

*Albert Lea / Freeborn County*  
*Chamber of Commerce*  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
Wednesday, July 27, 2016 – 7:30 a.m.  
Chamber Board Room

**MINUTES**

Present: Jeff Woodside, Randy Kehr, George Gonzalez, Jenny Iverson, Kim Nelson, Catherine Buboltz, Tricia Dahl, Julia Thompson, Angie Kolker

Ex-Officios Present: Brett Behnke, Chad Adams, John Kluever, Jon Murray, Ryan Nolander

Excused: Randy Cirksena, Justin Oman, Jeff Eaton, Amy Davis, Adenuga Atewologun, Kathy Sabinish

Absent:

Guest:

---

**Consent Items**

1. Chair Jeff Woodside called the meeting to order at 7:35.
2. The June minutes were presented. Catherine Buboltz made a motion to approve the minutes and was seconded by Tricia Dahl. The motion carried.
3. The June Retreat minutes were presented. Julia Thompson made a motion to approve and was seconded by Kim Nelson. The motion carried.
4. The June financials were presented. Randy K. reported that it was a great month for new member dues. Our expenses are normal and money is being saved for our new office. Randy K. commented that it is very convenient for our members in our location now. The income shown in June for the Golf Outing is just a portion of what we will take in. Randy K. estimates that the income should be \$16,000 - \$17,000. The outing went really well. Parade income was up and expenses were down. Overall, Randy said that we are getting back to where we are supposed to be. Jenny Iverson made a motion to accept the financials. Catherine Buboltz seconded and the motion carried.

**Action Items:**

There were no Action Items this month.

• **Reports:**

**County:**

- John Kluever reported that there are three workshops scheduled between now and the September 20<sup>th</sup> setting of the budget. The biggest budget items of concern are highways and Court Services. He explained that Rice County

received a 911 call that someone was planning to shoot at a courthouse in southern Minnesota. They added an extra layer of staff and fortunately, nothing happened. They are continuing to work on court security and campus security and are considering the possibility of having a screening process to get into the courts. This is a challenge for the budget.

- John will be calling for one more workshop to deal with their most pressing issue – the appointment of a new County Attorney. They have received one application and anticipate one or two internal applicants. There has also been outside interest. The appointed position will be for two years and then will return to an elected position because Craig Nelson is leaving in the middle of his term.

### **City:**

- Chad Adams reported that the primary election for Wards 1 and 5 is August 9<sup>th</sup> and encouraged everyone to get out and vote.
- The City is in the budgeting process as well. The preliminary levy will be set in September.
- Chad reported that there are four developers wanting to work on both large and small scale workforce housing.
- Chad reported that the market value for downtown buildings is going up and that is adding monies to the taxes collected. The city will be releasing the application for the Small Cities Development Program Grant in the near future. Eligible expenses include indoor and outdoor improvements. Second floor living spaces will be eligible.
- The Council will vote on the final ballot language for the Watershed sales tax extension. It will be on the November ballot. This is not a new tax, just an extension of the sales tax that we already pay to help fund the Watershed projects.
- Chad explained that the Splash Pad is a \$150,000 project that is being funded by donations. ITC recently donated \$25,000 to the project. Cargill has committed \$5000. We have received over one-third of the project funds and it might be possible to get construction started on the project in time to have it completed and up and running next spring.
- Randy K. explained that the Super Bowl 52 Committee asked SHIP to submit up to three projects for grant consideration. This is for \$50,000 grants that are non-competitive. The SHIP Leadership Team in partnership with the NVC Leadership Team approved three ideas for submission, one of which is for amenities for the Splash Pad and large musical instruments for Fountain Lake Park. The other two submitted projects were for the Boathouse and Memorial Park.

### **Shell Rock River Watershed:**

- Brett Behnke reported that the Watershed is moving full steam ahead with the plans for dredging. 90% of the design is complete and permits have been submitted. They will be in the Conservation Building at the fair every day from

4-6 and Saturday from 10-noon to roll out the design plans and answer any questions.

- Brett said that there has been a lot of interest in Bancroft Bay. The plan is to do some light dredging there and light removal of sedimentation, but the water quality in Bancroft Bay is good and it is a valuable ecosystem for the rest of the lake.
- The proposed plan is to start with Edgewater Bay for Phase I. They are hoping to start construction this year of the CDF on the property that has been purchased.

#### **Ambassadors:**

- Jon Murray reported that the Golf Outing was last Monday and was the best run tournament in which he has been involved. Setup and cleanup ran smoothly and everyone had a great time. Randy K. commented that we seem to raise more money at Wedgewood and that they were very cooperative. He commended the Ambassadors on a great job.
- Jon also reported that the Ambassadors have visited new members Robin & Mark Russell, and Bomgaars. They have also visited the new locations for ABG Financial Services and today will visit Angie Eggum of Edward Jones at her new location as well as State Farm's new representative Ben Bartelt.

