

West Liberty Business Association

Thursday, January 14, 2021 at Liberty Gathering Place

In attendance: Mitch Lingrell (LT's Uniquities,) Roberta Yoder (Bobbi's Bungalow,) Tami Cox (Country Friends of Ohio,) Linda Vernon (Vernon Farm,) Katie Neer (Solomon's Garage and Neer & Farm,) Alex and Brandy Nicholson (Salon 1926,) Mindie Fish (LMT,) Gary Weaver (Civista Bank,) Stacy Rees (Neer and Farm,) and Jill McKelvey (West Liberty Village Council)

Business items:

Roberta read the minutes from the December meeting. Mitch moved to accept the minutes as written. Linda seconded it. Motion passed. Mitch reviewed the financial report in Jon's absence. \$3,222 was received in December for downtown lighting sponsorships and from the Tour of Homes. Expenses included advertising for the tour of homes for a total of \$190. WLBA ends the year with a balance of \$11,342.44. Tami moved that we accept the financial report as given. Gary seconded it. Motion passed.

Events committee report – We are planning a Fab-Fit-Fun Friday event (Name changed to **Fit & Fun Friday** due to a box subscription of the same name) on **Friday, February 26th from 2-6 pm at The Grove**. Vendors will be set up both in person and tabletop displays that reflect the healthy theme. We are looking for downtown businesses to join us and stay open during this time. We are seeking a food truck that might want to set up in front of The Grove. Contact Linda if anyone is interested.

Events are being considered for March and April outside of Neer & Farm with a food truck and vendors.

Farmer's Market was discussed. It was noted that it is not just fruits and veggies but local vendors like a street fair. Jill offered the park near the Splash Pad as a great location. Multiple locations have been offered and a rotation was suggested. Mindie suggested a passport idea with setting the location in advance and listed on the passport. She also suggested a calendar with our events on it. It was decided this was a great idea to consider at the end of the year, but it was too late for 2021.

Alex and Brandy reported on their new salon opening soon – **Salon 1926** – named so because there has been a salon in that location since 1926. They are updating it, and Brandy already has a following. They also reported that a health food store called **Macky's Health Food Market** is opening next to them in the old trophy store. They have an existing store in Wapakoneta and plan to open in February.

Jill reported that they will need a large map of the village and shops/restaurants, etc. for the enclosed sign at the park off the bike path with a QR code that would put the map in their phones. Council is going to paint tiger paws on the streets leading from the bike path to downtown. WLBA will continue to work up getting an updated map and rack cards for the year.

Katie reminded that businesses should claim their business listing on Google so their shops show up on the Google map, and to make sure that their store hours are listed and kept current. Consistent hours help other stores refer customers to you. Neer & Farm is planning on re-opening on February 9th. She would like to have one day a week stay open until 7pm and would encourage other businesses to do the same on the same night. She is considering Thursdays.

Membership drive – Mitch asked the group how we can encourage others in the community to get involved. Ideas were tossed around. Jill commented on how the community is growing and complimented the WLBA on what is being accomplished and how we are working well with Council. Gary asked about sponsorship tiers. Mitch will head up a membership committee to review the ideas presented for the 2022 year. Jill and Mindie agreed to be on the committee. Gary offered to help when he is available. Mitch moved that we begin increasing base dues in 2021 going from \$50 to \$100. Linda seconded. Motion passed.

Annual Dinner – Mitch wants to hold it since we cancelled it in 2020 due to COVID. It will be held on Tuesday, April 13th. We need a facility. Ideas included Opera House, Markin Farms, Jones Country store, one of the castles.

Linda would like the WLBA to host a half day business training event. Suggestions are welcome.

Jill reported from Council. She asked that we move the Fire Sales in 2021 only for a memorial event they are planning to honor Sherman Ricketts, a fallen officer. They are dedicating a park at the triangle section near the bike path. The Splash Pad location will be giving out bike helmets and promoting the bike path. **Mitch moved that we move the Fire Sales in 2021 to Saturday, May 22nd**. Katie seconded it. Motion passed.

Council is working on a sidewalk to Marie's, flashing crosswalks around town, enhancements to the park, and a water dispenser at town hall for bicyclers. Council has two foggers for disinfecting that businesses can use. Churches have been using them. Council can also get masks and disinfectant. Contact Cindee at the village office if interested. Mitch thanked Jill and Council for working with us.

Mitch moved that the WLBA make a \$200 donation to the WL Ball Association on behalf of Bob Griffith's passing. Katie seconded it. Motion passed.

Roberta announced that she is opening a store called **Heaven's Dew Agriculture and Healthy Home**. It will be at the Yoder Concrete site south of town and will focus on products to help people live healthier lives. She hopes to be open for the Fit & Fun event.

Mitch moved to adjourn the meeting. Katie seconded it.

***Next month's meeting is on Thursday, February 11th at Liberty Gathering Place.**

Roberta Yoder
WLBA Secretary