

**Chamber of Commerce
Minutes
October 13, 2009**

The regularly scheduled semi-monthly meeting of the Granite Falls Chamber of Commerce was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chamber President Debbie Taylor.

Introductions:

Present (in sign-in order) were Trisha Broughton, Debbie Taylor, Paul Long, Cecil Andrews, Danny Meeks, Mark Sarandos, Jim Kapelke, Robin Kapelke, Christy Glonek, Vervia Gabriel, Hillary Lampers, Ken Oakes, Edith Farrell, Randy Farrell, Lyle Romack, Tera Trask, Karen Glover, Johanna Raupe, Michael Jackson, LeAnna Walker, Sam Walker, Arun Sethi and Joshua Golston.

Treasurer's Report:

The treasurer's report was reviewed as submitted by treasurer, Jeanenne Hoyt.

Old Business:

Railroad Days:

The event's activities were reviewed and discussed including the beer garden (time and location, music, insurance, license, and beer order/return), carnival (one day short of last year), parade, and t-shirts (the cost of which included 2010 shirts as well). The income and expenses were reviewed, showing a loss on the beer garden of \$235. but an overall event profit of \$808. Debbie again expressed appreciation to all who worked hard to make this event a success. Businesses reported an increase in sales from last year.

Granite Falls Phone Book:

Randy and Edith Farrell, Christy Glonek, Robin Kapelke, Vervia Gabriel and Trisha Broughton agreed to form a committee to update and produce the 2010 phone book. Matt Hartman's notes and files are available to provide support and background into prior years' planning and implementation. Vervia offered the school district's facilities for layout and design and Arun Sethi offered assistance. Snohomish Publishing was suggested for printing.

Halloween Map:

Cecil Andrews together with Jim and Robin Kapelke volunteered to develop the map for trick-or-treaters showing businesses participating in Halloween festivities. It was agreed the event would be held starting at 4:00, ending at 8:00. Maps and announcements will be distributed via businesses, schools and churches.

Christmas Lighting:

Plans to decorate the town with Christmas lighting were discussed. Jim Kapelke surveyed the businesses to determine interest and costs. It appears the cost of LED lights, extension cords, power and installation will be prohibitive. Randy Farrell proposed inquiring with Peter Dingfield of Light Your Way for an alternate bid. Randy joined the committee and will follow up with inquiries.

Senior Lunch:

The Christmas Senior Lunch will be held on Monday, December 14th from 11:am – 2:pm at Alfy's, Granite Falls. The Chamber will cover the cost of the lunches, assist behind the counter, as well as with serving and cleanup. A committee will be formed to bake cookies for the seniors. Gen-Care will provide transportation with their van.

Granite Falls Lodge Update:

Ken Oakes reported on the October 10th town meeting held at the Performing Arts Center at the high school. Useful feedback was received from participants and will be implemented into future meetings. Appreciation was expressed to those in attendance and to Randy and Edith Farrell of About the Wow for their assistance with the presentation. Follow-up meetings will be held the first Saturday of each month, same time, same place, with the next meeting scheduled for November 7th.

Marketing Committee Update:

The committee had no specific updates. Randy and Edith Farrell volunteered to join the committee. Ken Oakes requested a listing of non-member businesses to assist in the promotion of membership.

Motocross Update:

Mark Sarandos reported the red tape in getting to this point in the process seems to be complete and a Snohomish County hearing should be set soon. Videos filmed at other tracks regarding training and racing are available to integrate into the Chamber website. Strong resident, business owner and Chamber participation is encouraged at the hearing. A notice will be sent once the date has been set.

Chamber By-Laws Review:

The Chamber by-laws have been reviewed by several of the Chamber members. Notes and revisions were discussed, with Paul Long volunteering to organize and recommend updates and changes.

Show and Shine:

Sam and LeeAnne Walker presented a check to the Chamber in repayment of \$800. of the seed money advanced to them for this event. Sam reported a larger than expected turnout with the

proceeds going to the high school in the form of a scholarship. This year's scholarship is larger than in past years.

New Business:

Candidates' forum:

Debbie reported a call from the League of Women Voters asking the Chamber to co-sponsor a second Candidates' Forum for local candidates on Thursday, 10/17 at the American Legion hall. Proposed is a one-and-a-half hour format with a meet and greet at 6:30 and forum from 7:-8:30pm. It was agreed that the Chamber agree to co-sponsor this event. This does not replace the forum at the Granite Falls Library, still scheduled for 10/22.

Mountain Loop Experience:

Sherri Pribble-Jones recently attended the Oyster Run in Anacortes. Discussion followed and consideration was given to incorporating a motorcycle rally into the Mountain Loop Experience, with the focus on taking advantage of the momentum started and now abandoned by Snohomish. Cycle Barn and Crown Distributors would consider sponsoring a rally in Granite Falls if the Chamber decides to pursue it. Issues to be researched and resolved include closing the streets, police services, problems with gangs. Oyster Run organizers and officials in Anacortes will be contacted to study the issues.

Promotional Chamber Membership:

With regard to the promotional Chamber membership available through December 31, 2009, new member Pam Burley inquired as to whether this free membership included free business listing on the Chamber's website as well as other member benefits. It was determined it included all membership benefits afforded to any member, through December 31st. As with all memberships, an invoice will be mailed in December for dues payable for the 2010 calendar year. All businesses, including promotional members, have the option as to whether or not to renew.

City Council Meeting:

Jim Kapelke encouraged business members to attend the next City Council Work Session to be held Wednesday, October 14th at 7:00. The agenda includes discussion regarding business license fees and sign permit fees. Participants can sign up to speak to these issues with input relevant to the subject.

Temporary Accommodations for Alternate Route Employees:

Employees working on the alternate route are in need of temporary accommodations. Inquiries have been made as to whether there are inexpensive options for short-term parking of their motor homes. Anyone with such space is asked to notify Mark Sarandos.

Local Community College:

Arun Sethi discussed the option of utilizing the old High School as a local community college. He reported 400-500 local students now commute to other communities to attend school and suggested inquiries be made into what it would take to get accreditation and transform the old high school into an institution of higher learning. Further study would be needed to ascertain the feasibility of such action.

Visitors' Center:

The Visitors' Center currently receives over 200 inquiries a week from tourists and visitors and is in serious need of an upgrade. Randy and Edith Farrell agreed to participate in bringing the Center up to the standards expected of a visitors' center.

Granite Falls Press:

Christy Glonek inquired about the problems experienced by the newspaper staff regarding content, priorities, proofing and advertising. It was stated by Chamber President, Debbie Taylor, the Chamber needs to maintain separation from the paper to avoid the appearance of endorsement of its content, and further, that the Chamber must adhere to its purpose of promoting business and tourism within the City.

Next Chamber Meeting:

The date/time of the next meeting is Tuesday, 10/27 at 8:00am at the Robin's Nest/Whistle Stop Café in the atrium.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

Trisha

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