

South Platte United Chambers of Commerce (SPUCC)
Business Meeting
Holdrege Country Club, Holdrege Nebraska
December 13th, 2017

The business meeting was called to order by President Tim Anderson at 1:20 p.m.

A roll call sheet was not returned to the Secretary.

The agenda for the meeting was agreed upon.

Minutes of the last meeting, held in Red Cloud at the Opera House, were read. There were no corrections or additions. It was moved by Ron Tillery to accept the minutes. A 2nd was given by Kelly Gewecke. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

The minutes of the telephone conference with the Board of Directors from November were read. There were not corrections or additions. It was moved by Jay Hall to accept the minutes. A 2nd was given by Kelly Gewecke. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

David and Marilyn Snodgrass tendered their resignations as co-secretaries of SPUCC. The members accepted the resignations with regrets.

The Secretary's position being vacant, there was thus discussion on filling the office. There was discussion. Jay Hall, presently Treasurer of SPUCC, was asked to take on the Secretary's responsibilities until the next election of officers. Jay consented and then resigned as Treasurer. Jay Hall was designated Secretary by acclamation.

With the Treasurer's position being vacant, the members talked about possible solutions and candidates. It was suggested that Jean Issler assume the duties of Treasurer. Compensation of \$600 annually for the rather complicated work of the Treasurer was suggested. The Board of Directors had recommended this as a good solution. The membership attending the business meeting agreed by acclamation.

The Financial Report was given by newly elected Treasurer, Jean Issler. A copy of the report is filed with these minutes.

Marilyn Snodgrass asked when annual membership dues are "due". That question was answered a bit later after claims for payment were discussed and approved. The list of attendees at the Red Cloud meeting in September and their companies and addresses is a good starting point. Jean Issler will look into dues paid and dues outstanding. Attendees were encouraged to email Jean if they have questions. Attendees were also encouraged to phone organizations and individuals to check about the status of their annual dues payments.

A claim was presented from Glenwood Telephone for web / email services. The claim was for \$5. It was moved by Dena Beck with a 2nd by Kelly Gewecke to approve the claim. The motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

Pioneer Village in Minden was discussed. Perhaps the South Platte Chamber of Commerce can play a role in promoting this business / this institution that is so much a part of the historical and cultural life of the South Platte region. A dialogue has commenced between the owners of Pioneer Village and the City of Minden and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (Kelly Gewecke). A new marketing plan was discussed. It was mentioned that the old man cranking the car was an important symbol for Pioneer Village. Repairs of that display were discussed. (perhaps \$1,000)

Because Pioneer Village has welcomed 6 million visitors, it was suggested that this milestone be recognized widely by the South Platte United Chamber of Commerce.

The iconic signage along highways was also discussed. It was reported that several of the bigger signs have been renovated and that in 2017 a small sign project will be undertaken.

Improving access to the parking lots at Pioneer Village and its adjacent areas was also discussed.

It was pointed out that expanded marketing for Pioneer Village will help Minden and the region.

Kelly Gewecke made the suggestion that the South Platte United Chamber of Commerce provide a grant of \$1,000 to the Pioneer Village Foundation/Harold Warp Foundation. She also suggested that SPUCC present a proclamation to the Governor concerning Pioneer Village and request that he sign it.

Further discussion brought up statistics about Pioneer Village: that in its heyday, for example, in 1980 it attracted 300,000 visitors. During these last years visitor numbers have been between 20,000 and 30,000 annually.

Kelly Gewecke said that to “show some love” to Pioneer Village on the part of SPUCC would be a very good form of recognition for the positive impact that Pioneer Village has had on the region’s tourism industry.

President Tim Anderson agreed that a proclamation signed by the Governor would be a very good gesture toward the Harold Warp Foundation and Pioneer Village.

A Go Fund Me campaign for crowd-sourcing / fundraising was suggested. Those attendees interested in helping with this were Kelly Gewecke, Matt Cederburg, Jarrod McCartney, Max Kathol, Melissa Garcia and perhaps Dena Beck (moral support).

Dena Beck suggested that the region’s attractions / tourism businesses, such as Pioneer Village and others, be supported with a project grant each year in the future. SPUCC could sponsor a work day to help out.

Rick Nelson suggested that the project grant be a matching grant of, for example, \$500 with a local match of \$500.

Melissa Garcia also brought up the use of “in kind” donations.

Kelly Gewecke moved that SPUCC appropriate \$500 for a grant to Pioneer Village, dependent on a \$500 local match. The suggestion was included, that the grant be used for the old car and the man cranking. Rick Nelson provided a 2nd. There was no further discussion. The motion carried upon a unanimous voice vote.

Rick Nelson also brought up the possibility of using a regional “community” fund advisory committee through the Nebraska Community Foundation. The “FAC” could be used to pool resources, promote grant projects, etc. Rick will talk with Jeff Yost with the Nebraska Community Foundation.

Melissa Garcia asked for more information about a volunteer work day. Dena Beck will talk with Pioneer Village and obtain a list of needed work projects.

This entire discussion might be summed up with the phrase “Adopt a _____”

Celebrations of 150th year of Nebraska Statehood were discussed briefly.

Kelly Gewecke quickly mentioned the work done to hire a new tourism director. Perhaps “tourism tours” for the region’s representatives and activists could be arranged. Either one day of touring OR one town tour can work.

President Tim Anderson spoke briefly about the conditions of the region’s highways. It could be summed up that most highways are not in good condition with the possible exception of highways near and between McCook and North Platte. It is important to look at new trends in transportation and the goals of the Department of Roads, the Governor and the Legislature.

Cooperation with the Rural Futures Institute and director Chuck Schroeder was also stressed.

Marilyn Snodgrass welcomed the membership to the Orleans Hotel at any time but especially for the June meeting of the South Platte United Chambers of Commerce.

President Tim Anderson reviewed the new Legislative Session beginning in January. In cooperation with the Tri-Cities’ Chambers of Commerce, SPUCC will participate in a Legislative Day in March.

Tourism will be the main focus of the meeting in Orleans in June. It was suggested that the region’s state senators be invited to attend that meeting.

Jarrold McCartney mentioned that Don Macke of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship would be a good resource for any discussion about grassroots tourism. Don has been working with Red Cloud on its Heritage Tourism Economic Development initiative. Jarrod will provide Jean and Jay with Don Macke’s contact information.

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 2:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jay Hall, Secretary