

Minutes Tuesday, May 19 Bemidji Area Chamber Board of Directors
Mayflower Building

Present: Kristi Anderson, Betsie Curb, Colleen Falk, Bob Griggs, Dave Kloha, Ashley Johnson, Kirk Malkowski, Bryce Oakes, Mychal Stittsworth, Scott Turn, Chris Vacek, Kayla Walters, Ryan Welle. Staff: Erin Messer, Lori Paris
Absent: Chuck Hildebrant, Lindsey Wangberg
Guest: Nate Mathews- Bemidji City Manager

Chair Turn welcomed Nate Mathews- board members did introduction and turned it over to Nate to talk about his two weeks on the job and overview of his Bemidji experience so far-

Items discussed; Legal challenges with ongoing townships and annexation, traffic around the new school, housing and inventory of middle class affordable housing.

Long term goals are sustainable programs for Nielson Reise, Library- expansion? Community rink needs.

Discussed the need for either hospitality or sales tax for stated long term goals including south shore park and operations of the Sanford Center.

Ideas for business growth for Nate are to grow from within- work with current industry and seek out related business to what is here now- build on clusters.

T.I.F. is one method city has for industry expansion – RLF with HRDC

Talked about similar concept of Leads in Staples- LEAP- Leadership Engagement Advocacy Positivity.

Chair Turn called meeting to order at 8:35

M/S to approve April minutes- carried

Falk gave the financial report- stating net receipts up overall, showing a 3.21% variance for positive outcome- membership down \$6k over last year at this time.

Membership report- dropped include Home Depot, MetLife- new Aflac and Carpenters Local, Paul Diehl transferred his membership from Diehl Project Management to Paul Diehl Counselor Realty

Exec. Report- Nominations update- Bob Griggs will take on role as incoming chair in Sept of 2015. Walters, Curb, Kloha all will serve a second term. Two other candidates yet to be asked will be updated at June meeting.

Board meeting discussion to move meeting date to the third Thursday this Sept. both exec and full board.

Turn reported on trip to Camp Ripley and the push to support hiring members of the National Guard and Reserve. Discussion of how chamber can communicate message- possible insert, panel discussion and other marketing ideas- Kloha suggested Dathan Gazelka as resource.

Discussion of park renovations and timeline- need to get the word out that the center is still open. InnKeepers is a great group to connect with, FB posts, etc.

Paris noted the park is slated for an October end time. Plaza area first to be completed.

Presidents report; Lakes Guide is now online- Awards of Excellence May 28- make plans and register, Pints and Politics is still on as of today- even though special session will be called. True North making plans to market to the All School reunion participants to consider coming home to Bemidji= make them aware of the transitions Bemidji has made- opportunity to expand and relocate a business here, retire here and come home to raise a family.

Decal campaign= Paris suggested business post their photo of the Chamber member decal – remind businesses to use their decal to promote their membership.

No further business meeting adjourned.