

# MASON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## Meeting of the Board of Directors

October 3, 2008

PRESENT: Tom Botsford, Lance Delbridge, Jeff Haueter, Mark Howe, Neil Kentner, Jamie Robinson, Ron Tatro, and Bob Warnke  
ABSENT: Joe Dean, Kim Gorrell, Robin King-Fuller, Phil Preston, and Kathy Smith

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I. Call to order at 7:30 AM

II. Minutes of the September 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: **Allegiance Health** and **Robin Rich, A.C.G.** Information on them is in the October newsletter. We are currently at 279 members. Ribbon cuttings are taking off again. The next one is for Allegiance Physical Rehab at 566 N. Cedar on Wednesday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM. We may be doing one for Laundry Care Express’s new dry-cleaning service soon also. We really need to talk up the MACC Raffle & Party on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Mostly we just need to sell more tickets. Information for members was in the September and October newsletters. We have support materials here at the office. Publicity and limited advertising starts this week. We ended with around 170 vendors at the Down Home Days show -- well above last year at about 100 -- and we’ll end up with almost \$7,000 -- well over the \$5,000 projected. That’s really very, very good! We continue to see the gradual build-up of Spring Fling and Down Home Days into our two major community festivals once again, thanks to the participation of so many community groups and sponsors. I still believe there are even more improvements in income generation from sponsorships possible in these two events. Last month we saw the last of our eight concerts in the third season of “Thursday Night Live!,” a summer series of live musical entertainment presented by **Independent Bank** and hosted by the Chamber. Express your thanks to Chamber members **Dart Container, City Limits, CP Federal, LAFUCU, American Legion Post 148, and Ware’s Pharmacy** for their concert sponsorships. Give your special thanks to **Independent Bank**, who we hope will again be sponsoring the 2009 series. The Mason Area Idol idea was sure a hit. Perhaps we could have a TNL preview night at **City Limits** on the Thursday before Spring Fling to kick off the TNL series and 2009 Idol? A calendar of Board activities at this time of the year and supporting materials is provided. All standing committees are to be looking at possible changes to our yearly plan -- to build our program of work for 2009. If anyone ever talks to you with comments or suggestions for any of the Chamber’s events or programs, please recruit them to be on the appropriate committee. We have a few new names due to the discussion with some folks about going on the Board.

V. Committee Reports:

**Executive Committee** – The committee discussed the reports and agenda for the Board of Directors meeting on Friday, October 3, 2008. To ensure adequate cash flow, the CD coming up at Independent bank will be cashed in. It will be reinstated as dues money starts to come in again in November. If additional investments are possible after a couple more months, then we’ll look at Edward Jones - Kerry Ferguson, LAFUCU, and CP Federal (in that order -- the order in which they joined the Chamber). A nominating committee consisting of Jeff Haueter as chair, Mark Howe, and Robin King-Fuller selected a slate of nominees to fill 2009 Board vacancies. We thank the committee members for their service. In accordance with the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce By-Laws, Article IV, Section 3, the Chamber membership was notified in the “Mason in Motion” newsletter on September 30, 2008 of four seats on the Board of Directors that will become vacant after December 31, 2008. The people listed below are the nominees for the four seats for a term of three years beginning January 1, 2009 going through December 31, 2011. Additional candidates for the Board may be nominated by petition bearing the signatures of the principals of at least 10 Chamber members in good standing, submitted to the Chamber office within 10 days of notice -- that would be by 3 PM on Friday, October 10, 2008. If no petitions are filed, the persons listed in the notice shall be deemed elected by the membership and so certified at the Board’s November meeting / Chamber’s annual meeting. The following nominees are principals, associates or employees of members of the Chamber in good standing and are hereby nominated for the four 2009 vacancies: Michelle Carpenter -- **Dart Bank**, Robin Manno -- **Dart Container Corporation**, Aaron Fiedler -- **Fiedler Insurance**, and Chris Iott -- **Ace Hardware**. The committee discussed the preparations for writing the 2009 Program of Work. Staff plans to ask the Ambassador Committee to consider a program of member and non-member contacts, to ask the Membership Services Committee to consider a dues increase in 2010, to ask the Membership Services Committee to consider additional or different fundraising activities, to ask the Hometown USA Committee to consider enhancements to Spring Fling and Down Home Days, to ask the Hometown USA Committee to consider a brief Visitors Guide publication, to ask the Hometown USA Committee to consider convening two subcommittees: a “cultural committee” and a “service committee” to coordinate community calendar activities, to ask the Economic Development Committee to consider beefing up the Mason Area Entrepreneurs Club and the Housing subcommittees. Staff will be asked to place special emphasis on enhancing sponsorship value and on updating the website.

