

MASON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Meeting of the Board of Directors

April 3, 2009

PRESENT: Tom Botsford, Joe Dean, Lance Delbridge, Aaron Fiedler, Kim Gorrell, Jeff Haueter, Chris Iott, Neil Kentner, Ron Tatro, and Bob Warnke. ABSENT: Michelle Carpenter, Robin King-Fuller, and Robin Manno.

I. Call to order at 7:30 AM

II. Minutes of the March Meeting – reviewed and approved

III. Treasurer’s Report – discussed and approved.

IV. Executive Director’s Report – discussed and approved. Two new members since the last report: **Mason Assembly of God** and **David Aldrich Agency – Farm Bureau Insurance**. Information on both was in the April printed newsletter. Two dues transfers also took place: to **Rieth-Riley Construction** from Aggregate Industries and to **Ramseyer’s Hearth N Home** from Ramseyer’s Insurance Agency. Dues are still coming in (but very slowly) and we are sending URGENT dues reminders again to any members with outstanding balances. We did so already at the end of January and February – this is our last invoice. We’ll send a “goodbye for now – hope you come back soon” letter after the Board votes the non-paying members invoices off the books on May 8, 2009. The list of those with outstanding balances is always available to Board and Committee members. The “Member Survey 2009” went out in the last newsletter and will soon be available online. Results will help guide us in constructing a strategic plan for the Chamber. We need feedback in by April 24th. Who can fill it out? Any of our contact people or principals of our member businesses and organizations AND any of our Chamber volunteers are encouraged to respond to the survey. This is still a good time to talk with others in our community about community. I’ve printed up some posters with Uncle Sam saying, “I want you to spend more of your money locally.” Be sure to put some up around Mason. I spoke recently with the **Golden K** and **Leslie Chamber** (and am more than willing to speak with other groups) about the local economy. The message is that the way to get through these tough times is to get tough and get going – not hold back and sit on our hands. We need members, sponsors, and volunteers to join together to make the Mason area an oasis in Michigan’s economy.

V. Committee Reports:

Executive Committee – The committee discussed the reports and agenda for the Board of Directors meeting on Friday, April 3, 2009. Discussion took place over the officers’ reports, especially as regards current dues payments. The committee reviewed a revised version of the portion of the 2009 Staffing Plan not approved by the Board in December that dealt with executive director succession. This portion is now considered as a separate Board policy proposal. The Membership Services Committee’s ad hoc group looked at it again before it came back to the executive committee. The revised proposal is to be attached to the Board packet at the April 3rd meeting. This is contingency planning in case we are ever faced with a situation where an executive director departs, such as has happened recently in Lansing and Grand Ledge. The Executive Committee recommends passage of the proposal as Board policy. ***The proposal was moved, seconded, and approved unanimously by the Board.***

Ambassadors Committee – Ad hoc committee developments and assignments were discussed: Member Mixers – A discussion of the upcoming Thursday evening, March 19th “Fun and Games” Mixer at the **Masonic Center** took place. Jon Grocki has agreed to chair the ad hoc Mixer Committee. **A&W** is doing the food. The liquor license is here and we will purchase from beer, wine and pop from **Darrell’s** and water from **Meijer**. Other upcoming mixer events -- or events that have a mixer component -- are the Mason Area Idol kickoff Mixer on April 30 at the **City Limits Sports Grill**, the June 21st Chamber Night at the Races at **Spartan Speedway** (to benefit the Mason Area Visitors Center Fund), the Golf Classic outing on July 30th at **Eldorado** (to benefit the MACC Aggie Corner Scholarship Fund), the annual Raffle Party on October 17th – now at **Eldorado** (to benefit the Mason, Michigan – Hometown USA Fund), the new Business-to-Business Expo on November 12th at the **Cobblestone Events Center**, and of course the Holiday Party Mixer on December 3rd at the **Fairgrounds Community Building**. Good Morning, Mason! -- The next GMM is April 30. Spring Fling is the theme and we’ll roll out the annual MACC Raffle and all our other events. MACC Golf Classic Outing – We need golfer “goodie bag” and door prizes for this event. Sponsorships will soon be made available. We are still trying to build sponsorship and participation. Remember that the date was moved up to Thursday, July 30 due to conflicts with the **Fair** and Thursday Night Live events. Other items: Ribbon Cuttings – Tom Botsford checked with Columbia Street Mall, but no response as yet. (NOTE: the mall now has a ribbon cutting scheduled for Tuesday, April 14th at 12:30 PM and the Mason Flea Market has one a week later on Tuesday, April 21st at 12:30 PM. Neither has yet joined the Chamber, but remember that membership is not a requirement for a ribbon cutting.) **A&W, Independent Bank, Freedom Tax Services, and R&R Travel** have anniversaries in 2009 and we’re waiting on their dates. **Joseph A. Young & Associates** and **Mason Insurance Agency** will need to have ribbon cuttings soon. **Salon 130** is doing an expansion as well. Member Visits – The Chambers’ Directories are ready and are now available for distribution through personal visits.

