do our job as NJCC members. Susan further stated that if we had the funds to support someone from the NJCC to be in Leadership Gainesville, we should do so. Bill Brant said that the by-laws said that if a board member missed 3 meetings, the Board would discuss the absences. Another example is the CPAC meetings that Susan Parker and Joy Glanzer attend. When these meetings are at the same time as Board meetings, they don't count against Susan and Joy. A motion was made by Susan Parker that the meetings missed by Christy Finnegan due to Leadership Gainesville meetings, not be counted as absences. Rocky Viglio seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Sophie Lancaster commended Main Street on the Unity Day. Sophie also said that she wasn't aware of the fact that the NJCC didn't have a tent, tables and signage. When she arrived at Unity Day, she was expecting the above. Sophie made a motion that the Chamber invest in a professional tent, tables, signage and chairs. Barbara Hendrix seconded the motion. Motion carried.

President Alfano brought up the fact that we need a place to store the tent, tables, signage and chairs. The feeling was that the Kincaid Building wasn't secure enough. Rocky Viglio said he would talk to Mrs. Whittle to see if we could get a small storage unit. This issue of bugs was discussed with the solution being putting charcoal in the unit. Susan Parker suggested that we rent an office. That way we could install a telephone and have volunteers staff the office and answer the phone. Susan feels it is time to have an office. There were many advantages discussed in having an office, such as a street address, a central filing cabinet and storage. Patricia said that in the interim, we could use Ameris as a storage area. Bill Brant said that we need to have Trent Snider's input with the budget as the prices of different kinds of tents vary.

The scholarship fund was discussed. Rocky collects \$1.00 towards the Scholarship Fund from everyone attending the Tuesday networking Group.

Barbara Hendrix said that we were close to launching the website. President Alfano will be able to add things to the site. People will be able to pay on-line with PayPal.

Bill Brant said that he had nothing to report regarding the Procedure Manual Committee. The By-Laws are finished. President Alfano, Ann Knapp and Robert Fillyaw are also on the committee. Bill welcomes other people.

\$65 was collected at the last Chamber Luncheon for the Scholarship Fund.

Susan Parker invited everyone to the Political Forum tonight at 7:00 at City Hall. A discussion then ensued regarding CPAC fund possibilities. There is a potential for the Chamber to raise funds for political opportunities, such as trips to Washington, D.C. Susan suggested that the Chamber have separate functions to raise money for these opportunities. An example was the realtor's association's chili cook-off in October. Susan suggested a fundraising event in the Fall to raise money for CPAC. It was brought up that Main St. has a BBQ event in the Fall, on October 3 at the Fall Festival. The CPAC chili cook off should be a free-standing event. Bill Brant made a motion that we proceed with the chili cook-off committee and that they bring their ideas as to how it should be organized. Keri Moore seconded the motion.

The organization of the Chamber Luncheons was discussed. Patricia Yates said the check in system challenges were on-going. Keri Moore and Barbara Hendrix cover over all and they get assistants. It was mentioned that we need a backup system, primarily so other meetings in the building won't eat our food. Rocky is in charge of getting the food vendors. This month, Villaggio's Pizzeria is doing the food with Vulcan paying. \$2 will go to the scholarship fund.

Bill Brant asked Susan Parker for an update on the rice plant. Susan went to Biloxi. They are still talking to Newberry about the plant, but it hasn't been approved by Newberry yet. There would need to be a land use change and this hasn't been approved yet. It would involve a \$700,000 CPEG grant, \$3.6mil in economic development and \$811,000 from Gainesville for road development. The Planning and Zoning Committee meets the first week in May and it has to go to two public hearings. There is some opposition. Stefan Davis has purchased a building in Madison, FL. and they are operating.

Bill Brant said there is talk of a Rotary Club in Newberry.

Susan Parker discussed her public position. She believes in sustainable economic development and jobs for Newberry. She said that every company has a right to come before the city. As far as land use goes, there are lots of things to consider: traffic, infrastructure being two of them. Susan wants to know where the Board stands on the issue. She is hearing that we have families that live across the street from the proposed rice plant spot who are opposed to it. They don't want the odor, traffic and trains that will come with the plant. The Chamber took a beating when Florida Rock came and backed off with the asphalt plant. Barbara stated that people need to come to the meetings. The Economic Development Committee is trying to get the meeting times out so that people will be notified. Barbara suggested the industrial part as a location, but there isn't enough room for the plant.

Jeff Leivonen, Membership Chair, wasn't certain of the number of new members.

Barbara Hendrix gave a Main Street report. There weren't as many people at the Main Street Festival as they hope for. They raised \$219.00 for the Kincaid Building Fund. She has Main Street t-shirts that she will bring to the luncheons and the chili cook-off to sell for \$10.

Barbara has also applied for 2 grants for Main Street: 1. \$65,000 Capital City Grant and 2. On March 23, Barbara went to Tallahassee to apply for \$50,000 but there were not state funds available. They pulled all funding for cultural grants, so all funding for Main Street was pulled. She will be applying for more grants. The city of Newberry is going to help with the office. As part of our Main Street Charter, Main Street has to have a paid director and an office. Susan suggested that the NJCC and Main Street partner and share an office. President Alfano agreed that this could be an option.

Susan Parker, Joy Glanzer and Rocky Voglio, members of the Banquet Committee, will begin work after the elections.

Susan Parke invited the Board Members to her Open House across the street from City Hall tonight from 4-7 p.m.

At 10:08, a motion to adjourn was made by Susan Parker and seconded by Keri Moore.

Respectfully submitted by:

Christy Finnegan, substituting for Anne Knapp, Secretary