

MASON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Meeting of the Board of Directors

December 5, 2008

PRESENT: Tom Botsford, Joe Dean, Lance Delbridge, Jeff Haueter, Mark Howe, Neil Kentner, Robin King-Fuller, Jamie Robinson, Kathy Smith, and Bob Warnke. ALSO: Michelle Carpenter, Aaron Fiedler, Chris Iott, and Robin Manno.

ABSENT: Kim Gorrell, Ron Tatro, and Phil Preston

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- I. Call to order at 7:30 AM
 - II. Minutes of the November Meeting – reviewed and approved
 - III. Treasurer’s Report – discussed and approved.
 - IV. Executive Director’s Report – discussed and approved.
 - V. Committee Reports:

Executive Committee – The committee discussed the reports and agenda for the Board of Directors meeting on Friday, December 5, 2008. Current investments that lost value have been devalued in November as planned. We still have a good chunk of money invested in Lion King tickets. We’re expecting a \$1500 royalty check for our maps in early January. The committee recommends that the Board adopt the following: **“MACC Annual Award winners for 2009 are to be: Lee Talboys for Citizen of the Year, Pat Weiler for the President’s Award, Ware’s Pharmacy for Excellence in Business, David Jones of Mason High School for Excellence in Education, The Friends of the Mason Library for Special Recognition (organization), and Len Stuttman for Special Recognition (individual).” That was moved, seconded and approved by the Board of Directors.** The committee discussed the changes in the most recent draft of the 2009 Program of Work by the committees, especially for Goal 4. The committee recommends that the Board adopt the following: **“The most recent draft (distributed at this Board meeting) of the 2009 Program of Work is approved.” That was moved, seconded, and approved by the Board of Directors.** The committee discussed the procedures for electing officers of the Chamber by the 2009 Board of Directors. This will be done under new business using parliamentary procedure for election of officers. All 2008 and 2009 Board members may discuss, but only 2009 Board members may vote. The committee discussed the draft of the 2009 staffing plan distributed to the Board in early November. No changes have been suggested. The draft is distributed separately from the Board packet. Only the first two pages usually are part of the plan, but the balance 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 committee recommends that the Board discuss and amend the plan if desired by the Board under new business at the end of this December Board meeting in closed session (without staff present). All 2008 and 2009 Board members may discuss, but only 2008 Board members may vote.

Ambassadors Committee – Ad hoc committee developments and assignments were discussed: Good Morning, Mason! -- The next GMM is December 11th. There will be a five-minute presentation by the co-sponsor Bestsellers Books & Coffee Co. The event will have a holiday theme and poinsettias will be given away at the end after the 50/50. Setup is scheduled for the day before at 2 PM and we need help for that. Member Mixers – The mixer committee has been meeting to discuss the Holiday Party taking place on Thursday, December 4th. There are 13 “Taste of Mason” sponsors confirmed. Help with decorations is needed. Remember that the Board requires that all sponsor/donors be Chamber members. We’ll try to describe the live auction items’ values better. Setup is at 1 PM on the day of the event. Save the Moments Photography will rejoin the Chamber as a trade for being at the Cobblestone Events Center. A rundown on all items consigned and contributed (‘tribbed) was done. Looking ahead, we have confirmed using the Masonic Temple Hall for our cards & games mixer in the Spring. The 2009 Chamber events calendar was reviewed. MACC Golf Classic Outing – It was decided that we would go back to Eldorado for the 2009 Golf Classic, as we are still trying to build sponsorship and participation. The date was moved up due to conflicts with the Fair and Thursday Night Live events. Other items: Member Lists – Ambassadors (and Membership Services folks) are again getting updated membership lists this month. Lion King – There are loads of tickets still here for evening performances in 2009 on April 2nd and 5th for \$67 each. (Note that there is no school for kids the next day for either showing.) The seats are more contiguous and right next to the \$125 seats. (Unfortunately, the tickets are printed with a lower price that does not reflect Wharton or Chamber handling costs. An explanation will be provided with the tickets as they are sold.) 2009 Program of Work – The committee again reviewed a draft of the 2009 Program of Work. No additional changes were made to the sections concerning the committee’s scope of responsibility.

Economic Development Committee – A draft of the Program of Work for 2009 was reviewed. No changes were suggested. The Mason Area Entrepreneurs Club met again on November 10th. About 15 people attended. The main topic was time management. The topic of taxes will be discussed at their first 2009 meeting. They are finishing work on Cedar Street and the rest of M-36. The DDA has a posting out for a new executive director. DDA is also involved in a strategic planning process and will be asking for community input. Discussion of the national economy took place, with committee members saying that things are a bit different than in 1982, because housing stock is so high. Tim Gaylord said that some community bankers are holding back on getting involved the TARP program the feds are now doing. He also added that “we have mortgaged our future (in recent years) and now the bill has come