#### **ALEDA:**

- Ryan Nolander reported that the Board approved the sales of two properties, one next to Freeborn Lumber for an ag related business and one for the MERC office facility.
- There has been interest in the purchase of the Endres property for the expansion of a local business and the potential for a 40,000 square foot new construction building, although that is a very preliminary contact.
- Downtown is active and busy and there continues to be interest in properties there.
- ALEDA has a new website, growalbertlea.com and a Face Book page.
- Ryan stated that they are working on their budget as well. They have the authority to levy a tax but will not. He will present the budget at the next Board meeting and follow it with a planning session for them to set goals. ALEDA will also hold a workshop with the City Council in August. The Chamber will participate in both the planning session and workshop.

#### **CVB:**

- There was no report.

#### **Riverland:**

There was no report.

## **Chamber Business:**

### **Committee Updates –**

- There were no questions about the updates sent to the Board.

## **Old Business:**

### **Leadership Participants:**

- Randy reported that there are 19 participants in the next Leadership class at this point. He showed the list to the Board and reviewed the participants. A range of 15-22 participants helps the program to pay for itself. He stated that they are a well-rounded class. Kickoff is August 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **CGI Video Sales:**

- Randy informed the Board that Dan taped last week. He is putting the video together and we are using some ALEDA video as well. CGI should be out selling now.

### **U.S. Military All Star Game:**

- Randy reported that there was not the attendance that we were hoping for. He has not received the final numbers, but is hopeful that the Legion will make some money from the event.

### **Annual Meeting Speaker:**

- A lengthy discussion took place about a speaker for the Annual Meeting. Kim has been unable to get a response from her contact. It was decided that Kim give her one more try and after a week, we move on.
- Ellie Krug was discussed as a possible speaker. It was suggested that she would be a better fit for a workshop or seminar rather than speaker for the Annual Meeting.
- Catherine stressed that we need to get someone dynamic and other ideas were discussed. Noelle was asked to join the discussion as she had been present for a presentation by Courtesy Corporation and she reported that the two speakers were very interesting and dynamic.

### **Minnesota Supreme Court:**

- Randy stated that the plans for the Supreme Court visit are moving along. Catherine stated that she had spoken to the engineer and they cannot live stream on KIMT. This will be pursued to see if there is some way to make it happen.
- Randy said that Wedgewood gave a super deal for the dinner and we will be selling the tickets at the Chamber. No one should miss this. Invitations will go out in September.

#### **Parade Status:**

- Randy K. reported that there were no issues with the parade and the fireworks were great.

#### **Greater Education Project:**

- This initiative is still a work in progress. Sixty companies and over 100 students expressed interest, but when they held a meeting only 8 showed up. They need multiple time options and better communication.

#### **New Business:**

##### **Southwest Education Initiative:**

- Southwest Middle School has a program two times a week called Tiger Plus. It consists of individualized attention over lunch hours for struggling students. There are also students who are not struggling who may receive enhancements to their course of study. Randy K. and John Double are working together on a plan to plant the seed early for business opportunities in Albert Lea and offer a vision for students of how their future might unfold. The idea would be for a business to take ownership of one week. They would have two sessions to present two 30 minute presentations that would interest students in their business. The presentations need to be interactive. The Board feels strongly that this program has real potential, however all students should be included. Randy K. will continue to pursue this.

##### **School Board Support:**

- Randy K. put on the screen a letter to the editor that he has written on the Board's behalf in support of the School Board. Kim stated that we need to send it. Multiple people are not following the Code of Ethics and are going off agenda. Edits were suggested and Randy

will make the changes and email the letter to the Board for their consideration.

**Fair Week:**

- Randy K. informed the Board that he would be in and out of the office during the week as his grandchildren will be visiting.

**Lake City Visit:**

- Randy K. informed the Board that he was contacted by the Lake City Chamber, who was referred to us by MnDOT, about visiting for an informational tour of South Broadway and our “road diet”. They would like to know how we were able to accomplish this. They will be bringing 58 people with them next Thursday and Randy and others will tour South Broadway and downtown with them. They will lunch at Wedgewood Cove and go back to walk downtown.

**Staffing:**

- Randy K. let the Board know that Noelle has applied for a position at another business and has not heard if her application was successful.

**Forum Updates:**

- Although two candidates did not participate, last night’s forums were successful.

**Other Business:**

**Hayward Days:**

- Randy K. showed the Board the Certificate of Appreciation from the Hayward Booster Club for our support of Hayward Days and the Blazing Star Trail Dedication.
- Randy also passed around flyers for the Business Law Coffee Series being put on by Peterson, Kolker, Haedt & Benda.

**The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m. The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 24th at 7:30 a.m. in the Chamber Board Room.**