

**GREATER GEORGETOWN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
THE GEORGETOWN TRAIN STATION
Wednesday, January 7, 2009
4:00 P.M.**

In Attendance: Jan Fraipont, Helen Kruger, Ray Hopkins, Rich Warfield, Joan Tyndall, Kyle Morgan, Lit Dryden, Ashley Hoban, Debbie Hartstein, Linda Price, Joy Sikora, and Garry Killmon

Also Present: Toby Givens, Karen Duffield

Absent: Jeanne Dukes, Robin Parker, Enrique Nunez, Bernice Edwards, Scott Rukowicz and Jamie MaGee.

Debbie Hartstein, President, called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm at the Georgetown Train Station, Georgetown, Delaware. She welcomed everyone to a new year with the Chamber and to new Board member, Linda Price of DE National Bank.

REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Minutes: The Minutes were sent by email to all board members and copies were made available at the meeting. Helen Kruger made a motion to accept the Minutes and Jan Fraipont seconded. Lit Dryden abstained. Motion carried.

B. Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Reports were sent by email to all board members and copies were made available at the meeting. Ray Hopkins motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report and Garry Killmon seconded. Motion carried.

1. Rich Warfield asked for clarification on QB reporting of Equity on the Balance Sheet-1) Opening Balance Equity, 2) Retained Earnings, 3) Net Income & 4) Total Equity. Where do these figures come from and what do they mean? Karen Duffield will check into it and give clarification at the next Board meeting. Ray Hopkins suggested speaking with his wife, Joanne at ServPro, who is familiar with QB reporting.
2. Lit Dryden questioned whether the 2009 Budget had been finalized. It was explained that the final budget had been approved at the December 2008 Board meeting, which was a meeting he was unable to attend. Lit was extremely concerned that the proposed budget that he had been reviewing was extremely ambitious and he felt, somewhat unrealistic given the Chamber's expenses and ending balances for 2008 and the current economic climate.
3. Rich Warfield questioned whether we thought that membership revenue as proposed was attainable. Karen Duffield replied that efforts would continue with an even more determined attitude to implement strategies to develop new

members and retain current ones. There has been a significant increase in requests for some of the Chamber's low-cost member benefits & services, (i.e. Email & fax blasts, newsletter inserts, etc.) These benefits and others will continue to be promoted and are expected to bring in much needed revenue.

C. Executive Director's Report: A full report of the Executive Director's activities throughout the month of December 2008 was submitted. There were no questions.

D. Committee Reports*:

1. Christmas Balloon Parade-Debbie Hartstein reported that the parade was a great community success; and while the event came under budget, expenses still exceeded income, and the parade ran at a deficit of \$3711.25. Debbie explained that there had been a huge jump in gas costs for the balloons; it was also extremely difficult to get the sponsorship monies that were projected, perhaps because of the downturn in the economy, and the Chamber having just solicited sponsorship monies for *Wings & Wheels*. Discussion echoed group sentiment that costs had to be reigned in for 2009, and that the Chamber could not risk losing money on this, or any event in the future.

2. Membership-Helen Kruger read her letter of resignation as Chairperson of the Membership Committee and Ribbon Cutting to the Board, which detailed her extreme concerns with the Chamber's latest budget shortfalls and apparent disregard for event budgets. She explained that after her hard work building up the membership over the past 2-3 years, which accounted for increased revenue and the Chamber's healthy bottom line, she now felt completely disheartened to see the Chamber at a nearly \$32,000 deficit b/c of overspending. She also reported that she felt uncomfortable with the administrative process surrounding her membership responsibilities lately, and had some issues with Chamber staff. Board reaction was one of extreme surprise, sadness and concern, and the Board tried to impress upon Helen how valuable she is to the Chamber, and particularly to the Membership Committee. Karen Duffield will follow up.

3. Christmas Party- Toby Givens reported that the Christmas Party was a great success- there was great food, nice entertainment, great facility set-up, and everything came UNDER budget!

4. Economic Development- Joy Sikora reported that the committee had met as usual earlier in the day; she is concerned that there is a lack of integration between the various economic development entities in the area/state and a lack of communication between these when important events are scheduled (ex. Then Gov.-elect Markell Roundtable Discussion on Eco. Dev. held in Georgetown on Monday, Dec. 8th and the Chamber was not notified until the Friday before.) A SBA Workshop on Federal Contracting is scheduled for 1/27/09.

5. Breakfasts, Mixers & Lunches-Being scheduled and speakers being lined up. Following a Board vote, Breakfasts have been moved to the Brick Hotel for the first half of 2009. Negotiations with Terry Johnson and DTCC are ongoing, but we it is fairly certain that lunches will remain at Del Tech for at least 5 months.

6. Decadent Dessert Party- There had been a previous discussion to schedule this event in place of one of the Mixers. April was identified as an "open" month, and Delaware National Bank agreed to be the host member/site. Because the date happens to be April 15th, it was suggested having the party's theme relevant to Tax Day.

* Debbie Hartstein reported that she is still compiling the 2009 Committees and a meeting is scheduled for tomorrow, Jan. 8th, to discuss the committees' various goals & objectives, and prospective Chairs.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Debbie Hartstein introduced the idea of developing a "**Business Person of the Year**" award that could be presented at the Decadent Dessert Party.

B. Terry Johnson of DTCC suggested that the Chamber consider a **Student Discount** program between all area students and Georgetown merchants. Salisbury COC has a very extensive & successful one. Karen Duffield will look into.

C. Toby Givens reported that the Hudson's Billiards & Arcade would be holding a billiards tournament from Jan. 31-Feb. 5. Because they do not have a license to sell, distribute or consume alcoholic beverages on site, it was suggested that perhaps the Chamber could apply for a "**Gathering License**" in its place, with all proceeds from sales going to the Chamber. There was concern as to what entity would be liable in this scenario. On a motion by Helen Kruger and a second by Lit Dryden, with Ray Hopkins and Garry Killmon abstaining, it was agreed that Debbie Hartstein would look into the insurance and liability issues that would be involved in such an arrangement, and follow-up.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Duffield (In the absence of Jeanne Dukes, Secretary)