

**Bay Area Chamber of Commerce
Board Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2006 – 7:00am – Red Lion**

Board Members present: Bonnie Barron, Bay Area Hospital; Jenny Bream, Brian Bream Screw Machines; Ken Croes, KCBY-TV; Barbara Gunnell, Community Financial Services; Joanie Johnson, Sincerely Yours! Antique Mall; Dick Leshley, Yellow Cab Taxi; Joy McCarthy; Renee Middleton, US Bank; Barry Hayes, Pony Village Mall; Brandy Thompson, Cardinal Services; Sherry Yarbrough, Umpqua Bank; Shirley Liberante & Connie Davis, Bay Area Chamber of Commerce.

Community at Large: Ron Opitz, South Coast Development Council. **Ex-Officio:** Scott McClure, City of Coos Bay; Jan Willis, City of North Bend.

President-elect Jenny Bream called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

The minutes of the April 12, 2006 Board Meeting were unanimously approved as mailed. (Notation after the fact: Timm Slater was present at the April meeting).

President's Report – Shirley Liberante stated that Board Member Scott Nay will be working out of the area and unavailable to finish out his term on the Board. The Executive Committee asked Tom Jackman, Menasha Forest Products Corporation, if he would be interested in serving on the Chamber Board. He would be filling out the term for Scott and then be up for re-election at the end of that term. Tom indicated he was interested. It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to accept Tom Jackman as a new member of the Chamber Board.

Executive Director's Report – Shirley Liberante introduced new Board Member Barry Hayes, Manager of Pony Village Mall. Barry will be filling out the term of Eileen Ophus, CCD Business Development Corporation, who has moved from the area. Barry told everyone a little about himself and some of the future plans for the Mall.

Shirley asked that everyone take a moment to call and welcome our latest new members. They are Caytie's Country Cottage (a ribbon-cutting will be held tomorrow at 5:00); Willamette Dental Insurance; new Century 21 Agent, Maria Ogaard; and the Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association.

Shirley reported that the LNG letter went out as Martin Callery wrote it. She said that she received a lot of positive feedback and said that Bob Braddock thanks everyone for the letter and their support.

Dick Leshley reported that they have been considering asking the County to open the dump on Sundays. It was suggested that the months of daylight savings time (April – October) would be convenient for those people wanting to dispose of yard debris. The suggestion was made to combine our efforts with other nearby communities. It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to send a letter to the County Commissioners immediately to get that project underway.

Shirley stated that she recently received a nomination for a 4-Star Award and it is the first one she has received in about 3 months. She encouraged everyone to send in nominations so we can thank and give recognition to those businesses who do a good job. Ken Croes volunteered to run the names of the winners on KCBY. A suggestion was made to provide a customer opinion survey form at local businesses to gain feedback from tourists and local shoppers. A discussion was held regarding the benefit to the community by learning people's opinions. It was also suggested to award a "5-Star Award" at the annual banquet with the winner being chosen from the year's 4-Star Award winners.

Shirley reported that at a recent Executive Board meeting it was suggested to have some small, elegant yard signs printed to be awarded to those residents and businesses who take particular pride in their property. The winners would be recognized in the monthly newsletter and the Chamber Quarterly. She said that photographer R.C. Hall has agreed to donate his time to take a photograph of any business planning to spruce up their property. Call the Chamber and let her know when you will be working on your project. Ron Opitz said that the Flags & Flowers committee is "all about community" and have suggested that their committee work

jointly with the Chamber to send a letter to businesses asking them to clean or replace their awnings. It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to send the letter. Shirley asked Ron and the Flags/Flowers committee to prepare the letter. Additional suggestions were made and it was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to choose a sign designer and request a cost estimate for yard signs to be awarded to the winners. Shirley suggested that since this project was becoming quite large we need a "Pride" sub-committee. Jan Willis and Scott McClure volunteered to chair this committee and Chris Christoffer, Jenny Bream, Joanie Johnson, Ken Croes and Renee Middleton will volunteer as committee members.

Treasurer's Report – Barbara Gunnell distributed copies of the Profit and Loss from January 1 through May 2, 2006. She stated that the report shows a loss due to a couple of large payouts for the Community Profile. She explained that this figure was less than the same time period last year and indicated that it is a typical occurrence since dues revenue comes in primarily at the end of the year while the Profile payout is at the first part of the year. Shirley said that Chamber books start with a zero balance every year and many of the revenue-producing programs are held later in the year.

Other Officers & Committee Reports -

Ambassadors – Joy McCarthy reported that they will have a ribbon-cutting on Friday, at the new Oregon Spine Institute building, at 5:30. Shirley will send out an e-mail inviting Chamber Members to attend. Joy stated that the Ambassadors plan to bid on getting the state convention to come to the Bay Area and it generally takes a couple of years to get it. She said that they have to host a hospitality room at this year's convention in Roseburg, with food and wine depicting our area, and will be putting on a skit (directed by Jill Hansen), She said since the Roseburg Convention is the same weekend as our Bay Area Fun Festival, and many of the Ambassadors are involved in that, they have been given permission to perform their skit and host the hospitality room on Friday night so that it doesn't interfere with their Fun Festival activities. Joy said the last Ambassador's Convention that was held here was 12 years ago brought approximately 250 people, from around the state, to our area.

Joy reported that she has had the opportunity to talk to other Ambassadors around the state and said that everyone is very impressed with the working relationship our Ambassador group has with the Chamber. She said that most other Ambassador groups have a coordinator who is a Chamber staff member and that person makes all the decisions for the group. She said that she has received calls from three different groups who make their own decisions, with the support of the Board, but others around the state don't have that relationship.

