

MASON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Meeting of the Board of Directors

November 6, 2009

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

I. Call to order at 7:31 AM

II. Minutes of the October Meeting – reviewed and approved.

III. Treasurer’s Report – discussed and approved.

IV. Executive Director’s Report – discussed and approved. One new member since the last report: **Spenny’s Accounting & Tax Service**. Information was in the November newsletter. Dues notices have started to go out this week. Thanks go to all who helped with the MACC Raffle & Party on October 17th. The Membership Services Committee will soon begin to make decisions on any changes. They will also continue to look at other fundraising ideas. Our fund balance is now too low to cover a year’s worth of expenditures and that situation is not sustainable long term. We have actually dipped into our fund balance each year since 2004 and have done so again this year. We need to start adding to it as soon as is practical. Usually that means some stronger or additional fundraising activities, as we’ve started to emphasize this past year. The Business-to-Business Expo (while not a fundraising activity) and the Holiday Party Mixer are the two remaining opportunities to make net income this year. All standing committees are looking at possible changes to our yearly plan -- to build our program of work for 2010. The Board will approve the P-O-W at the December meeting. College student internships are posted on our website and a student can start with us anytime in most college programs. We have also established a “community member internship” for those wishing to keep or gain skills outside of a formal college or high school program. 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. See the 2010 Membership Update form for a good list. Our vice president, Michelle Carpenter, has proposed “volunteer leadership” and “event sponsorship” as two main points of emphasis in 2010.

V. Committee Reports:

Executive Committee – The committee discussed the reports and agenda for the Board of Directors meeting on Friday, November 6, 2009. The committee reviewed the progress on the year-end planning calendar. A discussion on the Executive Director’s 2010 staffing plan recommendation took place. This will be discussed with the entire Board at the Friday meeting as part of this report. The new 2010 Board members will be certified at the Friday meeting also. The committee then requested a list of the nominees to date for the annual awards to review at their Friday meeting. Nominations close on November 13th and the 2009 Board votes on all slate of awards at their December meeting after recommendation by the Awards Committee through the Executive Committee. Also in December, the 2010 Board will elect their officers and Michelle Carpenter’s seat on the Board will be filled until the next regular election. It seems that Executive Committee members have this about figured out.

Ambassadors Committee – Ad hoc committee developments and assignments were discussed: Good Morning, Mason! -- The next GMM is October 29. The theme is “Halloween.” Co-sponsor is Caring Touch Therapeutic Massage. We’ll continue to roll out our B2B Expo, Holidays Celebrations, Holiday Party, and all our other events. Ambassador passes were given to each committee member at the meeting. “Chamber 101” will not take place again until April 2010 -- and we’re hoping for a decision on a new tiered benefit dues structure before then. Member Mixers – The Economic Development Committee could still use the Ambassadors help for planning the Business-to-Business Expo on November 12th at the **Cobblestone Events Center**. This month we’ve also started planning for the Holiday Party Mixer on December 3rd at the **Fairgrounds Community Building**. **Origami** has been confirmed as the presenting sponsor. Solicitations of sponsorship through food, beverage, auction items, and door prizes have begun. It looks like nearly all the possible food/beverage sponsors will participate. MACC Golf Classic Outing – The ad-hoc committee is still planning to work on a list of criteria for hosting the MACC Golf Classic. Other items: State Conference – Jan Pfeiffer from the GLCVB, and an Ambassador for the **Lansing Chamber**, discussed ideas and items with the committee regarding the State Ambassadors Conference in Lansing in September 2010. The 2011 conference will be in Marshall and the 2012 one in Jackson. Ribbon Cuttings – Recently did cuttings for **R&R Travel, Two Men And A Truck, Mason Public Schools, Green Acres, and Caring Touch Therapeutic Massage**. Our procedure is to do a “first anniversary” ribbon cutting only if we didn’t do a “grand opening” the year before. Everyone then waits for 5th year increments – unless they have new management/ownership, new or remodeled facilities, etc. **Country Thyme** and **A&W** are possibilities, but not confirmed. Membership – A discussion of Los Tres Amigos and the possibility of their membership took place.

(continued)

Economic Development Committee – Doug Klein reported on the Business-to-Business Expo that the committee is overseeing, as well as an update on the Mason Area Entrepreneurs Club. He also discussed possible changes in the program of work to address sustainability and “active search” for “specific niche” businesses. There is a need to do another study of downtown commercial rental rates. The last one done was five years ago. Mark Howe and the committee discussed most open downtown business space and updated information was reviewed. **Ware’s** façade improvements were also discussed. A discussion of the expanding role of **Allegiance Health** in the Mason community took place. They’re being viewed as an alternative to **Sparrow**. The McLaren system (Ingham Medical) doesn’t have much of a presence.

Hometown USA Committee – The Chamber’s newly designed website is going up. This will be “under construction” for some time because of lack of staff time to devote to this, but should be substantially done this year. The 2009 Thursday Night Live concerts on the **Courthouse** lawn this summer were discussed. Concert sponsorships need to be at \$500 for one and \$750 for two this next year. We had only one at the new level this year, which reduced expected income, but not by much. The results of Down Home Days were discussed in depth. Income and number of booths was down a bit, although the attendees and weather cooperated well. We need to promote more in crafter publications and websites. Make cards to drop off when we attend other shows. Reports on port-a-jons and wash stand will be relayed to Trevor Leasure. A discussion of the banner program took place. We’re expecting a few changes in the once-every-three-years rollout in 2010 based on our experience with the prototypes on N. Cedar Street. Possible blue and red banners with a simpler text message that could be mixed in with the white banners were discussed. The committee discussed arrangements to date for the Mason Holidays Celebration on the day after Thanksgiving. “Mason Moolah” will go again. Ways to disseminate information about member special events, etc. were discussed. While communication is strong once the information is given to the Chamber, not enough people get their info to the Chamber by deadlines.

Membership Services Committee – A prize of \$100 in Chamber gift certificates will be presented to the top ticket seller at the Raffle Party. Sales to date for dinner tickets and the “On the Town” Raffle tickets were discussed. This fundraiser benefits the Mason, Michigan - Hometown USA Fund. Since we decided that it required the support of all Chamber members to sell these tickets, four tickets to sell were mailed to most contact people at member businesses and organizations. The resignation of the Horse Show manager and the action of the Board to discontinue the show was discussed. A discussion regarding potential future poker room fundraisers took place. The Board of Directors annual planning calendar was discussed and amendments to the program of work were offered. The continuation of the dues restructuring and strategic planning efforts will be in the program for 2010, as will continued fundraising planning and implementation.

VI. Old Business – None.

VII. New Business – None.

VIII. Committee Assignments -- Executive Committee - Wednesday, November 4 - 9:00 AM; Ambassadors Committee - Tuesday, October 13 - 7:30 AM; Economic Development Committee - Thursday, October 22 - 7:30 AM; Hometown USA Committee – Tuesday, October 13 - 8:30 AM; and Membership Services Committee – Thursday, October 15 - 7:30 AM.

IX. Announcements -- The 55th District Court had a successful session at Mason High School recently. The Mason State Bank 5 K will be held on Friday, May 7, 2010 -- a week after Spring Fling. Board members are invited to the LRCC Mixer at the Hampton Inn in Okemos on the 10th and to an energy issue luncheon on the 17th.

X. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 AM.

The next Board of Directors meeting is Friday, December 4, 2009 at 7:30 AM in the Chamber office.

Minutes Submitted 11/30/09 by the Secretary--Douglas J. Klein, APR