

HCCC

HOTCHKISS COMMUNITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

promoting business & quality of life

Minutes: Board of Directors – May 28, 2014 – 8 a.m., Hotchkiss Public Library

Present: President/Chair – Nathan Sponseller (First State Bank, Stonehouse Inn, Merchant Herald), Vice President – Bill Long (TDS), Recording secretary – Tom Wills (Merchant Herald, Wills Gallery and Used Books), Board Member – Rhonda Duclou (Hotchkiss Public Library) Board member- Mary Hockenbery (Church of Art/Mary Hockenbery Photography and Elaine Brett - Treasurer. Absent: Communications secretary – Katherine Colwell (Colwell Cedars Retreat)

President Nathan Sponseller called the meeting to order.

The minutes of the April 30 board meeting were approved.

Treasurer, Elaine Brett, reported that the Chamber's account balances were: Regular checking (operating account) - \$8,929.49, special projects - \$6,149.74, and Downtown Merchants - \$292.80.

In the absence of Katherine Colwell, Nathan reported that as of the meeting there were 89 paid 2014 Chamber members. Katherine has done some updates to the NorthForkValley.net site. The planned Chamber brochure is in progress with the work being done by Hotchkiss graphic designer, Niki Richardson. It should be done by the first of July. Richardson has also been developing reusable branded ad templates for Chamber and Chamber sponsored events.

The Chamber rented out nine yard sale spaces on the downtown First State Bank owned lots during the Sheep Dog Trials. Thanks go out to the bank.

E-Waste – The Chamber's/E-Waste recycling event is set for mid-day on Saturday June 14 at the Fairgrounds. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event gives local businesses and individuals a chance to conveniently, and legally, dispose of old computers, monitors, televisions, and other electronics. Sponsors include the Chamber, Western Slope Conservation Center, First State Bank of Colorado, TDS Telecom, and the Town of Hotchkiss. The items will be collected and recycled by E-Waste Recycling of Grand Junction with the help of volunteers from the Chamber and WSCC.

Downtown Improvement:

Flower coordinator and chief volunteer, Mary Hockenbery, will send out a thank you to Lost Mesa Flowers who donated quite a few extra plants on top of the ones the Chamber /Town purchased. Working around the late freeze required lots of extra effort. More planters have been adopted by local businesses and other volunteers.

We will need a new general coordinator for the flowers for next year as Mary will be stepping back to just taking care of one block. Tom has been applying preservative stain to the large planters.

There was a discussion of having a sign made for the Chamber's Bernie Fair alley park information kiosk. Something that would extend out to the sidewalk and be very visible to passing visitors on the highway. There was some debate about whether to have a one piece metal sign made or to have a bracket with an attached sign. All agreed to allow the idea to be passed on to metal artist Ricky Sparks and engineer/Town councilman Dustyn Foster with a budget of approximately \$500 with the idea of having a Visitor's Information sign that is both creative and practical. Dustyn will be finishing up the second (back side) display case on the kiosk in the next few weeks.

Larry Jakubiak (North Fork Valley Restaurant owner and new Town trustee) would like to reconfigure the planters in relation to the picnic tables and Tom will work with him on that. He would also like to paint the picnic tables a different color replacing the current hot pink. There would no objections to the changes and hope was expressed that Jakubiak will also help with future maintenance and subsequent improvements the alley park.

Welcome to Hotchkiss sign replacement. There was a discussion of how to proceed with replacement of the Welcome to Hotchkiss sign on Highway 133. The old sign was damaged in a wind storm. Mary Hockenbery would like to see something creative. There was also a suggestion that the old sign could be sold to someone as an outdoor decorative piece. It is broken but could be reassembled onto wooden supports.

Bill Long suggested that a local sign painter/artist be supplied with a suitable sized panel for a new sign and then the new sign be coated with multiple layers of poly-urethane to insure long life. All appeared to be in favor of moving ahead with this.

CDOT ROW-sign code issue

Tom Wills reported that although the Chamber's letter asking that the Town seek to remove the sidewalks downtown from the CDOT effective right of way, particularly as signs are regulated, was received, no action was taken. The issue is that the Town is considering adoption of a sign code but the CDOT ROW issue makes all signs (or any non-exempted object) that projects more than 15 inches into the sidewalk area in violation of CDOT regulation. As it currently stands the Town has little choice (if it adopts a code) but to ban new projecting signs either directly or by requiring all new projecting signs be reviewed by CDOT, which achieves the same thing. But, the Town is concerned that opening negotiations might also open an unintended can of worms. The Chamber is concerned that the new sign code will make all existing projecting signs non-conforming to the code and subject to eventual removal, and that the status quo also leaves such signs at risk to the whims of CDOT enforcement due to complaint.

After some discussion Bill Long agreed that instead of a letter sent to higher management perhaps the Town could, as first step, move forward by simply contacting the regional CDOT ROW person and inquiring as to how the Town might receive an exemption for signs, planters, flags, banners and structures in the sidewalk area.

Other announcement and discussion:

Elaine Brett (also chair of the Friends of the Paradise Theatre) announced that the new community funded digital projector had been installed and a schedule of movies was being arranged.

"The picture and sound quality will blow your mind," Brett said.

There was a discussion of whether or not to offer a membership discount for additional businesses if a member owns more than one business. In the end there was an agreement to offer such second businesses to be listed as members in exchange for significant volunteer time on Chamber projects.

Respectfully submitted, Tom Wills – Recording Secretary.