

**South Platte United Chambers of Commerce  
Board of Directors Meeting – ZOOM Conference  
Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – 4 p.m.**

The meeting was called to order by President Ron Tillery at 4:01 p.m.

Roll Call: Ron Tillery, Kelly Gewecke, Jean Isler, Kevin Poppe, Jeff Hofaker, Jay Hall  
There was a voting quorum.

Minutes from the prior meeting on December ....., which did not have a voting quorum with only three board members present, were not taken. However, two members provided helpful thoughts based on the meeting's discussion. Those thoughts are attached to these minutes. The Treasurer's Report was presented by Jean Issler. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes.

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by Jeff Hofaker with a Second by Kelly Gewecke. The motion to accept passed unanimously.

Future of SPUCC: discussion

The written thoughts provided by Dena Beck and Jeff Hofaker after the previous meeting were reviewed.

It was mentioned that some members have been less active with SPUCC business than they would wish. COVID was a complicating situation in many cases. Other important tasks and projects from members' organizations/businesses have taken precedence.

Dissolving SPUCC is both drastic and difficult, being an organization since the 1930s and being a 501 c 3 non-profit corporation. After dissolution it might become apparent that it once more is needed.

The virtual meetings by ZOOM because of the COVID pandemic have been both good and bad. The convenience of not having to travel long distances is a positive note. It was mentioned, however, that the travel time often is used for reflection on SPUCC matters.

Perhaps more relevance for SPUCC could be providing its members with the newsletters from the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce, of which SPUCC is a member. The newsletters could be emailed to SPUCC members and/or posted online. The state chamber also has online webinars. A good example of this will be the After COVID-19 webinar on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. A notice of that webinar is attached to these minutes. Relaying information from the state chamber is a service both to the state chamber and to SPUCC's members. Our members can be encouraged to join the state chamber.

Even with ZOOM meetings and the time-saving benefit of online meetings, people must often still choose between which meetings to attend. Weighing which meeting(s) provide the "most

bang for the buck” is still something that people take into consideration. SPUCC must strive to provide that “bang”.

Looking at involving more younger people was stressed as a positive move. The next generation of businesspeople needs to be served by an organization such as SPUCC in order to stay relevant. This idea is good but the question remains, “How does SPUCC successfully implement this drive to serve younger people?” The Central District of the Nebraska Development Network was referred to as a good example of providing needed and wanted assistance to local businesses. A summary of the Central District NDN is attached to these minutes.

The increase in sales on the local, small town level in the SPUCC area was mentioned as a positive sign. The COVID pandemic has led people to shop closer to home. SPUCC needs to provide service and information to businesses on a level seen as being “closer to home”. Statistics about local sales is attached to these minutes.

Referring once again to the younger generation of businesspeople, it was mentioned that Connecting Young Nebraskans is an organization that is an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation and that Dena Beck has quite a lot of firsthand knowledge of. Perhaps moving to strengthen ties with this organizations would be good. Kelly Gewecke will have a conversation with Dena Beck about CYN and they will report back to the board of directors. The process of sharing information between colleagues, i.e. networking, was stressed as important. Face-to-face SPUCC meetings have, in the past, served this beneficial purpose. Perhaps the forms of networking have changed. Round table sharing has worked in the past. Perhaps there are new forms of networking that SPUCC needs to look at. Using a “list serve” form of email communication that allows participants to throw out information or questions to that list and thus share with many other colleagues works well in many instances. Once again, consulting with younger businesspeople can be key for finding communication forms that are effective seems to be a key to success. An overarching question for the board of directors is, “Who can do this work?” That is, who has the time, the skills and the connections. Once more the board members figuratively turned to Dena Beck and Connecting Young Nebraskans. In talking about communication, questions came up about the internet and broadband communication. Speed and reliability are necessary but lacking in many rural communities. Kevin Poppe who works with Great Plains Communication referred to the new laws that included sections dealing with broadband. It is not completely clear what the new laws will lead to, Of course improving the internet/broadband infrastructure by providing fiber optic cable connections is considered key.

Summarizing: Kelly Gewecke will speak with Dena Beck about cooperation with Connecting Young Nebraskans. Perhaps a meeting with CYN representatives can be set up. Ron Tillery suggested that the board of directors aim for a ZOOM meeting next month, February, together with CYN.

Membership Dues of \$350 to the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce was discussed. Ron Tillery asked if there was consensus on continuing membership and paying the \$350 annual dues. There was unanimous consensus to remain a member and to pay the dues.

Facebook statistics were provided by Jean Issler. Visits to the page were very rare. The statistics for Facebook are attached to these minutes.

There was a brief discussion about paying the fee to Facebook to “boost” the distribution of an interesting article and allowing more people in our region receive the information. The first step is finding an interesting article to boost. Perhaps the state chamber’s next “legislative update” newsletter would be a good choice. Besides using the “boost” function through Facebook, it was stressed that each of us can share that update with our colleagues and friends.

Kelly Gewecke, who works for the Nebraska Department of Economic Development has been given special recognition for her work. The SPUCC board of directors congratulated Kelly. A press release from NE DED is attached to these minutes.

Ron Tillery asked Jean Issler to formulate a Doodle poll to ascertain a good time and date for the next board of directors meeting in February.

The allotted time on ZOOM was running out. Therefore, President Ron Tillery adjourned the meeting at 4:43 p.m.

**Notes/Minutes respectfully submitted,**

***Jay Hall***

**Secretary, Board of Directors**

**South Platte United Chambers of Commerce**