Economic Development Committee – The committee reviewed the minutes of the February meeting – the presentation on commercial lending by Tim Walling of **Dart Bank**. Doug Klein discussed updating business listings on the internet and the planning for the Mason Area Entrepreneurs Club meeting on Tuesday, May 12th. After the May meeting, they’ll meet again on Thursday,

(continued)

for the Mason Area Entrepreneurs Club meeting on Tuesday, May 12th. After the May meeting, they'll meet again on Thursday, September 24th and Monday, November 16th. The Chamber is planning a Business-to-Business Expo on Thursday evening, November 12th at the **Cobblestone Events Center**. Sue Pigg reported that the **Ingham County EDC** Board is now complete. The LEAP regional board is also doing good work, especially with their Springboard program. The electric for the JNL expansion is now approved. Williamston's industrial park is being expanded in services infrastructure and a roadway needed for a medical supply company. Meridian Entrepreneurs have seminars once a month at Okemos Library assisted by CADL and MABA. Hayhoe Trail expansion to **Vevay Township** Hall is being worked on. Brent Forsberg says that they are starting to get traffic – on their lower priced homes. Jeff Oesterle explained more about the planned livestock exhibition (Michigan Livestock Expo) at Ingham County Fairgrounds being worked on by the state Farm Bureau and the Michigan Department of Agriculture. The show will be three days long and also utilize the MSU Pavilion. Jeff Oesterle says that since the State Fair is going away, this could be a sizable show. Jeff Oesterle also announced that new plat books are coming in at the Farm Bureau. Marty Colburn discussed that nine federal jobs with the Department of Ag are coming in. City Hall work is going forward. Dennis Anderson is leading a project for developer Weiland-Davco in Canada. The **City** and **DDA** have applied to be a “redevelopment district” for additional liquor licenses to help some downtown businesses. There is a vacancy on **City Council**. They are putting in a few bike racks downtown. **Cedar Street School** will be used by the district for current programs. The **Green Acres** assisted living will open in May. Bob Warnke said that we will have a thousand participants in town for the **MSB 5K** on May 1st. **Rieth-Riley Construction Company** bought Aggregate Industries plant in Mason. Art Good mentioned that the storage unit business is not doing too well right now. He also expresses support for a “calendar committee” to help with community events scheduling. A lot of activity downtown with Mason Madness, **DDA** planning a special event, etc. MACC went to the Mason Women's Expo and the home shows at the MSU Pavilion and the Summit with member cards and maps.

Hometown USA Committee – A discussion about the Christmas tree on the Courthouse lawn took place. The Chamber has been unable to make private arrangements for removal of the tree lights for two years running now. The arrangements will be looked at by the Chamber, the **City of Mason** and **Ingham County Facilities** and changes will be planned soon. The committee discussed continuing progress on arrangements for Spring Fling and Down Home Days. Spring Fling promises to fill up again for the second year in a row. The first “deadline” for Spring Fling is March 15th. Preparations are being made for the eight 2009 Thursday Night Live concerts on the Courthouse lawn this summer. Some from the ad hoc committee met and made suggestions for improvements, such as clarification on the Mason Area Idol event as “an entertainment, not a competition.” Sponsorships are needed for the concerts and program and will be requested soon. The **Mason Optimists** will continue as concessionaire. The new prototype banners were sent out for bid, with **JP Signs** having the lowest bid. 20 of the new banners will go on N. Cedar Street. Approved by the **City of Mason**, the banners will be made (and lower arms purchased) and sponsorships will be solicited – all in April.

Membership Services Committee – A discussion of the annual Horse Show again took place. Cathy Groce provided details. The show's booklet is now done and going to **Action Printing**. Discussed the return mail provisions for the booklet – and how that will be an added expense, but may cut down on mailing in 2010. Next year, we need to put more about camping in the show booklet. We have a camping coordinator to get volunteers to work from Thursday through Saturday at a table charging for assigned camping spaces. A map of spaces is being completed. Volunteer sheet for all Horse Show “jobs” is going to Chris Iott and a duplicate one is at the Chamber office. The committee continued to work on the Chamber's strategic planning process. A membership survey will be worked on to be returned by the end of April. Strategic planning will continue through the summer and will then go the Board for approval. The same committee will finalize the Executive Director Transition Plan and the Executive Committee will review it at its next meeting before going to the Board. An update on the planning for the new **Spartan Speedway** fundraiser was presented. It will be on Fathers Day - June 21st and will benefit the Mason Area Visitors Center Fund. Tickets are now available at \$10 each and also feature a parking-lot mixer. An update on the annual MACC Raffle “On the Town” that benefits the Mason, Michigan - Hometown USA Fund was presented. The party was moved to **Eldorado**. We've worked out that two Michigan State Lottery Commission licenses are necessary and have applied for both. One for the early bird/dinner tickets (200) and the other for the “On the Town” Raffle tickets (2000), each to be sold at \$20 each per ticket. As soon as the licenses are received, we'll begin printing tickets – to be available beginning on April 30, 2009. Now we need items for the early bird prizes. An update was given on the Chamber involvement in poker room fundraisers. Our first license and agreement has been applied for and signed for May. There is a big investment in time to do these, but the fundraising potential is great. (NOTE: New dates are May 21, 22, 23 and 24, 2009 for the first one.)

VI. Old Business – None.

VII. New Business – **Moved, seconded and approved unanimously by the Board:** “Any checks written over \$300 require the approval of a co-signatory – except for the monthly rent check, the weekly paycheck of the executive director, *the weekly paycheck of the administrative assistant, and any payroll tax payment checks.*”

VIII. Committee Assignments: Executive Committee - Wednesday, May 6 - 9:00 AM; Ambassadors Committee - Tuesday, April 14 - 7:30 AM; Economic Development Committee - Thursday, April 23 - 7:30 AM; Hometown USA Committee – Tuesday, April 14 - 8:30 AM; and Membership Services Committee – Thursday, April 9 - 7:30 AM.

IX. Announcements – None.

X. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 AM.

The next Board of Directors meeting is Friday, May 8, 2009 at 7:30 AM in the Chamber office.

Minutes Submitted 5/5/09 by the Secretary--Douglas J. Klein, APR