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due.” The new water plant on Avery Lane will have an open house on December 3rd from 3 to 7 PM. The groundbreaking for the assisted living center took place recently and construction is progressing toward an April opening. McDonalds will be opening their new restaurant and closing their old one on Cedar Street in early December. McDonalds’ relocation people wanted the city to buy the old McDonalds property, but there is no compelling public interest. The city is now looking at construction of a new City Hall. It doesn’t appear that the Hayhoe Riverwalk will be completed this season. All local street projects were not quite done. Jim Leasure mentioned that Aggregate would have to make accommodations, as some were out thousands of dollars. George Hayhoe said that slow business is way off. Lower oil prices will drive down asphalt prices, but it moves slowly. Asphalt to concrete cost comparison is less with higher prices. Both products are 100% recycleable. Any economic stimulus plan has infrastructure improvement in its plans. Jeff Oesterle thanked Lear Corporation for letting farmers use their parking lot. Palmer’s Farm is continuing their removal of trees. Nothing is in the wind right now for the old Wickes Lumber property. In the last month, four different farms have been up for sale. It is hard to determine value due to fluctuating agricultural prices. Regarding the wind farm project to the northeast of Mason, the needed ordinance has been approved by the township. No design draft is available yet. Linda Diamond is retiring as Vevay Township treasurer. Marty Colburn said that HardTech has requested an amendment to their tax abatement. The employee cap has been removed. The committee discussed the possible decline in property tax collections due to property values decreasing. Taxes will likely flatten out since the SEV and taxable value have to equalize before tax bills will go down. There was a spirited discussion of the reliance on property taxes by schools and local governments.

Hometown USA Committee – We should have the new Mason maps in hand by the end of this month. A royalty payment of approximately \$1,500 will be coming from Village Profile in January. A schedule of Chamber events for 2009 was distributed. The MACC Golf Classic outing was changed due to conflicts with the Fair and Thursday Night Live events. Aleasha Wood and all the members of the subcommittee have been working on the Light Parade and Holiday Celebration (on the day after Thanksgiving). All the plans and preparations were reviewed extensively. The Program of Work was again reviewed for 2009 updates. No revisions were made to the sections that concerned this committee’s oversight. The Chamber has spent about \$4,500 in magazine and newspaper advertising in 2008 for community events and community identity. Gannett has a new “bundled” program that costs \$3,600 per year that we would like to go with. That would mean discontinuing our TravelHost advertising to remain within budget. Discontinuing TravelHost would also be consistent with a proposed gradual shift from Chamber to DDA for promoting downtown Mason as a destination to those visitors who live outside the tri-county region. The Gannett package will help the Chamber better promote downtown Mason and the entire Mason area as a destination to those residents who live within the tri-county region.

Membership Services Committee – Discussion took place about moving the 2009 Membership Services committee meetings to 7:30 AM on the second Thursday of the month or the Thursday after the Board meeting, whichever comes first in the month. That seemed reasonable to those in attendance. Cynthia Eiseler of the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce led an extensive discussion of the Blue Cross - Blue Shield health plans that the MACC offers to members through the LRCC. They will consider groups of up to 100 employees and even sole proprietors. Handouts on the programs were distributed. They have both a traditional PPO plan and a “Blue Care” HMO plan available. Plans are more competitive in rates the more employees a member has in the plan. Blue Cross requires proof of membership. LRCC is going to be providing continuing education classes for Blue Cross agents starting early in 2009. In the 2009 Program of Work, a change to the goal was suggested regarding membership value and the importance of providing such to members and providing for the operations of the Chamber. The committee will continue to investigate other Chamber fundraisers besides the Horse Show and Raffle. The committee will assist the Board in oversight of the strategic planning process in 2009. It was again suggested that perhaps an incoming Board member could serve as a liaison to the Horse Show Committee chaired by Cathy Groce. Chris Iott was suggested. The committee also briefly discussed preliminary research done into readjusting the dues structure in 2009 to be effective in 2010. A discussion of the raffle changes for 2009 took place. In general, it would be a \$15,000 cash raffle with 2000 tickets at \$20 each to be sold -- reverting to a 50/50 if less than 1500 tickets are sold in advance of the party -- and an additional \$20 admission to the party at the door. Sponsorship is to be open to all members. All those changes are now reflected in the 2009 Sponsorship Opportunities handout.

VI. Old Business – None.

VII. New Business – **The following nominations for 2009 officers were made, seconded, and approved by the Board of Directors: Neil Kentner as President, Michelle Carpenter as Vice President, Robin King-Fuller as Treasurer. Other officers are: Jeff Haueter as Past President and Doug Klein as Secretary. The Board then met without staff present to discuss and approve the 2009 staffing plan as proposed. The Board amended the plan to increase the bonus for the executive director and then approved the first two pages as amended. It referred the executive director succession plan portion back to committee.**

VIII. Committee Assignments: Executive Committee - Wednesday, January 7, 2009 - 9:30 AM, Ambassadors Committee - Tuesday, December 16 - 7:30 AM, Economic Development Committee - Thursday, December 18 - 7:30 AM, Hometown USA Committee – Tuesday, December 16 - 8:30 AM, and Membership Services Committee - Thursday, December 18 - 9:30 AM.

IX. Announcements

X. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 AM.

The next Board of Directors meeting is Friday, January 9, 2009 at 7:30 AM in the Chamber office.

Minutes Submitted 1/6/09 by the Secretary--Douglas J. Klein, APR