

**West Liberty Business Association - Meeting Minutes**  
February 11, 2016, 7:30a.m. @ Coffee Matters Coffeehouse

**Present:** Officers: President, Margaret Hager (A Needle Pulling Thread), Vice President, Diana Wilkins (Kara Lynn's), Treasurer, Julie Bodenmiller (Civista Bank), Secretary, Katie Neer (Solomon's Garage), Members: Sherry Forsythe (Highland Country Store), Ryan Berry (Berry Digital Solutions), Chris Anders (Berry Digital Solutions), Tami Wenger (Gloryland Ministries, Project Teddy Bear), Roberta Yoder (Yoder Concrete Construction), Rebecca Marker-Smith (Green Hills), Michelle Neer (MCC Thrift), Malia Hughes (Realtor, Marketplace), Colton Lowry (Edward Jones)

**Minutes:** The December minutes that Katie emailed out were approved.

**Financial Report:** Julie provided the most current Financial Report dated Feb 2, 2016. The current bank balance is \$3,659.70. Julie reported there is an outstanding check to Honest Print from last August for \$360.40. Katie said she will contact Tommy Yoder to see how to proceed.

**Website:** Chris Anders provided some website analytics. For the month of January there were 629 different people who viewed the site, and 3244 page views. About 150 visitors were from West Liberty but they were responsible for 2300 page views. West Liberty residents are using the site for local info. 43% of traffic came from google. Questions are often submitted on the site and fielded by WLBA members as well.

**Advertising:** We continue to get more website traffic from Urbana than Bellefontaine and would like to revisit our decision to not advertise events in the Urbana Paper. It was discussed for future events to boost event pages on Facebook especially in the Urbana area and possibly print ads in the River Current, Mechanicsburg and Indian Lake Currents. Malia Hughes reiterated that she usually gets good response from those sources. Malia also suggested advertising in the County Classifieds and that often nonprofit organizations can receive a discount in that publication.

**Spring Fling:** Ryan and Chris will prepare a Facebook post to target the Urbana area for the Spring Fling. It will be held March 18 & 19. Diana suggested a theme of springy hats. It was approved. Anyone wearing a hat is eligible for discounts at participating locations. All store owners are encouraged to dress up for the Fling, downtown or not. Malia will be sure the Marketplace participates. Diana will work with Bob Chapman to get a color ad in the Examiner.

**Christmas:** While discussing the Spring Fling, Roberta and Margaret suggested we cover storefront windows with paper and reveal all at once at the Christmas preview, November 5th. Margaret saw Kenton do this last year and it was very effective. Out of town businesses can sponsor empty storefronts like Urbana did for the MSD Gala contest last year, Katie suggested. We will be sure the street Christmas decorations are up by that weekend as well. Must coordinate with Bob Rabenstein and Mark Nelson.

**Annual Dinner Meeting:** The WLBA Annual Dinner meeting will be held Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm. We discussed that it has been very crowded the last couple years at LGP and we anticipate this event growing. We brainstormed larger locations. Rebecca suggested Foundation Hall at Green Hills. That was

approved. Green Hills will prepare the food, similar to what we had at LGP. Rebecca will provide a quote next week. We decided to look for sponsorships for the meal. Businesses are welcome to sponsor the meal then WLBA members can attend for free. We feel this will be a great way for successful businesses to give back to the community and for businesses that can't always attend the meal to participate. We will have 4 centerpieces from Marie's Candies and 4 centerpieces from the Marketplace.

New officers will be elected that evening. Website ad silent auction will take place. We will reuse our displays from last year for bidding on website pages but we will also prepare a stat sheet to have at each seat, and to be mailed out in advance with the invitation. The silent auction will close at the end of the meeting that evening. Winners will be announced the next day.

Malia and Margaret will speak with Jason Duff to see if he could be our guest speaker this year. Additionally, during the meal, Ryan and/or Chris will speak on the website and traffic generated by ads last year. Tami Wenger and Colton Lowry will provide an update on the Bicentennial plans for July 2017. And the Historical Society will provide an update on the Town Hall renovation.

**Spotlight Business of the Week:** Please watch [mywestliberty.com](http://mywestliberty.com) for updates in March. We will soon have a form submission of 10-20 questions about your business. You can submit answers/photos at any time and then be featured as the "Spotlight Business of the Week". Businesses will be featured on a first come first serve basis. Businesses are welcome to offer sales or specials during their spotlight week. We hope this will boost traffic to everyone's establishments.

**Other:**

- Those interested are encouraged to get involved with the Bicentennial committee. Their next meeting is Feb 23, 6:30pm at Town Hall.
- Julie will soon obtain the 28" x 10' double sided white with black letter banner reading "[www.mywestliberty.com](http://www.mywestliberty.com)", and in small print, "brought to you by West Liberty Business Association"...from W Productions. This will be hung across Detroit St whenever a banner is not up.
- Julie shared a thank you note from the Woods family for the donation from the soup dinner at Christmas.
- West Liberty brochures are nearly gone. We will need to have updated ones printed.
- There will be another no sales tax day in August this year.

Margaret made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Katie seconded it. **Our next meeting will be March 10, 2015 at 7:30a.m. at Liberty Gathering Place.**