**West Liberty Business Association Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, July 13, 2022 at Mad River Farm Market at 5:30pm**

**In attendance**:

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| Heather Chamberlain, President | Theresa’s Gingerbread House |
| Linda Vernon, Vice President | Vernon Farms |
| Brittany McElroy, Treasurer | Civista Bank |
| Katie Neer, Secretary | Solomon’s Garage, Neer & Farm |
| Tami Cox, Member at Large | Country Friends  |
| Jill McKelvey | Mayor of West Liberty |
| Jayne Griffith | Village Council |
| Lee Chamberlain | Theresa’s Gingerbread House |
| Chad Pitcock | Civista Bank |
| Ryan Berry | Berry Digital Solutions |
| Steve Barth | Hickory Medical  |
| Lindsey McGlone | Elle A Design |
| Cindee Boyd | Village Clerk |
| Shane Oelker | American Fireworks (also Police Chief) |
| Jeff Stoner | Stoner’s Ice Cream Parlor |
| Jake Vitt | Logan Lawn & Landscaping |
| Jeff Vernon | Vernon Farms |

Board President Heather Chamberlain called the meeting to order.

Secretary Katie Neer read the **meeting** **minutes from June,** which had previously been emailed to membership. Tami moved to accept the minutes. Jill seconded it. Motion passed.

Treasurer Brittany McElroy provided the **Treasurer’s report**. See attached. There was an overall income of $1033.42 with total assets of nearly $14,000. Tami moved to accept the report. Jill seconded. Motion passed.

Jill reported on behalf of the **Village.**

* All businesses are encouraged to keep sidewalks and fronts of businesses cleaned up.
* Revival Design Studios meeting Aug 17 at 6pm Opera House - All are formally invited to attend (see attached invitation).
* Jill is writing a T-Mobile $50,000 grant by end of July (see attached Revitalization of West Liberty Downtown document). Matching funds will be needed, can be used for wayfare signs, tuckpointing bricks, awnings, business signage. The max will the $10k per business.
* CRA – Community Reinvestment Areas – see attached info.
* New Residents Meet & Greet Aug 18 5:30-6:30 Opera House – donations are needed from businesses to include in a welcome bag. 12 calendars have bene spoken for by businesses present to include. Drop checks made out to Columbus St Bridge Group to Cindee at the Village office to pay for the $10 calendars.
* Beautification Award – Residential and Commercial – make nominations by Aug 1 at <https://www.mywestliberty.com/beautification-award-nominations.html>
* Bridge Calendar and Merch – Jill passed around the calendar and a photo of some t-shirts that will come available for purchase in August.
* Broadband in the Village – Jill is working on this
* A 10 x 14 Gazebo coming to the north side of the Town Hall in the next couple weeks, can be sued for events, concerts, Santa, Easter Bunny, weddings, etc. Thanks to Sherry Barger for orchestrating this.
* Trick or Treat – Marie’s Candies has expressed concern about holding trick or treat on Saturdays, their busiest day of the week due to parking and traffic constraints. They would prefer to hold trick or treat in West Liberty on Thurs Oct 27 from 6-7:30pm. The Village Council, Mayor are not opposed to this and Mayor Jill is taking it to the County wide Mayor meeting to see if the county will move it or if perhaps just West Liberty will. Katie stated the business association should support moving trick or treat to Thursday evening if it helps one of our iconic businesses here in town. No one disagreed.
* Photographer – Mayor Jill suggested having a photographer take good quality photos during community events for social media, mywestliberty.com and perhaps to hang on canvases around town.
* Purple Heart Community – West Liberty is officially now a Purple Heart Community. Signage will be going up on 245 and 68 coming into town from all directions. There are purple heart videos on our website. There is parking off the township road and the parking and sidewalk is handicap accessible to the memorial.
* The Village Council is visiting local business owners, especially those that do not live within the Village. They have met with Stoner’s Ice Cream Parlor to kickoff the Ice Cream Trail and have met with Solomon’s Garage and Neer & Farm recently. They would love to meet with some of the other businesses – please contact them if you are interested in getting to know the Council better and sharing how the Village can help support small businesses like yours.

**Columbus Street Bridge Project** – Jayne reported that they are selling calendars and tshirts for this project and she and Jill will have a booth at Labor Day. Katie asked if they would hand out the remaining WLBA tote bags (approx. 140) that weekend and they said they could. Tami will collect donations for the bags at Country Friends.

**Business of the Month** – For review, this is the process. Council continues to nominate three businesses a month ahead and Mayor Jill then provides them to Katie Neer. Katie puts out a Google Form for voting and sends to all businesses on the email list. A business is selected based on popular vote at least 2 weeks prior to Village newsletter deadline. Katie gives this business name to Heather Chamberlain. Heather has created a form with questions for the selected business and provides this to the business. The business responds to this and provides some photos within a week and returns the info to Heather who compiles the write up the following week. Heather then sends the write up and photos to Cindee Boyd (vowlclerk@ctcn.net) for the village newsletter, and to Chris Anders (chris@berrydigitalsolutions.com) to put on mywestliberty.com and the Facebook page, and to bchapman@examiner.org for the Bellefontaine Examiner and udceditor@aimmediamidwest.com for the Urbana Citizen newspapers.

