

**Bay Area Chamber of Commerce  
Board Meeting May 5, 2004  
Ramada Inn 7:00 am**

**Members Present:** Tom Scheideman, Weyerhaeuser Paper; Bonnie Barron, Bay Area Hospital; Chris Christoffer, Sterling Bank; Sam Roth, Century 21 Best; Eileen Ophus, CCD; Barb Gunnell, Community Financial Services; Marty Giles, Wavecrest Discoveries; Jenny Bream, Brian Bream Screw Machines; Sid Fannick, Business Advisor; Beverly Saukko, Miss Coos County Scholarship; Dick Leshley, Yellow Cab; John Pundt, BiCoastal Media

**Others Present:** Deryl Beebe, SOFCU & Ambassadors; Rick Howell, South Coast ESD; Ray Penny, Allstate Real Estate

President John Pundt called the meeting to order at 7 a.m with introductions around the table. The minutes were approved on a motion by Dick Leshley and seconded by Beve Saukko; all were in favor. John gave an update on the Leadership Coos Program and their graduation coming up next Tuesday at the Yacht Club in Lakeside. John reminded everyone that May is National Tourism Month and the media is working on various quizzes to help inform the local public.

Karen Thompson, student rep from North Bend High School, gave an update on the happenings at North Bend. Most of the seniors are getting ready to graduate; they had an excellent Mr. Bulldog contest that garnered nearly \$16,000 for the neonatal intensive care unit.

Shirley Liberante discussed the newest members and pointed out that they are listed in the monthly newsletter. She urged the Board members to visit them and make them feel welcome to the Chamber. Shirley explained that the Visitor Center will most likely be run by the Chamber for the next fiscal year and said that she is very happy to keep that relationship going. She said that the more we all work together the more we can accomplish. Shirley explained about the Q program which is being run through the Tourism Division and the Community Colleges throughout the State. The Chamber will pay ½ the fees for each Visitor Center Volunteer from all three Visitor Center, Coos Bay, North Bend and Charleston, in order to have everyone trained. We have three local trainers including Crystal Shoji and Marty Giles.

Shirley said that the relocation of the Chamber to the Hub building would probably happen toward the end of May. She also gave an update on Connie Davis, the Chamber's office manager and Leadership Coos Coordinator. Connie had surgery on Monday and is doing well; she may be out for about 6 weeks but hopes to return part time sooner.

Chris Christoffer gave the Treasurers report and thanked Shirley for getting the Chamber in good financial order.

Committee Reports started off with Ambassadors and Deryl Beebe. Deryl said that they will be having a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration this Friday at Benetti's. Deryl is gathering items to take to the State Conference in September and asks that folks donate gift certificates in order to entice folks to come here to spend them.

Marty Giles, Chair of the Tourism Committee talked about National Tourism month and gave us some great information regarding tourism in the Bay Area.

Martin Callery of the Economic Development Committee noted that kudos should go to the City of Coos Bay for getting the Discovery Boat Rentals quickly in business. He also told the group that Brady Scott was the speaker last week.. Brady discussed the Weyerhaeuser property that CEDCO has just recently purchased along the waterfront. Brady is looking at a 12 to 18 month planning process.

Shirley Liberante reported that the IBO has had a successful season and will be ending at the end of May until the second Wednesday of September. She also reminded the Board that the Lumberjack Competition will be held June 26<sup>th</sup> at the Mill Casino-Hotel.

Dick Leshley said that they are working on a Meth Watch that will be on signs in stores explaining what the ingredients are for making Meth. This program has received statewide recognition.

Martin Callery said that the Chamber's Transportation Committee next week will feature Larry Van Elsberg regarding the funding from OTIA. The funding includes 215 projects and 4.4 Billion Dollars.

No one was present from the City of North Bend or the City of Coos Bay. Martin Callery reminded everyone that the Oyster Fest will be held in Charleston on June 4<sup>th</sup>. And that the Port of Coos Bay is involved in the rail bridge repair.

Ron Opitz said that the SCDC was moving right along and that he felt positive that some really good stuff was in the making. He is looking forward to the move to the new business site.

In other business, John Pundt gave the results of the recent Poll of Chamber Members regarding the issue of consolidating the Cities of Coos Bay and North Bend. The Poll was a follow up to the one that was taken 16 months ago. The results with a 26 % return. of 432 members polled, 113 verified members returned the Poll. 95 YES 18 NO. Although not scientific and not a reflection of the general population, it does reflect the views of Chamber Businesses

Ray Penny asked the Chamber Board why they would not take position after seeing the results of the poll. President Elect Dick Leshley stated that we had taken a position not to take an official position on the subject and that it would not be right to go back on our word.

The meeting ended at 8:25 a.m.