

NEVADA CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 15th at 5:00 PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Gretchen, Celine, Sheila, Teresa, Melissa, Moriah, Megan Loeswick, Megan Hart, Leea, Wendy, Brianne

Absent:

Staff and City attendees: Stuart, Carol, Adam Kline

Other attendees: Megan Loeswick

Meeting called to order at 5:12pm.

Call to Order Land of Nisenan Statement – **We acknowledge these are the ancestral homelands of the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe.**

Consent Agenda for Minutes 11/20/23. Minutes approved with motion by Celine, second by Moriah, all in favor.

ACTION ITEM: Moved to after external presentations

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- **Introductions** of new board members and announcement of Installation Dinner on 2/28 at Lola at 6pm. We will have the Awards Dinner as a long table event on Commercial Street in May.
- Heidi Hall – State of the County. Economic Development Plan in development. If you like to review the document go to www.nevadacounty.com. Plan will be voted on at the 2/27 meeting. They welcome your feedback.
 - Priorities remain: Affordable/workforce housing, broadband, climate resilience
 - Supervisors board retreat next week.
- Erin Minett and Gary Peterson (non in his role as a council member) spoke on Measure C, at proposed ½ cent sales tax to provide \$900k for fire-safe activities. The board will decide in February whether to endorse the measure. The measure has a 5-year sunset. It requires 2/3 approval
- **City Manager's report** – None this month
- **Position on A Frame Signage** – The City did not enforce the prohibition on A-Frames during the pandemic but will resume in the near term. Stuart put forth a draft position on advocating to City Council on how some A-Frames could be accommodated in the downtown. Wendy reminded the board that she is not here in her capacity on the Planning Commission, but as a Chamber Board Member. Wendy was not in favor of changing the regulation. Other agreed that it might enable a situation where there were A-Frames everywhere, littering the streetscape. The idea was discussed of creating an opportunity for a variance rather than changing the prohibition. We will also look to creating a one-sheet of other options merchants can employ to let people know that they are open. A revised position will be next month's board packet to be voted on.
- **Financial reports – Stuart**

Stuart reviewed the Chamber Balance Sheets over the past 3.5 years, to show how the Chamber is doing financially over time. "It is easy to get caught up in budgets and line items and forget the bottom

line: how much do we have at the end of the year compared to other years.” We have been steady in our total equities and liabilities having a total of between \$180,000 and \$200,000 in the bank throughout this period.

There will always be a challenge with tracking profit-and-loss for parts of the budget such as Victorian Christmas and the Bio-Lite orders, since payments happen on both sides of the fiscal year.

Next month we will have a more condensed P&L in the packet.

Brianne Hansen of Tri-Counties Bank in Nevada City will be examining Board financial reports in depth, starting in February. There were no financial questions that required follow-up.

Parsonage 1865 is planning a ribbon cutting on February 1st at 6PM, We incorporate a Chamber mixer into this event, details are being worked out.

- We reviewed the Chamber Strategic Plan and Bylaws, including a background of how they support the work that we do and how they are updated

- **Executive Director Report – Stuart**

Victorian Christmas was great yet again. Merchants and vendors universally had positive comments. Two hopes for next year: 1. More real greenery 2) a relocated food courts, possibly in the Miners Foundry parking lot or parts of Spring Street.

. The H/R training session that had to be rescheduled will be held on January 17th, at 3:30pm at City Hall.

Board members liked the idea of a password protected member page, but maybe there could be a teaser video that everyone can see as a motivator to join.

We discussed the Cultural District and the need to have something more tangible as a result of the designation (such as a signature event Art Walk or a project like a Walking Tour). We will invite Eliza to a future meeting to discuss.

Interesting factoid: Nevada County has more artists per capita than any other county in CA.

See Stuart’s attached Executive Director Report for additional information about Chamber activities in January.

Adjourned at 7:10pm – Next Regular Chamber Board meeting: Monday, February 19th, 2024.