**Ambassadors Committee** – Ad hoc committee developments and assignments were discussed: Good Morning, Mason! -- The next GMM is October 30<sup>th</sup>. Halloween decorations with a “candy corn” theme have been ordered. A co-sponsor is needed for that GMM and the one in December. Setup is tentatively scheduled for the day before (Wednesday, October 29) at 3 PM and we need help for that. Member Mixers -- The mixer committee meeting took place on September 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Holiday Party December Mixer taking place on Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup>. Solicitation letters are ready. The Board will now require all sponsor/donors to be Chamber members, although they may obtain their items from non-members if they wish. The table decorations will be based around a brass candlestick. The hall is rented and the sound system is reserved from GCC. Jon Grocki will make the same arrangements for the harpist. Food is in the process of being confirmed, as is **Jim Hyde**’s participation as auctioneer. We need to describe the live auction items’ values better. MACC Golf Classic Outing -- We had a few more golfers than last year, but again no major sponsors and some \$100 sponsorships went unsold. A reordering of sponsorships to include more mid-level opportunities was suggested. Publicity and promotion included tying net proceeds from the event to the Chamber’s scholarship -- renamed the Agnes “Aggie” Corner Scholarship. A formula to determine net proceeds was used. It showed \$414 net proceeds going toward the scholarship. Since this is less than the \$500 we normally do, we won’t set up a separate fund this springtime, but check on this after the next outing. In other business: Scarecrow -- **Keans Store** is

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promoting a downtown scarecrow display contest for the end of September and October. The Chamber office will participate. Business Expo Opportunities – We are still exploring with the Membership Services Committee the possibility of next year having a business-to-business tabletop show in a colder month and a business-to-consumer show in a warmer month, perhaps with other Chamber events. DHD Booth – We are filling the openings for people to staff our visitors’ center booth at the September 20<sup>th</sup> Courthouse Show. Some LCC students may also be there. Ribbon Cuttings -- Down Home Days will have a ribbon cutting on September 18<sup>th</sup>. One or two are already in the works for October. This has been our most successful year for ribbon cuttings ever! Member Lists – Ambassadors (and Membership Services folks) will now get updated membership lists every other month or so. Staff will provide them at meetings.

