**West Liberty Business Association –** Meeting Minutes, October 6, 2016, 7:30 a.m. @ Sweetie Pie’s

**Present:** Officers: President Ryan Berry (Berry Digital Solutions), Vice President Chris Anders (Berry Digital Solutions), Treasurer Mark Boyer (Shine FM), Secretary Katie Neer (Solomon’s Garage), Members: Sherry Forsythe (Highland Country Store), Tami Wenger (Gloryland Ministries, Project Teddy Bear), Michelle Neer (MCC Thrift), Margaret Hager (A Needle Pulling Thread), Roberta Yoder (Bobbi’s Bungalow and Yoder Concrete), Nancy Spragen (Library), Susan Schuster (Tour of Homes subcommittee), Alex Dye (The Grove), Nancy Smith (Christmas in the Village / Santa)

**Membership:** Mark Boyer pointed out that we need to make some corrections on the website with who paid the $25 for the active link to their website and who actually has an active link. Chris Anders will make the needed corrections. Mark also pointed out we have 40 local businesses listed on the directory that aren’t currently members and we should reach out to them for membership. There are many benefits for the businesses to become involved.

We need to work to spend the money in the WLBA account to further benefit WLBA members. We need to encourage members to shop local as much as possible. The association is open to member feedback on ways to spend the money.

**Tour of Homes:** The Tour of Homes will be next Saturday, Oct 15, 12-4pm, the same day as the Adriel Quilt Auction. Katie, Margaret and Susan reported on the event. On tour will be the Town Hall, Bobbi’s Bungalow, the Mac-A-Cheek Castle, the Moell home, the Carroll home, and the Gratz home (former Pioneer House). Tri fold brochures will be printed yet this week by Main Graphics in Urbana. We have $675 from sponsorships to help pay for the event advertising. There will be a homeowner/tour guide meeting held Thurs, Oct 13 at 5:30pm at Green Hills near Foundation Hall. Planks Pizza will be served. A preview tour will take place following the meeting. Sponsor signs and carpet runners will be placed during the preview tour. Roberta asked for a couple brochures at her location since she will have some people attending the open house only and she would like to have something to help direct them to the tour. Katie will provide those. Mark Boyer suggested we take some photos of people touring homes to use on Facebook blasts next year. Alex Dye suggested we set up a table at the tailgate Friday night at Adriel to advertise the tour of homes. Margaret will do that.

**Christmas preview:** Businesses will be set up for Christmas by the weekend of the preview, Nov 4 & 5, if not before. Ryan and Chris will create a Facebook event for this. The greenhouse will be open that weekend.

**Christmas in the Village:** Nancy Smith said that Jim Hoffman has agreed to be Santa Claus again and she will need some money for gifts. A budget of $50 for gifts was approved, but Katie said if more money is needed to let us know.

Katie will make sure Bob Rabenstein puts the mywestliberty.com banner back up over Detroit St and then puts up Christmas in the Village banner by Nov 4th. Nancy Spragen said that Rabenstein plans to put up wreaths / Christmas décor again this year.

Alicia Brehm from Hillside is planning to decorate planters year round. Nancy said that she is welcome to use basic Christmas décor that Nancy and Julie purchased last year in her arrangements for Christmas.

The theme of the parade this year was suggested by Roberta Yoder, and ties in nicely with the Bicentennial – 200 years of Christmas Past. Floats can be decorated for Christmas in any year in the past 200 years. Mark Boyer and Margaret encouraged us to look into having out of town local businesses decorate empty storefronts for Christmas season, or at least for the parade. The storefronts could be decorated for Christmas past as well. They could have things set up inside or be a tempura painting on the glass. Tami Wenger will choose three judges for the parade from the Bicentennial committee.

Ryan Berry will talk with Diana Wilkins about asking John Pond to be the announcer again, and about securing the newspaper ads like she has done in the past.

Michelle Neer reminded us that the sound system for Christmas music needs to be updated, that we were having troubles last year. Everyone agreed this is a great place to put money. Ryan and Michelle will work together on that. Ryan suggested we hire some musicians to play live music on the sidewalk downtown and add to the holiday ambience on Saturdays. A violinist overheard this discussion and gave her card to Ryan. We will also talk to Reed Jones, and Alex Dye suggested a carol-a-thon.

Janet Young contacted us on behalf of Church of God. They want to organize the bean soup dinner this year in the firehouse and the firemen will provide drinks. Alex suggested we provide another food option for the younger crowd, in addition to food provided by Quest and The Grove. Ryan suggested we invite the Flying Pepper and other food trucks to potentially set up in the alley by the library or on West Columbus St. by C&R. Roberta said they could also set up at the CT Communications lot.

Ryan will coordinate with Mark Nelson about the Luminaire run.

**Bicentennial:** Businesses are encouraged to get involved planning the Bicentennial Celebration for next year. Now is the time to get involved. Businesses are encouraged to decorate like a business that was in their location sometime in the past 200 years.

**The next monthly meeting will be Thursday, Nov 10 at 7:30a.m. at Liberty Gathering Place.**