

Siren Chamber of Commerce  
Board of Directors Meeting  
February 13, 2017

**Call to order 12:00pm**

**Present: Ranae Beers, Bluette Puchner, Rich Tims, Joan O'Fallon, Chris Moeller (non-voting), Mary Smoliak, Dave Bertuleit, Jamie Morales, and guest Gary Kannenberg – Siren Lions Club**

Lions update from Gary: Gary will be the next Lions president, and was on the Chamber board 10 years ago, so he's familiar with the Chamber. The Lions have both new and retiring members. They have questions on how the Chamber and the Lions can work closer with, rather than independent of, each other - to see more of a total community effort with participation and involvement by the Siren/Webster Rotary and the Chamber. Joan suggested we add the Lions' Secretary Steve Young to our e-newsletter. Ranae is part of Rotary and will talk with them as well.

**Secretary's Reports:** January 9<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes – approved by Puchner, Tims motion

**Treasurer's Report:** 2017 Fiscal YTD Financial Reports – approved by O'Fallon, Morales motion

**Board Action Required:**

**"Why join the Siren Chamber":** Reviewed ChamberMaster 2017 Chamber of Commerce Survey Results infographic.

- Joan – Suggested we make our chamber benefits list an infographic. Address top 5 reasons why people don't renew, possibly breakup the \$125 value to show how their money is spent.
- Dave – Hassle free is a big reason why people don't renew. Website hits would add interest in renewing; also "did you know % of businesses are chamber members". Network with fellow biz owners is benefit – also go to biz in person thanking biz owners for renewals.
- Jamie – face to face interaction would be great, even just 5 minutes.
- Chris – Will draft something up for next meeting.

**Old Business**

**1. Events**

- a. Siren Destination Wedding Fair: 31 Vendor booths vs. 33 PY; 35 Registrations vs. 64 PY.
  - i. The location was beautiful, the event was very busy all day, but registrations were down. Why, is hard to say, there were other shows on the same day. We are looking at new places to get the word out and possibly not requesting registration until day of event.
- b. AWSC 'Celebrate WI Snowmobiling Sport Show & VIP Ride' - Feb 19/20: Governor Walker attendance.
  - i. Snow trails are all closed for Burnett County and forecast is not looking good. Thinking about using Siren Bus Company buses to take visitors around, as the show goes on with or without snow.
  - ii. There are more people signing up vs cancellations, lower than prior year but 125 this year.
- c. St. Patrick's Day: Draft poster; awaiting 'Lucky Lilac' decision & few other edits.
  - i. Need help with lucky lilac – it will only be running from 10-12
- d. Taste of Siren on May 13<sup>th</sup> (Sat):
  - i. Letter to non-profits for 2018 & beyond issued; responses due Mar 13; will try to reach out to Boy/Girl Scouts to see if they are interested.
  - ii. This year, Faith's Lodge may possibly have a band afterwards.
  - iii. Gary – "timing is good".
- e. Music in the Park: 13 of 14 bands confirmed; awaiting final confirmation.
- f. July 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Dance: preliminary contract received from In2ition; 3-4 rooms requested.
  - i. Chris – cost is the same as it was for prior band; we need to finalize the contract; checking on room availability in area; requested to keep it the same as last year 9pm-1am.
  - ii. Bluette - will check with Maslows on the trailers
- g. Chamber Scholarship:
  - i. Ranae, Bluette & Chris met with Georgia – Recommend tie to Royalty beginning with 2018 scholarship: Miss Siren \$300 & Miss Siren Princess \$200.
  - ii. Also recommend keeping Royalty program same as current, with 1 little mister.

iii. Approved by Joan, Dave 2<sup>nd</sup> – 0 oppose

## 2. 2016-2017 Membership

- a. 79 Businesses (vs. 84) including 2 new (vs. 8), 1 new owner (vs. 2), & 2 lapsed members; 11 Non-profit paid (vs. 13); 1 Individual (vs. 2) – with website update pending:
  - i. 2017 Chamber member stickers distribution continuing.
  - ii. New Member Welcomes: Gary's Rude Café, Roosevelt Hills, Firefly Village, Better Than New.
- b. Member Meetings – bi-monthly educational 'lunch & learn' sessions:
  - i. 2017: March, May, July – topics/speakers pending; Sep 19 – Annual Awards Meeting; Nov 14 – Dr. Kevin Shetler, Strategic Plan Update.
    1. Chris would like to invite Burnett County Fresh & Healthy for July topic;
    2. Other ideas – Lions and other key partners 'get-to-know', Workforce and/or Connections group(s), STRIVE program, women's business meeting.
  - ii. Chris met with Sara McLain who offered additional membership ideas – add a business resources page on our website, biz tips to the e-newsletter, education ideas for topics, handling negative online reviews, is your Google biz up-to-date, etc.

## 3. Booklet & Tour Map reprints

- a. Both reprints now complete! Continued distribution.
- b. Booklet: Designed internally due to map's graphic design costs' overrun; internal design & reduced pages resulted in saving \$2500 (~45% reduced costs), assuming absorption of time into annual budgeted hours which will be tracked.

## 4. Social Media/Website

- a. Facebook: 90 #whylovesiren Photo Contest submissions; vote on committee's selected 36 'best' photos by Chamber membership via email survey; 12 winners chosen, each receiving \$25 CB.
- b. Website: Initial 'Ad Words' campaign discussion with webmaster Roger Peck; plan pending.
- c. Siren Video Plan: BC Tourism grant (attached) received for \$3,086! SCOC portion \$1,543. Plan for series of 7 Siren videos. Filming for 1<sup>st</sup> 'winter' video begun on Jan 29 at wedding fair, ice fishing and exterior of hockey area – and with continued content planned on Feb 20 but now we can't do it due to no snow. Julie Hall, Siren Social Media Director, assigned as 'primary project contact' for Siren.

## New Business

### 1. Tourism:

- a. Siren Newsletter: January newsletter open rate 45% vs. 28-30% Oct-Dec & 18% average user rate.
- b. Siren Beautification – Phase 2: Sub-committee decision to expand flower baskets to 35/70 corridor; 2017 vendor requirements split between Our Family Tree (Hayward) & Wood River Garden Store (Grantsburg – SCOC member) with changing baskets to retain more water. \$5,000 project cost inc. trailer/tank/wand purchase & new brackets.
- c. Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism, Mar 12-14: 3 Burnett County residents attending, so Chris will not attend – everyone is ok with that.

### 2. Communications/Requests

- a. Siren Sign: Benson Law Office has requested additional warranty definition from vendor.
  - i. North side of sign is down again, although assured there would be no maintenance issues.
- b. Siren School: Request to issue support for local school choice of start date.
  - i. Much discussion was held on this request including: what the motivation is, what is the difference in school start/end being suggested, current law was instated due to tourism (to help), and suggest we think about it before doing anything.
  - ii. Decided we will have a neutral stance and not issue letter.
- c. Timothy Wood, Scotchwood Candy Co.: NWRPC Business Center/commercial kitchen interest.
- d. Thank You's: Burnett County Fresh & Healthy; Northwest Passage (2).
  - i. Chris shared letters with board members
- e. Relocations: Restorative Justice, AODA, Workforce, etc; BCFRC, Daycare, etc; Avion Accounting.
  - i. WITC is looking for a board member

Meeting Close 1:25pm