Also, promptly after selected, the business also needs to stop by Marie’s Candies with a stack of business cards and select a candy of the month. This will be the sample given away at Marie’s that month. Around the first of the month, the business will be formally recognized in a ribbon cutting-esque ceremony and receive from the Mayor and the Business Association a window sticker, a framed certificate, and the traveling Business of the Month plaque. All selected Businesses of the Month are then eligible for Business of the Year. Peoples Savings and Loan Co will be the Aug business of the month and they will officially be honored with the plaque, etc. Aug 1 at 11am.

**Member Spotlights - Katie** stated the membership renewal form that went out last October asked members if they would like to be featured in a member spotlight. About a dozen businesses would like to be featured. These will be placed on the mywestliberty.com page and Facebook page, and will be more brief than Business of the Month coverage. Ryan suggested that Katie send questions for this to Chris, he will make a form and help send them out to those businesses.

**Fireworks –** Shane Oelker attended the meeting on behalf of his part time job with American Fireworks who puts on the fireworks in West Liberty each year. This year was an $8000 show, the Village and the Township splits the bulk of the bill. WL Force and Lion’s Club contribute as well. Everyone involved would like to build up to a $12-15k show. Linda Vernon suggested the Business Association give at least $1000 towards the 2023 fireworks. Katie seconded that motion. Tami suggested the executive board meet and possibly discuss doing more. Ryan said they could put an online donation on the mywestliberty.com and we should appeal to local businesses to donate towards this cause. Shane said they had a record turnout for the fireworks this year and he feels a lot of that was due to the successful Street Fair/car show, in addition to the Ball Tournament and Lion’s Club fish fry. The fireworks order will be placed and contract signed in Jan/Feb. Funds are needed by then.

**Events –** Tami Cox reported on various upcoming events.

* **Fall Open Houses – Sept 9&10 –** WLBA will advertise this event thru various channels and make sure we have food trucks in town. Store owners are encouraged to have sales, sidewalk sales, extended hours, etc. to encourage shopping and make this event a success.
* **Christmas Tree Decorating & Silent Auction** – Cindee Boyd will head this up once again. The WLBA will pay for the trees and Cindee will ask various businesses to decorate the trees. Then they will be on display in the Town Hall for a silent auction anddistributed the night of the Christmas parade.
* **Decorating the Library Window by Nov 1 –** Heather and TGH III will be in charge of decorating the library window for the Christmas season from Nov 1 thru Nov 30.Tami from Country Friends and Katie from Neer & Farm said they would be more than happy to loan out Christmas décor for this project if it would help.
* **Snowflake Basket -** Katie will send out an email soliciting donations for the snowflake basket (as well as the small business Saturday Amex bags and the remaining 140 mywestliberty tote bags). Businesses are asked to donate a cute Christmas item for the snowflake basket by Nov 1. The basket will be placed in the library window and raffle tickets will be sold the month of November at participating locations. On Cyber Monday (the Monday after Thanksgiving), the winner of the Snowflake Basket will be announced on the mywestliberty Facebook page. Village merch and splash pad shirts will be included in basket per Jill.
* **Christmas in the Village Open Houses – Nov 4&5 -** This event will kick off the Christmas shopping season in the Village. WLBA will advertise thru various avenues. Food trucks will be in town this weekend.
* **Small Business Friday & Saturday Nov 25 & 26 -** Small Business tote bags from AMEX will be handed out by the Christmas elf (Ava Chamberlain) at Sweetie Pie’s Coffee Shop on these days. Donations of coupons, goodies to include in these bags to entice shoppers into your stores can be dropped off by Nov 18 to Country Friends of Ohio to be stuffed in the bags. Provide at least 50 of each item.
* **Christmas in the Village Parade & Santa Nov 25& 26 –** Brittany McElroy will organize the parade this year, the parade may be in first come first serve order. We will not line up as early as last year. Volunteers are needed to assist. Santa will ride into town on a fire truck or similar and then meet and greet children in the Opera House following. Ava will hopefully dress as an elf for this occasion and give away gifts. Cindee stated we need more gifts this year. The stockpile is running low. Jill and Jayne suggested having hot chocolate with Santa and coloring sheets (designed by Elle A Design) on Saturday at the gazebo or in the Opera House. They will work to organize that.
* **Christmas Tour of Homes –** Due to her pregnancy, Katie will hand over the planning of the tour to Heather this year. We plan to focus on area Airbnbs. Jake Vitt volunteered to assist in planning. Katie will work to meet with the committee in the next week or so in order to book the airbnbs before they fill up for that day.
* **Thank a Bank Day -** Linda is arranging to have a food truck in town sometime in August in honor of Peoples being the Business of the Month.

**Secretary Position –** Katie Neer is due to have a baby in Nov/Dec timeframe and would like to step down from the secretary role for a while. Nominations for secretary can be submitted to our President, Heather Chamberlain.

Heather stated volunteers are needed to achieve all our goals as an organization.

 Linda moved to adjourn the meeting. Tami seconded it.

**\*Next month’s meeting will not be on the second Thursday due to the Champaign Co Fair. Date is TBD. Stay tuned for an email update of date and time.**

Thank you,

Katie Neer

WLBA Secretary