**Economic Development Committee** – The Mason Area Entrepreneurs Club will meet again on Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM at the City Hall community (basement) room. The presentation topic will be on financing your small business. The Housing Committee will support our promotion of their Sunday, September 21 open houses during Down Home Days at the Chamber’s visitors’ center booth and at several other real estate and rental unit booths. The committee plans to target employees of our larger employers with a “Why not move to Mason -- its closer to where you work!” promotion soon. LCC students will be conducting their annual survey of informal reactions to “What Mason really needs is a ....” and “When I think of Mason, what comes to mind is...” as class research project. The results will be tabulated and presented at the next meeting. Marty Colburn reported that work continues about on schedule for M-36 and MDOT is working harder. The Hayhoe Riverwalk extension is progressing to the north with **Anderson-Fischer** as the landscape contractor. About 85% of the water treatment plant has been built. Still has residential investment going on (especially Summerwood) with a lot of building permits being issued for fixing up existing homes. The annual street program also is continuing well. A new City Hall is the big upcoming project. **CADL** is regrouping after their millage defeat. Unfortunately there has been no movement on vacant E. Ash Street buildings. He said that a soy manufacturer was looking at the old Wickes property. Jeff Oesterle reported that the Palmer Orchard had been cleared, but not for a subdivision. Instead, they are planting corn. He further discussed with the committee the state’s deer-baiting/feeding restriction due to CWD. Dennis Anderson said that they had closed on the **Green Acres** assisted living units, now to be built east of the condos on Ash near Temple. They plan to run the first building N-S — but there is actually room for 3 buildings. Mark Howe mentioned that Paul Vlahakis has now closed on the old Firehouse Grill, and now owns the building. It is expected to be a Los Tres Amigos eventually. He further suggested that everyone go and check out the new **Maple Street Mall**, as it is a quite impressive operation. He also said that the old Assembly of God property was a possibility for development. Art Good talked about Chamber membership involvement and recruitment, saying that people have missed the face to face contact. He asked about and the committee discussed possibilities for the current McDonalds property, since they are actively moving across the street. Marty said it was likely that there needed to be some business activity on the 40 acres behind that to get a road through and before anything might happen. He also said the land was mucky back there, maybe about half. Jeff Haueter explained that **A&W**, KFC, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut and Long John Silvers all have YUM as a parent company. Art then discussed the **American Legion** U.S. Flag Program and how the Legion assists in veterans’ funeral services. David Haywood reported that the Ingham County Land Bank had approval for W. Ash 5-unit condo development across the freeway from Hayes Park. 2009 will be the year for a review of the City’s Master Plan, but it will be a more informal than formal process. He agreed with Marty Colburn that with the number of area folks involved in remodeling their homes, we are upgrading the quality of our housing stock -- even the increase in quantity has slowed.

**Hometown USA Committee** – A discussion of the TNL concerts took place, including the Mason Area Idol competition. That was a big success! The last concert is on September 18 to kick off Down Home Days, with the **High School Band and Cheer Squad**. Ambassadors will do a ribbon cutting. The map proofs are being reviewed and we should have the maps in hand by November sometime. DDA brochures still need to be re-done. The Chamber staff will assist soon. The possibility of including the new streetlights on Cedar in the banner program was again briefly discussed. Staff will look into the possibility of a different banner. The possible production of a Mason Area Visitors Guide booklet next year was also again discussed. Final Down Home Days preparations were discussed. Looks like a good show! The committee was reminded that the subcommittee working on the Light Parade and Holiday Celebration (on the day after Thanksgiving) needs a chair and more committee members. Key volunteers will also be needed.

**Membership Services Committee** – Extensive Discussion of the Raffle Party took place. The Raffle Committee will meet again on September 30<sup>th</sup> to continue work on the Party. Bid Wheel sponsors are still at two so far: **LAFUCU** and **A&W**. The letter to go with the promotional package for “Big Wheel” sponsors went out, but there has been no response. The committee discussed the needed changes to the volunteer job descriptions. These will be finalized at the Raffle Party meeting. Bartender (beer, wine, pop, water, and snacks), registration, trash, bonus ticket, ticket sellers, 50/50, drawings, announcer, etc. were the jobs that needed more description. Staff and intern will work on these for the Raffle meeting. Other Chamber fundraisers should continue to be investigated, as some events are experiencing possible reduced sponsorship from our major contributors now and possibly in the next year as economic recovery is still projected to be pretty slow.

- VI. Old Business – None.
- VII. New Business – None
- VIII. Committee Assignments: Executive Committee - Wednesday, November 5 - 9:30 AM; Ambassadors Committee - Tuesday, October 21 - 7:30 AM; Economic Development Committee - Thursday, October 16 - 7:30 AM; Hometown USA Committee - Tuesday, October 21 - 8:30 AM; and Membership Services Committee - Thursday, October 16 - 9:30 AM.
- IX. Announcements: Annual Awards nominations are due November 14.
- X. The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 AM.

The next Board of Directors meeting is Friday, November 7, 2008 at 7:30 AM in the Chamber office.

*Minutes Submitted 11/4/08 by the Secretary--Douglas J. Klein, APR*