Tourism - Shirley reported that Scott McClure was the speaker at the last meeting and let everyone know what is happening around the bay. Scott spoke about the Empire project and said that there is a new conceptual plan that includes new features, a new dock facility that can accommodate tall ships, etc. He said the City Council will be making a decision on the top section of the property, (the old Bay Club location) and the mid-section between that and the docks, and plan to keep the general theme of the project throughout the entire property and will probably include height maximums.

Shirley reported that the Tall Ships are due to arrive tomorrow at 2:00pm and plan to stay until the 16th. Plans are to have coffee served during the day in the Boardwalk pavilion with a "sandwich board" inviting people to walk down to the Marshfield Sun Printing Museum and other attractions.

Speaker at this month's Tourism Committee meeting will be Jennifer Groth with the Flags & Flowers committee.

Economic Development – Shirley said that American Bridge will be the speaker at the next meeting which will be held the 3rd Friday of the month.

IBO Lunch Forums – Shirley reported that Pacific Cove Humane Society will be today's speaker, next week will be South Coast Business Employment and the "Yes" Program. The third week's speaker will be the Director of the Oregon Lottery Commission.

Business After Hours on the 24th will begin at the Oyster Cove Plaza in Charleston and many Charleston Merchants will be open that evening.

CB-NB Tourism & Conventions Bureau – Shirley said that they will hold a budget meeting on Thursday the 11th.

Government Affairs – Dick Leshley said that last month's speaker was Ron Opitz with SCDC and they are hoping to have Jeff Bishop speak at their next meeting on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Dick reminded everyone that it is time to get their issues before the legislators prior to them going into session.

Forestry/Fisheries – Shirley stated that the Lumberjack Competition will be the last Saturday In June. She said that they are only \$1,000 away from their goal of \$14,000 which is the amount required to be able to keep the event free to the general public. She said that KCBY donates air time and many other people donate time and money as well. She said that approximately 2200 people attended the event last year. This year's competition will be moved out a little because of construction that will be going on at The Mill. She also said that more seating will be available this year.

Leadership Coos – Connie Davis reported that the group will be graduating another class next week. Keynote speaker will be Jane Barth with the Ford Family Foundation. Tom Bennett, with Southwestern Oregon Community College will also be speaking and Chamber President Chris Christoffer will offer words of congratulations to the class and will assist with the graduation ceremony.

Community Reports –

City of North Bend - Jan Willis reported that the budget committee has prepared a balanced budget that is ready to submitted it to the Council for adoption. She said that there are a couple of capital construction projects in the works; new residential developments at the top of Virginia Ave.; Home Depot is still doing studies and possible completion date could be September of 2007; The Mill hopes to have the RV Park open by June.

City of Coos Bay – Scott McClure reported that the old Central Dock building has been torn down and the new Museum will be located on that site. He said that the Wi-Fi project is looking for a location in downtown Coos Bay and that the city will be helping to set that up with a proposed completion date of June. He said that ORCA Communications will be the service provider.

Scott said that CGI Communications has shown a video promotion to the city. He said that the video tours the general commercial area and that businesses can become sponsors and/or have a virtual tour of their businesses. The company will provide the videography. Scott said that this concept started on the East Coast, they have some in Washington and California and have recently begun to introduce the concept in Oregon.

Scott reported that they have completed their budget process and are in good shape, have authorized some equipment replacement, and will have 3 positions to fill, one of which will be a Code Enforcement Officer. He said that action for code enforcement will be on a complaint basis to identify property infractions. He mentioned that some changes will be needed to tighten up ordinances and they may need support from people who want to improve community properties.

Scott reported that economic development is up from 8 to 35 million; several new subdivisions of single family dwellings are being developed.

He reported that the City will be cutting some timber behind K-Mart and the money derived from the sale will be used to purchase equipment.

South Coast Development – Ron Opitz reported that new retail, as well as new residential, development is in the works. He said that this indicates they have done market research in the area and see a growing market here. He added that the creation of new jobs contributes to the core of our economy and we have a lot of assets here, but we still have a lot of people who are "under-employed". He stated that he is very encouraged about all the things that are happening in the area.

Announcements -

Shirley mentioned that Connie will be retiring the end of June and that 34 applicants have answered the ad for that position. She is hoping to hire someone by the first of June so there can be a month's overlap for training.

Joanie Johnson announced that the Farmer's Market starts on the 24th and that Kaffe 101 will reopen this week with new owners. She said that the Antique Faire will be Saturday at Coos Art Museum.

Joanie said that the Bay Area Fun Festival is considering a new activity on Sunday of the festival weekend this year – a toilet bowl race. She said that new toilet bowls will be provided and mounted on a wheeled platform. The driver would be blindfolded and the passenger directs the driver which way to drive. The costumed contestants are required to drop their flag in a barrel and come back to the starting point. She said that they hope to have a challenge between city officials and that she plans to get out a letter with details about the race, inviting community leaders to participate.

Shirley announced that she will be gone on vacation for two weeks starting at noon on Friday. She is going to Michigan to visit family and her daughter will be graduating from Pacific University on the 20th. She will return to work on the 22nd.

Dick Leshley announced that he has received several inquiries about taxi transfers from the Eugene and Portland areas during the Bandon Dunes Curtis Cup Golf Tournament. The event will be held the last weekend of July 2006; there has been a lot of interest from people in other countries; hotels in the area will be full and many people will be staying in Eugene and driving over for the tournament; the tournament is expected to last 5 days with 3 days of golf.

Adjournment – Having no further business, President-Elect Bream adjourned the meeting.