

LA VETA/CUCHARA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
11-2-2009 – 5:00 p.m.  
La Veta Library

**President Steve Perkins called the Meeting to order** at 5:15p.m.

Board/Officers Present: Steve Perkins, Tracy Webb, Brad Atchison, David Reinhardt, Mitzi Kearns, Don Lowell, Chris Hudson, Nancy Wooldridge (arriving during the meeting).

Board/Officers Absent: Liz Henson, James Cooper

In attendance: Debra Malone, Linda Arnold (community member).

**The Minutes** of May 5th, 2009, were approved as submitted upon motion by David Rinehart and seconded by Tracy Webb. Approved unanimously by voice vote.

Steve reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Steve circulated meeting minutes and reported that previous meeting notes are posted on the Chamber website. It was noted that Rich Snyder has resigned as he is in Texas more than here.

**Financial Review**

David presented a report from the Chamber's Checking Account at Community Banks of Colorado. He pointed out that the Chamber took in approximately \$7,500 in dues and spent over \$10,000 on advertising, due to grants obtained. Current bank balance is \$2,030.38. David commented that this is the lowest balance in his memory. Refer to treasurer's report for details.

**Debra Malone/County Tourism Board**

Steve introduced Debra and reported that the County Tourism Board is currently taking in monies and would like to have grant applications from the Chamber by January.

Debra reported that The Scenic Highway of Legends has received approval to spend monies on interpretive signs (up to \$60,000). The Tourism Board will need to raise \$12,000 as the "matching portion" and will receive approximately \$48,000 in grants from state sources. Debra suggested a fall photo contest to gather appropriate images for promotion.

Debra reported that "gateway signage" would be placed in La Veta Park, Walsenburg Visitors Center, Aguilar Park and hopefully at the Trinidad Visitor's center. In addition, three descriptive signs are proposed at the Devil's Stairsteps on Highway 12 between Cuchara and La Veta and the community center in Cuchara and somewhere in Stonewall.

Chris asked if there was a chance in more "pull-offs" for Highway 12. Steve reported that the Colorado Department of Travel would probably not be able to do that because of costs and issues of right of way through private property.

Debra reported that there will be about 350 lodgers in June and July to work on a pipeline. She pointed out that this could be an issue due to the conflict with seasonal

visitors. Debora reported that the tourism board will focus on signage this year for Huerfano County communities, possibly permanent matching stone signs.

Debora reported that the Rio Grande Train has numerous events planned for the holiday season including performances, readings, carolers and increased train schedule. There are plans for performances on the train. Debra proposed that the town might consider having a "community carol" on several evenings during this period. The increased schedule will start the weekend after Thanksgiving 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of November.

Debora reported that the Chamber should submit a report on how it used grant money no later than the Tourism Board meeting on Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, at Noon. (accomplished)

### **Holiday Period**

Steve introduced the discussion of lighting at Christmas. Steve asked if San Isabel would have a special on lights again this year. Nobody in attendance knew of a "lights special".

The Chamber agreed to hang lights on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Those who can help should meet in front of Charlie's grocery at 10am. Don will coordinate this work session. Mitzi will speak with merchants on Main Street to use plugs.(accomplished)

There was discussion about where to hold the tree lighting and when the lighting would take place. Mitzi said that she would ask if the event could be held at Charlie's Park. Tracy will ask the Town of La Veta if we can decorate the city park. Tracy will ask if the town will donate electricity from the Marshall's office.

Tracy suggested that the Chamber should talk with churches about having caroling groups.

Ricky Tims has plans to have "Christmas in a Small Town" performance on December 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>.

The Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place on 4:30, December 5<sup>th</sup> at Charlie's Park.

### **Annual Meeting/Elections/Board and Officers**

The Annual meeting will be held December 11<sup>th</sup>, from 5:30-7:00 at the Inn at the Spanish Peaks. Board members will bring snacks. The Chamber approved providing beverages by a voice vote.

### **Membership Drive**

Don, Liz and Steve volunteered to be on the nominating committee. Steve encouraged members to encourage new board members. Brad agreed to take the Excel worksheet and put it in a label format.

### **Visitor Response (e-mail-phone)**

Steve asked if the Chamber wanted to offer a donation to the Methodist Church for covering phones. Mitzi reported that Peggy Hoobler suggested that the current system did not benefit the Chamber and suggested that the person who covered the tickets for the train may be appropriate for covering the phones. Debora suggested that the calls could be forwarded to the Walsenburg Tourism Board. The board agreed that the current system should be kept in place.

### **Website**

Steve reported that there is no budget for doing much change to the website. Steve suggested that the chamber add a section on viewing wildlife. The group agreed to explore adding a wildlife section. Tracy suggested adding a comments section and Steve agreed to talk with Cathy Kramer about adding a comment page.

### **Brochure**

No significant changes to the brochure or related procedure were suggested.

### **Financial Grants/Promotional Plans**

Steve suggested that planning for advertising next year would be based on grant funds and revenue raised through memberships. Steve reported that Charles Beard donated airtime and will do it again this year. The group agreed to make a gift basket for Charles. Debra reported that grant amounts would be similar to last year, unless many new agencies apply for grants.

Debra reported that the Tourism Board gave 18K in grants out of a budget of 42K. She anticipated no increase in budget for the next year.

### **Assembly of events for the year**

Steve suggested that any events for the rest of the year be sent to him to add to the calendar. He also encouraged submitting events for the next year.

### **Stonewall Century Ride/Arts in the Park**

Steve asked if anyone had picked up the Arts in the Park. Nobody knew about this issue.

### **New Business**

Mitzi reported that the Rotary Chili cook off will happen on near Groundhog Day. Steve said that the Rio Grande might have a train based golf tournament in the “swing season”.

Linda Arnold(a local caregiver) reported that older people would not venture out when the sidewalks are not well maintained. Mitzi reported that the Town has a machine to clean sidewalks. The board agreed that this was an issue of concern.

Steve said that the Chamber has been solicited by an organization to map our campsites. The Chamber members agreed that the listing was not a good idea.

**Next Meeting** – Our next Chamber Board/Membership Meeting will be held on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

David moved to adjourn. Brad seconded the motion. Steve adjourned the meeting at 6:47.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brad Atchison, substitute-Secretary