Stuart Baker

**Executive Director Report – NC Chamber January 15th, 2024
FOR MEETING MINTUES of FEBRUARY**

- December is all about **Victorian Christmas** and this took up most of our staff's collective bandwidth. Luckily, we had only one bad-weather day and we increased our net profit by roughly \$3k over last year. I will review more detail at the meeting. Again, the mastery of Lynn managing all of us--including volunteers--has made this event consistently both spectacular and memorable.
- Wendy Ermshar and I re-recorded the **member videos** on 1) How to start a successful business in NC; 2) How to work through City regulations, and 3) How to be part of the local merchant community. If you would like to see them, go to the Chamber website and click on Member Log-in at the top and put in the code: nevadacity. We plan to add 8 videos with different guests in 2024. Question to all of you: Should we have our member-only page password protected to create value for membership, or an unnecessary hassle?
- **NC Media** liked the videos and have asked for the Chamber to produce a monthly video with current NC material for the general public. Our first will be on Sierra Commons and the Business Ignitor program with Robert and a successful graduate. Sean is on tap for February. We will also do a member video on opening a successful eatery with Tony from Heartwood.
- I partook in a working session with business stakeholders for the **Nevada County Economic Dev. Action Plan** on 11/17. The plan was presented to the BOS on January 9th. It will be presented again on 2/27.
- As mentioned in the newsletter, the **GV VC Shuttle** was a great success with 160 riders on just the two Wednesdays. We did not want it over subscribed so we did only outreach on social media. We are hoping for this to be a start of a great partnership with Nevada County Connects for shuttles EarthFest, Summer Nights and Cornish Christmas. In the longer term the potential of a **Downtown Connector Shuttle** would be fantastic. "Dinner in GV and a Show in NC!". It would be a great feature to promote at the visitor's center and overall, a great way to improve access to both communities.
- I presented updates and plans and the State of the Business Community to **ERC** board on 1/4/24. There was surprisingly a lot of interest and questions in the shuttle ideas.
- Lynn and I met with members of **NC Energy Action Committee** in November. We have each attended a meeting but have been a bit disappointed in the lack of actual project-focused work. I will discuss.
- Celine, Adam and I did a **bulb planting on Argall Way** in December. We are exploring the possibility of stuccoing the planter boxes and having a local school do **some mosaic design**, if the Public Arts Commission were to approve. BTW, the first meeting of the Commission is 1/30. Go Celine! (our rep)
- Teresa, Lou, and I attended the **soft elements (basically planters and benches) for Commercial Street Workshop** on 1/9. Unfortunately, only 3 Forks showed up in addition to represent the merchants. There was a lot of input from the Historical Society. I will expand at the board meeting.
- We now have a first draft of the 7 Hills Map created by Cru Dorsey. A sample will be passed around.
- We had a **ribbon cutting** for the BrewHaus on 12/15. We plan to have **member mixer and ribbon cutting** for the Parsonage on 2/1 at 6PM. We hope everyone can make it! Our **second member training** on Human Resources will be this Wednesday (1/17) at 3:30 at Council Chambers.
- Started Monthly planning meetings with our City Manager.
- I'd like to have a short discussion with the Board at our meeting on the current state of NC designation as a **Cultural District** and what the Chamber's needs are.
- Creating a **budget** has become much easier with QuickBooks Online, except for the first time with a learning curve-and a deep dive of removing old unnecessary line items. Carol has done a great job pulling us through the overall adjustment process.
- The November Merchant Meeting covered **Cash vs. Credit** and was especially well-attended. The rep from Tri Counties gave a good current regulatory overview and we had a vendor with a new POS system for bars and restaurants. Everyone who attended agrees that we need to continue to explore options further.
- We need to have you each review your contact info on the attached board roster, including your term expiration. (I admit with the switch to 3-year terms and the inclusion of 1st and 2nd term, it is not entirely clear to me!)