

Hotchkiss Community Chamber of Commerce

Monthly membership meeting

October 5, 2011 – 7:30 a.m. Hotchkiss Public Library

Present: President Nathan Sponseller (First State Bank,) Vice-President - Bill Long (TDS Telecom), Treasurer-- Rhonda Duclou (Hotchkiss Public Library), Corresponding Secretary - Katherine Colwell (Rivendell Retreat), Recording Sec. – Tom Wills (Wills Gallery and Used Books), Elsie Winnie (The Rose), Katie Gnauck (Hotchkiss Trading Company, Joanne Tullis (Creamery Arts Center), Elaine Brett (North Fork 20/20), Marshal Dan Miller (Town of Hotchkiss) and Debbie Cheeseman.

Chamber President, Nathan Sponseller, called the meeting to order.

Katie moved that the minutes of the September meeting as written by Tom, and proofed and e-mailed out by Katherine, were approved. The minutes are also available on the Hotchkiss Chamber website (www.hotchkisschamber.com).

Rhonda presented the Treasurer's report. Tom moved that the report be approved as presented. The general checking account showed a balance of \$2,386.57 and Special Projects stood at \$6,982.64 without the roofing repair being subtracted and the amount transferred back to checking. The motion to approve was seconded and approved by all.

Corresponding Secretary's Report

There are now 81 members in the Chamber with the recent addition of The Pour Farm and Beavers' Construction.

Katherine reported that she is working on procedures for keeping members apprised of upcoming events. Besides periodic e-mails, events are posted on the calendar on the chamber website. Events for sharing should be sent to chamberinfo@hotchkisschamber.com

Business Symposium Delayed

After some discussion it was decided due to timing and conflicts that the Saturday, October 22 business symposium on "Local Business Meets Local Government" would be delayed until January. Participants will be polled to see which Saturday that month will work for the greatest number.

Craft Fair/Holiday Promotion/Hotchkiss Bucks project

Rhonda, who is heading up the annual November 19, Chamber Craft Fair, reported that ballroom table spaces were almost sold out with side room spaces remaining.

Elsie Winne Edstrom, chair of the Downtown Merchants Committee, presented her plan to issue HOTchkiss Bucks (HB) during the holiday season. The idea is to keep more local money local by selling, at a 20% discount, the local currency that may be used at participating Hotchkiss merchants in increments (\$25). In other words one dollar's worth of HB would cost 80 cents. Sponsors including the Hotchkiss Chamber of Commerce, the North Fork Merchant Herald and 2 others will cover the subsidy. For the introductory test run up to \$1,500 in HB's will be sold

beginning on November 19 at the Chamber Craft Fair. Participating businesses would simply turn in the HB's spent with them and collect full dollar-for-dollar face value. All HB's would have to be spent by December 31st. The idea is modeled on a more extensive program that has been done in Crested Butte over the last few years.

Katie moved to help fund the HB program with \$300. Joanne seconded and the motion was approved.

Ride the Rockies

Nathan announced that the Ride the Rockies is exploring the possibility of making Hotchkiss a stop on their 2012 bicycle tour. No official decision will be announced until February of 2012 but the Chamber (Nathan) has been asked if they are willing to coordinate the stop as was done in 2009. The executive committee has agreed that the Chamber will commit to doing it again if RTR finalizes Hotchkiss as an official overnight stop on Sunday, June 10th.

Nathan will once again head up the effort. If you are willing to be a volunteer in some capacity please contact him through the First State Bank.

Elaine Brett suggested that the lead-up to the event be used as an opportunity to educate the public on the benefits of bicycling, economic and otherwise. Businesses, particularly local restaurants, are encouraged to tentatively note the date to stay open on their calendars for June 10, 2012.

Nathan also reminded those present that the Colorado Grand, a vintage sports car tour of the Rockies, would once again be stopping in Hotchkiss in September of 2012. This is always a major fundraiser for the Chamber and helps build our special projects account.

Orton Foundation Grant/ NF 20/20

Elaine Brett of North Fork 20/20 announced that the group's application for a \$100,000 Orton Foundation Heart and Soul of Community planning grant had been shortlisted with 4 other finalists from the West. Two western communities will be selected. The grant requires a \$25,000 local match.

Representatives from the Orton Foundation will tour the North Fork on October 13.

It was pointed out that if the grant is awarded to the North Fork the Chamber's delayed (until January) planning business symposium might fit well into the early part program to kick off a two year local planning process.

The next Chamber of Commerce regular meeting will be held on November 2 at 7:30 p.m. at the Hotchkiss Public Library (downstairs).

Respectfully submitted, Tom Wills - Recording Secretary