jacksonville
OREGON

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Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce

February 12, 2026

Attending: Julie Baker (VIC), Meghann Walk (Secretary), Bobby Stricker (President), Mary Murphy, Juliana Houeling, Arlis Ducan, Amy Kranenburg, Sarah Woodbury, Don Litchfield (Executive Director), Jerry Hayes (Treasurer) Christian Hamilton

Guests: Melynda and Eric Cordis

January 2026 minutes approved.

- **True Crime Summit** Melinda Cordis and Eric Cordis, owners of UMC Black Car Service, presented on their business, which operates as a true livery service with discreet black vehicles, catering to high-end clientele and the people of Jacksonville. They are sponsoring the first Southern Oregon True Crime Summit, an event taking place on May 15th and 16th at Bigham Knoll. It is expected to draw over 200 attendees. The summit will feature 13 speakers with proceeds benefiting Jackson County SART and the K9 cadaver unit in Crescent City. The event is promoting Jacksonville businesses by not having vendors and encouraging attendees from across the country to shop locally. Tickets are currently being sold online for the 18-and-over event.
- **Marketing Strategy and Communications:** Key marketing efforts include plans to reenact the newsletter and improve other communication devices for the membership. The marketing committee formalized its actions, with a continued push for digital engagement, specifically working on TLT strategies to connect with drive-in markets and encourage overnight stays. Bobby Stricker also mentioned that budget coordination is needed with Don Lfield from the marketing committee to provide a financial representative.
- **Motion: Culpepper & Merriweather Circus Partnership, May 15th** The event is approved by the city and planning, pending Don Lfield submitting a final package to the city council. A motion to approve signing the contract for the circus was made and approved.

- **Treasury Report Summary for January** The treasury report, covering May 1st through January 31st, was presented, detailing that total income for January was $1,370, primarily from membership dues and a private trolley tour. Brian Roberts volunteered to join the Financial Committee.
- **Victorian Christmas Lights:** The Victorian Christmas project is currently at $19,851, which is 58% of projected costs, with more bills expected. A recent bill from Aaron Joe's window for the lights totaled $28,000, which is a 51% increase from the prior year's $25,000 cost, impacting cash flow significantly. The Chamber is currently sitting at $66,000 in the bank before this bill is paid, but they are expecting further city reimbursements, estimated to be around $20,000, for expenses through December.
- **Discussion on Expanding Holiday Lights:** The idea of adding lights to the second level of buildings on California Street was discussed, with Bobby Stricker noting that the city is open to funding a more permanent silhouette skyline.
- **Trolley Repairs** An issue with the power steering on the green trolley, Wally, was reported, as parts are difficult to find, though Brian Roberts has been managing the repairs. The Chamber is involved in the Pear Blossom parade again this year
- **Lunar New Year** Celebrations will take place will take place the weekend of the 21st. Don Lfield put up the lanterns and the correct Lunar New Year banner.
- **Wine Trolley:** A meeting was held with the Jacksonville Wine District to discuss changes to the agreement. The proposed change involves raising the wine trolley ticket price to $30, with $5 of each ticket credited back to the wineries to cover the cost of the complimentary tastings to cover the cost of the $500/winery established under the previous contract for marketing purposes. The goal is to add value to the tickets and drive traffic to the downtown wineries. Additional proposals include a $45 weekend pass to encourage overnight stays. The wineries also asked if the Chamber would accept $5,000 from two sponsors ($2,500 each). Don and the trolley staff will visit wineries to expand on their wine knowledge. The possibility of a branded glass was also raised.
- **Jacksonville Britt Proposal and TLT Grant Status** Jerry and Don attended the Planning Commission meeting, where the Britt proposal to proceed with new construction work was unanimously approved. Regarding the TLT grant, Don reported that they and Bobby Stricker had a productive work session to finalize the request, which is currently a high priority. Bobby Stricker mentioned a discussion with Tim Greg about the need for a community coordinator to unify

grant requests to the TLT, acknowledging that this would be a change from previous practices.

- **TLT Grant Marketing Strategy and Test Markets** The TLT grant application includes requests for standard print advertising and a targeted baggage claim billboard at the airport. The major new initiative is asking for funds for a drive-in test market in Bend and Portland to promote overnight stays, utilizing magazines like *Bend Magazine* and *Portland Monthly Magazine*.
- **Future of History Initiative** The Mayor is leading an initiative with the Jacksonville Historic LLC (Carolyn Kings North's organization) focused on the "future of history" in Jacksonville, ensuring its preservation and promotion as a key element of the town's charm. This effort will culminate in a two-to-three-hour conference in March, inviting various organizations and boosters for a brainstorming session on how each group and the collective can promote the town's history.
- **Executive Director Review and Permanent Hiring** A motion was made by Sarah Woodbury, seconded by Bobby Stricker, and unanimously approved to permanently hire Don Litchfield, the Executive Director, following the successful completion of the probationary period.
- **Departure of VIC Director:** Julie's departure was formally acknowledged, with thanks for their contributions and commitment to ensuring a transition. The issue of new board members and the need for a Vice President were brought up for future attention.
- **Seeking Legal Counsel for Contract Enforcement** Since Noel Burgess has not provided the contracted material, Bobby Stricker suggested leveraging a relationship with a Chamber member attorney, such as Ken Law or Campanella, to draft a "demand letter."
- **Motion & Approval, Bank Account:** Jerry Hayes motioned to add Don Lfield to People's Bank accounts (Account #1084 and #9478) and remove Julie Baker from those accounts. Arlis Duncan seconded. Unanimously approved.
- **Motion & Approval, Nonprofit Credit Line:** A motion was made by Jerry Hayes, seconded by Meghann Walk, and unanimously approved to pursue a $30,000 nonprofit credit line from People's Bank. Don Litchfield will follow up.

Notes created by Gemini notetaker and edited by Meghann Walk, Secretary.