

Board of Directors
Wednesday, March 3, 2004
7:00am - Ramada Inn

Attending: John Pundt, President; Dick Leshley, President Elect; Jenny Bream, Vice President; Barbara Gunnell, Secretary; Chris Christoffer, Treasurer; Sid Fannick, Business Consultant; Raye Gieseke, Pony Village Mall; Marty Giles, Wavecrest Discoveries; Todd Goergen, Arctic Ice Co.; Renee Middleton, US Bank; Sherry Yarbrough, Umpqua Bank, Board Members. Martin Callery, Oregon International Port of Coos Bay, Community at Large Director; Shirley Liberante, Executive Director; Connie Davis, Office Manager. Guests: Deryl Beebe, Southern Oregon Federal Credit Union/Ambassadors; Margery Whitmer, Betty Kay Charters; Don Yost, Charleston Merchants Association; Porscha Boyd, Marshfield HS Student Representative; Rick Howell, South Coast ESD.

President John Pundt called the meeting to order and everyone present introduced themselves and their businesses.

The minutes of the February 4, 2004 meeting were approved as mailed.

Porscha Boyd reported that the school trimester is ending, current sports and other events have ended and others have not started yet. She stated that Raye Gieseke visited the school and talked to the seniors about getting a job, what is expected, how to go about it, etc. She said that it was very informative and they learned a lot from Raye.

John reported that the Executive Committee has discussed how to deal with forums throughout the upcoming political season. The decision was made to have both sides represented with Rick Howell as the moderator. Questions will be written, the scope will be narrow and the focus will be totally on local business economy with candidates being asked to reply to what they plan to do to help business succeed. Business issues will be addressed as to how they will help business to succeed if it passes and also what would happen if it were to fail.

Shirley reported that road race promoter, John Buchanan, is interested in speaking at a Wednesday forum. She said the issue of whether or not to hold a NASCAR-type race in downtown Coos Bay will be on the ballot and both the pros and cons of the issue should be addressed if a forum were to take place. A discussion was held and some of the comments were: the Chamber's function is to inform and educate, not take sides of an issue; John Buchanan and Roger Karr have obtained enough signatures to get it on the ballot; the City has committed to manage the event (with ODOT and other issues); this will be a NASCAR event with any and all proceeds going to fund School District 9; this topic would not be an IBO function, but would be a Government Affairs function since it will be on the ballot.

Shirley reported that the Community Profile/Business Directorys are here and she brought a few so that everyone could take one and encouraged them to stop by the office if they need more. She stated that this is one of the recruitment tools that the hospital and medical clinics use to encourage doctors to move to our area, and said that there is an additional page in this publication that features industry. She said that the majority of pictures in the publication were taken by Chamber member R.C. Hall.

Shirley congratulated Raye Gieseke on her new job as Manager of Pony Village Mall.

Shirley reported that plans for the Chamber move are looking good and said that the proposed moving date should be in approximately 60 days.

Shirley reminded everyone about the "new and improved" Chamber website and said that currently the picture

on the home page is the Profile cover picture but plans are to change this to a revolving display after a logistical problem is worked out. She said that in July we received 230,000 hits to the website, then it dropped off for a few months, but February is back up to 228,000.

Chris Christoffer reported that the 2003 year-end report shows a total revenue of \$265,000 and expenses of \$235,000 for a net profit of \$30,000 which includes Profile revenue. He said that our accountant allocates part of that revenue to 2003 & part to 2004. He said that actual operating revenue comprised of dues and program revenue was \$156,000 with operating expense of \$152,000 for a net of \$4,000. Chris stated that membership dues don't cover the actual cost of operations so the Chamber relies upon program revenue to balance the budget. He said that we ended the year with \$214,000 in the bank of which \$107,000 are restricted funds that includes \$54,000 allocated for fixed assets (property & reserve fund). He commended Louie Liberante for establishing this fund several years ago, when he served as Chamber President, so the money was there when new equipment was needed or a move was made. Chris said that we ended the year with a net operating fund of \$107,000 as compared to a \$78,000 balance the prior year.

Chris reported that the total revenue for January was \$90,000 which included \$31,000 in renewals and \$15-20,000 in Profile income). Expenses were \$44,000 with a net of \$46,000. Cash reserves are \$220,000 with \$111,000 in operating funds (not including Profile money). He said that next year's costs will increase somewhat since the Chamber will start paying rent in the new location. Shirley stated that the Chamber has been paying taxes, insurance, janitorial, and other bills, portions of which are for their locating at the Visitor Center, and said that she calculated that when the Chamber moves to the new location expenses will be approximately \$200 per year more than we are paying now overall.

