



541-843-0985  
P.O. Box 33  
Jacksonville, OR 97530  
[jacksonvilleoregon.org](http://jacksonvilleoregon.org)

**Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce  
Thursday, August 1, 2024  
Minutes**

**Board members present:** Jerry Hayes, Brian Dunn, Arlis Duncan, Abby McKee, Meaghann Walk, Bobby Stricker (on Zoom), Don Tollefsen

**Guests:** Paul Faubion, Eileen Bobek

**Staff:** Belita Palu-ay, Julie Baker

**Current Business**

Jerry requested that the minutes be sent out after board meetings.

Brian shared the Wine Trolley Update, with lots of details about sign ups, etc. Over 700 tickets have been sold since the start of the season. Fridays seem like higher numbers of riders than the rest of the week. One of the trolleys broke down during one of the hot days. Discussion ensued regarding exactly what happened with the trolley and how to regroup when breakdowns happen.

Julie shared the VIC Center & Trolley Update. Julie shared that both trolleys broke down at various points in the last month, and each has been repaired. The board briefly discussed the age of the trolleys. Jerry also shared that two days of service were canceled because we did not have drivers. Ads are out to hire additional drivers. Jerry highlighted that we are currently heavily reliant on the trolley for revenue, and that currently we are suffering from lack of driver coverage at times. Given that these are part-time jobs, it can be tough to ask for consistent scheduling. The requirements for trolley drivers is a Commercial Driver's License and one year's experience with a CDL. Julie and Brian will call First Student to see if any school bus drivers would be a good fit for substitute drivers and other summer part time work.

Belita shared that the website is underway. The Marketing Committee will be heavily engaged in the development of the website. The 1851 Gold Rush Run is the next event, and Belita shared some of the awesome sponsors that Helena Lopez has recruited for the event. There's brainstorming underway on how to get run participants in downtown stores and restaurants after the event. Volunteers will be needed for the event. Julie will follow up with Helena.



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Jerry shared the monthly financials. Currently, expenses are outpacing income, but about \$53K in grants are on the way. Significant expenses have included our marketing action plan, which was a known expense and investment that is largely covered by grants. The account is fine on cash flow, and the bottom line looks like we will be fine at the end of the year.

Brian shared that the Bylaws will be finalized and formalized by the Executive Committee. The standing rules will also need to be updated. Everything is on track to get that done.

Bobby shared an update on the Jacksonville Holiday Lights Tour. Bobby shared that plenty of folks have agreed to join, and are awaiting next steps. Brian shared that most participants would like to have their lights installed and taken down, which the Chamber will need to pay for. There is already an expense budget of \$10-20,000 for lighting installation. Discussion ensued regarding grants that might support those expenses. If people own their own lights, the Chamber will pay for the installation. If folks are happy to install the lights themselves, the Chamber may be able to pay for those lights. Belita needs to submit the special event packet to the city within this month, which is the next step of the event. Bobby will work with Belita on that packet. Next week's WED meeting will include a discussion about the lights tour with the retailers downtown.

Belita has engaged a PR firm for general marketing. That firm has compiled a list of responses for commonly asked questions so that we're on message, in particular related to the cancellation of the Haunted Trolley for this season. The key message is that we are conserving resources to devote toward Victorian Christmas and the Holiday Lights Tour, and that there is a PAUSE on the Haunted Trolley.

Belita updated the group on September grants: license plate grants (up to \$50K) and the Transient Lodging Tax (late September deadline). License Plate grants (Travel Oregon) this year are really to promote wine and cuisine this year. Abby suggested focusing the license plate grant on underwriting part of the marketing budget for the year.

Belita also shared that the city is comfortable with us redirecting the \$2,500 grant that was initially planned for new promotional flags. Conversation ensued regarding what those funds should be allocated toward. We need to determine that by the end of September. There was conversation about replacing the flag hardware throughout downtown, or use for downtown beautification with live flowers.



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## **New Business**

### Victorian Christmas

- Jerry shared that the first parade organizational meeting has taken place. 15 groups have signed up to participate already. This year, the suggestion was made to put the MC stand on the balcony of the US Hotel. Abby will find out from her production team whether Britt could provide the sound system for the parade.
- Julie updated everyone on the status of the Tree Lighting. Jerry suggested that the tree lighting script needs to be updated and refreshed. Don has the script, and the Marketing Committee will take on updating the script. The City is also planning to purchase the Victorian Christmas marquee for full-season installation at City Hall. Conversation opened about whether to purchase a marquee that's slightly more generic (Jacksonville, for example).

Julie shared that 13 members have not paid dues. Discussion ensued whether the chamber should assess late fees or simply pull unpaid members off the website. Eileen shared that a fee feels less incentivizing than removing members from the website and marketing materials.

Jerry raised the issue of needing a Vice President to fill out the Executive Committee. Belita shared that it would be useful to establish an onboarding process for new board members. Even current board members would benefit from onboarding, and it will allow members to help recruit new board members. Discussion ensued regarding the size of the board, aiming for something like 9 or 7 total board members, instead of the 12-member board currently reflected in the bylaws.

The board briefly discussed the desire to have a business person or chamber member to run for City Council.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:34.