



## Board of Directors Meeting

August 18, 2009

Steve thanked Von for sponsoring lunch and welcomed guest Susan Oaks

Call to order by Steve Thompson, Chairman of the Board @ 12:05 PM.

Members present:, Burke, Goforth, Buckner, Erickson, Inklebarger, Toppins, , Thompson, Von Schipmann, Mayor Lay, Steve Hill, Wine, and Graham

Members absent: Kelly Smith, Cooper, Gibson, City of Maynardville, Mills, Roe

Visitors present: Susan Oaks

Approval of Agenda: Motioned by Wayne; 2nd by Dwain. Motion approved.

Steve reported new members: Chad Faulkner, Union County NewsLeader, and Smithbilt

Approval of June minutes: Dwain motioned to accept; Rom 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Steve reported a starting balance of \$3,101.78 and an ending balance of \$2,923.18. It was noted that the chamber executive position had been working unpaid for June and July. Mayor Lay stated that the chamber could request release of funds from the County. Marilyn moved to accept the treasurer's report and Von 2nd. Motion passed

President's Report: Julie reported on the following- Tourism **Update-TN guide, METTC, Norris Highlands:** We submitted a list of all the assets into the TN vacation guide including the marinas and the Chuck Swan. Previously, only the museum was listed. METTC will be doing motorcycle maps this year, Norris Highlands: The strategic plan for 2009-2010 is for the completion of a regional information brochure that will be distributed on the 75 corridor into Michigan and at all welcome centers in Tennessee, 2 billboards on 75 and a full page add with reader response cards in the Tennessee Vacation Guide. Julie also reported that the chamber has been responding to tourism requests from Coastal and Mountains with note cards listing the web address of the

chamber. **Matt Garland and 3 STAR:** Union County is recertified for this year and the, next mid year evaluation will be in Jan 2010. All members were sent a copy of the final report card which shows areas of concern with planning and transportation, new standards for Ed, and community development. **Grants- Tourism, ART and SOC:** The Chamber applied for \$1800- to be used to re-advertise in Norris Marina Guide/ signs and also historic drive tour (3STAR community development requirement). The Chamber/ County was award a RAPS grant for a 2010 program to be titled "Music Under the Stars." The chamber filed an application for SOC money to be used to refresh the contents of the economic development web site. Rural Money for broadband.-Julie is working with CenTel and ATT to apply for a state funded non matching grant that is designated to bring broadband to unserved or underserved locations in rural communities. The grant announcement was made in August and the deadline is September 10. **Chamber networking events:** The event in August featured Ramay Winchester, Program Director for Retire Tennessee, who presented a customer focused presentation to 33 attendees. A big thank you to Scott, Food City and Angie, ORNL for hosting the event. A special thank you to Gibbs IGA for sponsoring a door prize. The September 17 program will feature Tracy Larson from Southeast Capital and a presentation on new rural development money for businesses. A&B Book Keeping will host. Julie reminded everyone of the ETPA Matching event scheduled for September 10. All businesses interested in this event must register by Aug 20. **Blog:** The blog is live and we have entertained many inquiries from out of state people about activities in Union County. **Scores:** Union County is in need of volunteers for SCORES. The chapter is based in Knoxville, but we have had many businesses expressing the need for local volunteers who can meet in Union County.

## Board Action:

### Old Business:

Steve reported that the close date for the nominees for Volunteer Tennessee was July 28. The committee is currently reviewing the nominations.

In response to Dwain's concerns with the census process for 2010, Julie contacted the Atlanta office of the Census Bureau. She reported that the forms are only mailed to street addresses and not PO Boxes. Mr. Mark Johnson from the census bureau will be in Union County on 8/27 at 3PM, and Mr. Burke suggested that we ask if the Post Office can work with the census process to insure that all residents get the necessary forms. Steve then discussed a recent document from the East Tennessee Development District, that cited how important census numbers are for our school funding, road funding and for recruitment of retail businesses that ultimately provide our tax base. All are encouraged to attend on 8/27.

In response to the concerns regarding separation of duties within the Heritage Festival Board, Steve reported that Tonya Adkins has agreed to serve as treasurer for the Heritage Festival.

Steve reported that both the motorcycle run and the Ramay Winchester program were successes. He discussed the need for continuing to promote Union County businesses. Julie shared that Success Union County had met regarding an upcoming Shop Union County. Julie circulated some slogans that Jennipher had been working on to promote this event. The plan is to remind the community that money spent out of the county is money that is not available for schools and roads. The chamber would like to partner with Success to distribute re-usable shopping bags at the Heritage Festival that will promote shopping local first. Steve also thanked ORNL and Food City for their sponsorship of the networking event.

Steve reported that there is ARRA money for individuals and businesses for weatherization. Homeowners may contact ETHRA for additional information; Businesses should contact Jeff Bolton at 615-741-6201.

### **New Business:**

Susan Oaks discussed the Walters State program and course schedule for the fall semester. In order for Walters State to retain interest in bringing a campus to our community, it is imperative that enrollment is at 45 students. Ms. Oaks stated that a broadcast message had been sent to the parents of current UCPS students, but that more effort is needed to drive enrollment. Marilyn suggested that Susan contact Gibbs and Halls High Schools about the class offerings. Scott was recognized for stapling 140+ flyers to his employees pay checks. Gina Buckner, Justin Collins and Chantay Collins volunteered to help with a community sign-up table if Susan arranged and brought a financial aid officer to assist with paper work. Scott was agreeable for that community table to be done at Food City. Wayne also reported the new requirements for the TN Diploma Program, that will include 4 years of college bound math, 4 years of science, a personnel finance class, a ½ extra semester of PE and that all juniors will be required to take the ACT college entrance exams. Steve Hill reported that the goal is to bring a CNA program to Union County that could develop into a nursing program.

A lengthy discussion of the chamber finances was held. The present location is ideal in terms of visibility, but is also a large expense. Mayor Lay, Marilyn, Steve Thompson and Ron agreed to evaluate other locations. Mayor Lay stated that county space may become available in about year that could house the chamber. The committee will report back. Steve Hill then stated that the Chamber must develop a fundraiser to insure that the annual budget will be met. He stated that the most chambers do a golf tournament, auction or banquet as their primary money source. Steve Hill, Susan Oaks and Wayne volunteered to organize a fundraiser for the Chamber. Steve motioned to form a committee to raise funds and Ron 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed.

Steve read a letter of resignation from board member Glen Crawford. Larry moved to accept the resignation and Marilyn 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed.

Steve reported the chamber applied for a SOC grant to reformat the chamber economic development page on the web site.

Steve reported that the chamber applied for a tourism grant to develop a self guided tour of Sharps Chapel. This initiative will fulfill a community development requirement of the 3 STAR application.

There were no committee reports

Von is seeking candidates for the 2009-2010 ballot. Please submit interested persons to Von.

Announcements:

March of Dimes walk on 9/9/2009 at Union County High School

United Way Kick-Off Dinner 8/25 @ 6:30PM Plainview.

Blue Grass at Big Ridge on 8/21

***Chamber Networking Event:*** Rural development business money with Tracy Larsen of South East Capital 9/17 2-4PM at A&B Book Keeping.

Meeting adjourned at 1:03PM.

Next Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15 @12N