Marty Giles reported that Andy LaTomme spoke at the Tourism Committee meeting last month on the Oregon Shores Management Plan, giving an update as well as website information. She said that the information will be available in local libraries and the public will have another month to comment on it. She said that the committee will be bringing the topic of signage to the Government Affairs Committee. Marty said that National Tourism Week is coming up and they will be working on plans to educate the public. One topic will be Law Enforcement on the Oregon Dunes.

Marty said that Margery Whitmer has been instrumental in working on the Charleston to Bandon Tour Route and has met with Pat Moran of ODOT regarding the installation of entry signs on Highway 101 directing people to the tour route.

Margery Whitmer reported that Marty and others in the Chamber have established detailed plans for the tour route that will incorporate entry signs at the south entrance to the tour route, at spurs leading to the tour route (such as Bastendorff Beach, Cranberry Bogs, Coquille Point, Beach Loop, etc.), and also at the Charleston Visitor Center. She said that plans are to get in touch with the Bandon Chamber to see if they would be willing to help raise funds to pay for the signs. Margery said that National Tourism Week is the end of May and they hope to have the signs in place by that time. She said that the signs are \$80 each and they may decide to look for people to "sponsor a sign". She said that she and Marty are working together to create a brochure and want to co-op with Bandon in a regional marketing effort.

Marty reminded everyone that the next Tourism meeting will be on March 8, 7am, at the Ramada Inn.

Deryl Beebe thanked everyone for participating in the Business After Hours 50/50 drawings, and said that it is a fund raiser for the Ambassadors. She said that they were going to send a letter to businesses asking for gift certificates and/or gifts for the Ambassador's convention baskets. She said that they are hoping to get more gift certificates since that would encourage people to visit our area. Deryl said that this year's convention will be in Gresham.

Deryl invited everyone to attend the Open House at Southern Oregon Federal Credit Union on March 16th at 5:30 and to be sure and put their name in for the drawing of a 50" Big screen TV. She said that the next Ambassador meeting will be Friday noon at Benetti's. She reported that sweatshirt sales have been very successful and plans are to order more that will be sold at The Oregon Connection. She reminded everyone that this month's Business After Hours will be at Coos Bay Manor from 5-7 on the last Wednesday of the month.

Martin Callery reported that the Economic Development and Transportation meetings have both been cancelled for the month of March. He also said that he is looking for a co-chair for the Transportation committee.

Raye Gieseke reported that Ron Opitz will be the speaker for Wednesday's IBO lunch forum and a representative from Big 5 Sporting Goods will be next week's speaker. She said that she has April and May forums scheduled already but she still needs a couple more ideas for March.

John Pundt said that we need to work on boosting Chamber membership. A discussion followed and general consensus was that rather than have an actual membership drive we should continue to encourage businesses to join by showing them the benefits of being a member. Shirley said that we need to look to other sources of revenue (other than membership) to sustain us in the event of economic fluctuations.

Connie Davis reported that this month's Leadership Coos class will focus on Health & Human Services. Some of the topics will include meth prevention, drugs don't work, coos county mental health, children's advocates, what the salvation army does for the community, hospice, bay area hospital presentation and tour and more.

Dick Leshley reported that the Drug's Don't Work Task Force meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7am at the Red Lion.

Don Yost thanked everyone for helping at the Charleston Crab Feed. He said that over 50 volunteers helped to serve crab dinners to more than 800 people this year. Shirley stated that Charleston is our crown jewel. She said that she is proud to be associated with Charleston and all they have and what they've grown to be. She said that the Chamber recognizes Charleston as being an important part of Oregon's Bay Area.

Martin Callery, reporting for the Port, stated that work is still continuing on the railroad bridge. He said that several of the support pilings had to be replaced and the in-water work is expected to be complete by the end of March. He said that if the work stays on track Phase 1 work will end in October and since Phase 2 is expected to cost between \$10-12 million, further negotiations are in order. Martin said that Mike Gaul and commissioners went to the east coast to negotiate on a rail spur for the North Spit. He reported that Representatives Ron Wyden and Peter DeFazio were very positive about the project and that Rep. Gordon Smith and Ron Wyden spent a lot of time with the Northwest Delegation.

Martin reported that he will be going to NE China with Brady Scott and other delegates from the state to discuss shipping commodities.

Dick Leshley stated that he feels if a person is a Board Member they should be serving on a committee and encouraged all to pick a committee and get involved. He said that committee meetings are listed on the Chamber calendar, that is included in the monthly newsletter, and are also listed on the website.

Having no further business, President Pundt adjourned the meeting.