

**Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce**  
**Thursday, June 6, 2024**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**

**Board members present:** Brian Dunn, Meghann Walk, Jerry Hayes, Don Tollefson, Arlis Duncan, Bobby Stricker, Sarah Woodbury, James Soule

**Staff present:** Belita Paluay, Julie Baker

**Guests:** Donna Bowen, Jim Westerfield

Abby shared an update on Britt's escrow process on the US Hotel, thanking the group for their advocacy. Donna recommended researching FEMA grants for earthquake retrofitting for historic buildings.

### **Current Business**

Brian shared that the Wine Trolley has already sold around 500 tickets and earned \$12,000 in revenue in its first five weeks of service this year. Revenue is meeting the proposed business plan that was submitted to the city and in the budget. Due to the only other West Coast wine trolley suspending service, Jacksonville now has the only wine trolley on the West Coast. Brian shared some ideas for incentivizing Friday riders.

Belita recapped the Parade of Inns - it was a huge success with 161 tickets (\$6,040 in revenue) sold. Belita recommends a third annual parade of inns, but we would need a volunteer chair from the board or the lodging community. Notably, tickets were sold at the last minute.

Julie reported that she's reorganizing the VIC and updating signage. She shared that the brochure display is slightly more complicated than previously understood. The VIC needs a new refrigerator.

Jerry shared that the combined trolley income for the month of May was \$7,684.50. Discussion ensued regarding private events, trolley ticket pricing, and tracking results.

Belita shared that Jacksonville will be featured with a two-page spread in Via Magazine's fall issue. We are also partnering with Travel Oregon to understand more about money that's being spent with merchants in town. Sarah and Jerry both reported that income is up in their businesses; Sarah said business is up around 20% from last year. The website redo has been narrowed down to two teams, with a decision pending mid-month. The new website will launch in September. Belita is building a Chamber facebook group, and asked the board if anyone would be willing to serve as the moderator; Sarah volunteered to take that role on. Belita also shared that WED is creating ripples of reconnection within the community, which is very positive. It's also giving us the opportunity to connect with other Chambers. Belita and Julie recently hosted the head of Travel Oregon for a day in Jacksonville.

## **New Business**

Brian updated the group on the Bylaws Refinement project. Brian clarified that we have bylaws and standing rules, which govern different things. He distributed copies of the bylaws to the group and asked everyone to read them and provide feedback to him and Arlis, with the goal of integrating feedback from the group next month. Brian gave a brief overview of the changes, including adding the new mission statement, updating procedural dates to reflect the new fiscal year, and moving some items to the standing policies.

The next event will be the 1851 Gold Rush Run on September 28. Belita urged the group to look over the new event guidelines for all new events. While this event is an excellent community event and Helena Lopez has driven it, Belita requested that the group reevaluate the event before its third year in 2025.

The following event will be the Haunted Trolley. The current priority is recruiting volunteers while there's excitement and vibrancy in town. The first meeting for planning will take place June 11, 5pm. Jerry also reminded everyone that the Haunted Trolley is the biggest fundraiser of the year.

Brian updated the group on the Jacksonville Holiday Lights Tour. At a recent meeting, Bobby Stricker and Amy Kranenburg agreed to co-chair this new event. The idea is to bring the tour to Jacksonville. Five major entities have already signed up to install holiday lights on their properties. Brian Roberts suggested sticking with the narrated trolley route for the tour, so the drivers don't have to learn a new route and the neighbors are already accustomed to trolleys passing by. Discussion ensued regarding viable options. Ideally, the Chamber aims to recruit 30 participants. The Medford lights tour is sold out every year, so Brian hypothesized that this could be a major revenue driver. Meghann suggested that perhaps some days the route could begin somewhere outside Jacksonville (for example, the mall).

Belita outlined the upcoming September Grant Requests, asking the group to consider projects to submit to the TLT.

Donna Bowen inquired about continuing the display of the "Victorian Christmas" marquee signage in front of City Hall throughout the holiday season. Brian and Belita shared that a conversation has been ongoing with Jeff Alvis about purchasing those signs, and the Chamber can store them. Discussion ensued regarding ways to promote Victorian Christmas earlier throughout the year.

## **Open Forum**

James thanked Donna for her presence. James brought up the subject of an EV charging station. Donna shared that the funding/incentives got cut, but infrastructure is in place already (wiring ready to go near Public Works). Signage and fines have been discussed. The Library has also applied for one EV space in their parking lot. There are already a few around town in

private parking lots, but this is a high demand from visitors. Brief discussion ensued regarding pickleball courts, with more information to follow.

The meeting adjourned at 9:32am.