



February 4, 2010

Minutes of the meeting

The meeting was held at the Benkelman Community Building, 809 Huron Street, Benkelman, NE. Members present: Harlan Cansler, Meghan Pursley, Drew Pursley, Scott Vanderford, Bob Prangle, Cheryl Prangle, Melissa Jacobitz, Ben Blecha, John Lemon, Marilyn Zarkowski, Linda Melchert, Tim Fegler, Shari Hearon, Nicole Sis, and Rita Jones.

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by Secretary Rita Jones. Rita welcomed all those in attendance.
2. The minutes from the January 7, 2010 meeting were reviewed with a couple typos noted. Motion by Cheryl Prangle for approval of the minutes. Second by Bob Prangle. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.
3. Acting Treasurer Rita Jones reviewed the Treasurer's report for period ending 01-31-10. Beginning balance on the account as of January 1st was \$12,390.02. Total credits on the account were \$0. Total debits on the account were \$2,096.26, leaving a January month-end total of \$10,293.76. Checks outstanding and checks written since month end totaled \$1,099.74, leaving a balance at date 02-04-10 of \$9,194.02. Motion by Ben Blecha to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Second by Cheryl Prangle. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.
4. Old Business:
 - a. Action Groups
 - i. Benkelman Beautification/Community Improvement – No report was given at tonight's meeting.
 - ii. Scott Vanderford gave the report on the Web-site and communications. Scott noted that the page for the chamber minutes has been updated and he has added the information to alumni on the 2010 Dundy County Stratton Alumni Banquet. The current featured business spotlight is Dundy County-Stratton Schools. Scott gladly accepted the responsibility of reading and responding to chamber emails.
 - iii. Bob Prangle gave the report on the communications on the Chamber phone.

- b. New Business Promotion – Linda Melchert presented an outline for the promotion of new businesses in the community. Motion by Linda for the Chamber Officers to be responsible for attending any new Dundy County business grand openings to present the “first dollar of profit” certificates and to promote the same with a photo op through the Benkelman Post. Any businesses who have been missed and wish to have this same type of presentation may contact the Chamber. Second by Bob Prangley. Motion carried unanimously of the members present. Linda will talk to the Benkelman Post to request that their office contact one of the Chamber Officers anytime a grand opening is scheduled and all members are encouraged to bring information on new businesses to the forefront.

5. New Business:

- a. Cheryl Prangley nominated Ben Blecha for 2010 Chamber President. Motion by Harlan Cansler for nominations to cease and to cast a unanimous ballot for Ben Blecha. Second by Bob Prangley. Motion carried unanimously of the members present. Ben assumed control of the meeting at this time. Ben proposed Meeting Standards for the group’s consideration. They are as follows:
 - 1. EVERYONE MUST BE ON TIME. There must be no exception to this unless there has been prior communication and an obvious problem. We respect that everyone’s time is valuable.
 - 2. EVERYONE MUST COME PREPARED. There is nothing worse than a team being slowed down by someone who did not do their homework, be it reports, research, or simply keeping themselves informed on the project at hand.
 - 3. EVERYONE MUST BE ALLOWED TO TELL THE TRUTH AND SPEAK THEIR MIND WITHOUT THREAT OF RETRIBUTION OR CONDEMNATION.
 - 4. THERE IS NO PUBLIC HUMILIATION PERMITTED.
 - 5. NO RAMBLING. STAY ON THE SUBJECT.
 - 6. LISTEN TO WHAT IS SAID: You will have your turn to speak. What you have to say is important. You want to be heard, start by returning the favor.
 - 7. YOU MUST BE WILLING TO POLITELY BUT FIRMLY “CALL” EACH OTHER ON THESE STANDARDS. As a team we must help each other so we can accomplish great things!!

Motion by Bob Prangley for the Chamber to adopt the Meeting Standards. Second by Scott Vanderford. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

b. Future-

1. 2010 Strategic Planning-Ben shared a stimulating video on building a playground that demonstrated the steps, individual roles, and teamwork required to achieve great things.

At this point, the attendees broke into groups and worked on an extensive list of successful projects that have been completed that have enhanced the community. The group was amazed at the long listing and was given homework to find those persons and groups responsible for these projects and tell them “Thank You”.

Ben shared with the group some of the history of the Chamber and the melding of SWADC (Southwest Area Development Corporation) into the Chamber, thus giving the Chamber its expanded role in the community.

Ben called up the Facebook pages from his recent cause “I would move back to Benkelman If”. The answers were reviewed with the group noting several common themes including entertainment and jobs. We paused at this time to say “Thank You” to Randy Raile for the wireless internet connection that allowed access for the information shared at tonight’s meeting.

Ben asked the group to form consensus on 2 issues they would like to work on this coming year. Following a selection process, Retail and Jobs were the issues chosen. Each person was asked to sign their name on the roster for the project they would like to work on. Harlan shared information with the group on the current community initiative that parallels the direction the Chamber is moving as well as information on the City’s upcoming assistance with nuisance abatement.

- c. Election for remaining slate of Officers was then held, noting that all officers elected tonight, including the previously elected President will be approved signers on the Dundy County Chamber of Commerce & Development’s checking account.

1. Meghan Pursley nominated Linda Melchert for the office of Vice President with Linda declining at this time. Nicole Sis nominated Scott Vanderford for this office, moving that nominations cease and those present cast a unanimous ballot for Scott. Second by Meghan Pursley. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

2. Cheryl Prangley nominated Judy McCune for the office of secretary. Meghan Baney nominated Melissa Jacobitz for the office of Secretary. With two nominees, the group proceeded to secret ballot. President Ben Blecha counted the ballots in the presence of the attending chamber members, declaring Melissa Jacobitz Secretary as she received the most votes.
 3. Rita Jones nominated Meghan Pursley for the office of Treasurer, moving that nominations cease and those present cast a unanimous ballot for Meghan. Second by Nicole Sis. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.
- d. Other – Linda Melchert shared with the group a letter from Betty Sayers and Nancy Herhahn regarding the benefits of subscribing as members to Nebraska Rural Living. There was discussion and some confusion as to the pricing structure as there was no invoice included with the letter. Linda shared that Nebraska Rural Living will be featured on a Sirius Radio spot called American Voices on February 11th and Dundy County must subscribe to be mentioned on this spot. The group requested to table this issue pending further information on specific costs and several members volunteered to research the benefits that have come to area businesses that have been featured in the Nebraska Rural Living Newsletter due to past Chamber subscription.

The group discussed the current treasury balance and the need to set up a budget for the year. Ben directed Treasurer Meghan Pursley to review purchases during the past year and provide a template of the usual expenses encountered by the group. Ben directed Secretary Melissa Jacobitz to include the following items on next month's agenda: Nebraska Rural Living, Budget, and Membership Drive.

Harlan Cansler shared with the group that the City of Benkelman may have some opportunities to access grants for the Chamber which may be dependent upon which non-profit status guides the Chamber. Ben directed Secretary Melissa Jacobitz to research this for next meeting.

Rita Jones shared with the group that the Dundy County Hospital has recently accepted the loan of \$115,000 from BWTelcom at a 1% rate of interest to assist with equipment purchases at the hospital. This loan runs for 10 years and Randy Raile has stated that the interest money will come to the Chamber annually for their projects.

Pictures were taken of the new officers for publication in the Benkelman Post.

6. Next meeting: March 4, 2010

Adjournment at 8:10 pm

/s/ Rita Jones, Secretary DCCCD