

Neligh Chamber of Commerce Meeting Minutes 11/12/2024

Present: Jill Kallhoff, Rich Burgess, Diane Brugger, Steve Simonsen, Kelli Garcia

Absent: Klint Arnold, Laurie Larsen

Guests: Tammy Struebing, Lauren Sheridan-Simonsen

President Jill called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

Diane motioned to approve the October minutes as presented, seconded by Steve. All in favor. Motion approved.

Steve motioned to approve the October bills and treasurer's report, seconded by Rich. All in favor. Motion approved.

Steve told the board he ordered new gloves and a hat for Santa, which cost about \$30.

No new board members were presented for consideration. Diane mentioned a discussion with Hilltop Community Pharmacy for a potential board position.

Lauren presented the chamber report stating Ladies Night is November 14, and AMH will use the chamber/ED office for women's health and aesthetic services. The FBLA will set up the Christmas lighting display at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 17. The Christmas Lighting Contest judging will occur December 9-15 in three categories: religious, residential, and commercial. Each winner will receive a \$100 credit on their city electric bill. The Great Elf Hunt begins on November 29. Snap a photo of a receipt at a participating business for a \$25 or more purchase, and don't forget to get a picture of the elf, too! All eligible entries will be included in a drawing for \$300 in Big Bucks on December 20! The total chamber hours year to date as of 10/31/2024 841/1000. Steve motioned to accept the chamber report, second by Rich. All in favor. Motion approved.

Lauren presented the ED report, sharing the new doors and windows recently installed in the office. She reported on a loan request for the Market Rate Housing Revolving Loan Fund for the apartment building at 105 D St. for \$125,000, which is on the council agenda for approval that evening. She reported that the six apartments range in rent from \$500 to \$800, and the current owner will completely renovate the apartments. The Memory Tree will be back for the season but will be delayed because of the accident that damaged the electrical service in place. Applications from Next Step Counseling for façade and digital façade grants and an electric incentive application from Grammy's Kitchen are also on the council agenda for that evening. A new bike repair station from the NE Game & Parks should be installed within the month at the southside of the Rainbow Fountain. A ribbon cutting and open house will occur at Blackstrap Inc. on Friday, November 15, and a ribbon cutting was held at the Grace Lutheran Childcare Facility on November 2. In Clearwater, Lauren reported the Veterans Park fundraiser was highly successful, and the DED community visit by a team of ten went great. She also noted that the new, third location of the Kidz Korner Clubhouse is nearing completion and will be the same owner's third in-home two facility in Clearwater.

The board discussed the summary of the ED-Chamber executive committee meeting, including Loren Kucera from the Nebraska Business Development Center, on October 24 for the Assistant Director position. The consensus was to restructure the position to 25 hours weekly, 1,300 hours total, with a 600 chamber /700 ED split. The position will be staffed part-time weekly (M, Tu., Th. F) and a full day on Wednesday. The position will include limited benefits for holidays, vacation, personal, and sick leave earned by the hours worked. The position's estimated cost per hour is \$26-\$30. The contract will be updated by the city attorney and presented to the council for approval at the December 10 meeting. Diane motioned to recommend a \$25 wage cap and a 50/50 split with the ED office for an annual contribution of \$16,250 and a yearly cost of living increase set by the city council. Steve seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passes.

The board discussed the potential new membership for NE-Leigh Farm and Hilltop Community Pharmacy and welcomed Next Step Counseling.

Steve spoke about Novemberfest, reporting the turnout was about half last year. Better marketing for future events was advised. The Husker home football game and lack of personal visits to businesses also contributed to the decline in attendance—those there were reported to have had a great time. Steve will meet with Klint and work on the P&L for the December meeting. Steve also said the volunteers and the entertainment were great.

The board discussed holding Chamber After Hours on a Wednesday in December, using leftover Novemberfest. Diane offered to host at AMH and will work on the special designated liquor license.

The board addressed the Parade of Lights and its sponsors, advertising, line-up, and start times. Diane suggested the chamber do something like the NYMC setting up the PA west of the courthouse.

Rich made a motion to adjourn at 12:59 p.m., seconded by Steve. All were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned.