

Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

Jan. 3, 2020

Present: Nick Angeloff, president; Jim Brickley, vice-president; Tracy O'Connell, secretary; Sharon Holt and Gabriel Smith, board members. Excused: Susan Pryor. Guest: Chuck Scheid, chamber member.

The meeting was called to order at noon. Financial report: As of Jan. 1., there was \$7210.69 in savings and \$7,330.55 in checking. Membership and ad renewals are going out, some funds received.

Nick said the decorations would come down that weekend, Sat. and Sun., Jan. 4 and 5, starting at 9 a.m. each day. Discussion included the need to get all the work done in one weekend to not require another commitment of the lift; the possible need for more people such as the fire fighters, and the possibility of using the California Conservation Corps in the future, though enough time may not have been allocated for them to plan/respond to the request this time, as many firms and organizations close for two weeks over Christmas/New Years.

There was discussion of needs and plans for the decorating project, which includes lighting the bridge next year; further purchases to come with funds received already, and report of Rio Dell Facebook posters excited at the thought of decorating homes next year, with the idea lights be bought on sale in January.

This discussion included asking owners of downtown business fronts to decorate, even if there is no business in that site, and holding a decorating contest next year to encourage this, with categories such as Visible from the Freeway as possibilities, and gift certificates as prizes. We need to start in summer to get these plans formalized.

Our next networking event is tentatively Sat., Feb. 8, which will be a candidate's forum with Estelle Fennel and Rex Bohn, the two county supervisor candidates in our area who are up for the March 3 election, and the people they will be running against. In Fennel's case there are four opponents, and in Bohn's case, one. The plan is that the afternoon will be given over to Fennel and her opponents, in the 1 to 5 p.m. time frame, and Bohn and his opponent would be in the 6-8 p.m. timeframe.

Nick has contacted the two incumbents to confirm their availability and has contact information for the challengers and a call to the fire dept. to use that facility, with the chamber as the fall-back. The early date is necessary as $\frac{3}{4}$ of area voters use mail-in which starts in mid-February.

Nick proposed that the chamber host an otter in an upcoming event in which fiberglass otter statues painted by area artists are placed in participating locations, which typically in these events draws a large number of people taking selfies of the otters. Called the North Coast Otter Public Art Initiative, it

involves placing 100 otter statues in host settings across five counties, with visitors searching them out in the chance to score the most sightings and win prizes.

In our case Nick proposed the chamber would move the otter around to various businesses and post where the otter is each week so visitors will know and the anticipated traffic would be spread around among several stores. Tracy moved, Sharon seconded, and the motion passed to host an otter for \$500.

Nick suggested if each of 10 stores agreed to pay \$50, they would each get the otter for a week and that would cover the \$500 cost. Tracy suggested the businesses are already paying enough in membership, newsletter ads, holiday lighting expenses and sometimes more like the Ave. of the Giants sign, and should get this for free.

Discussion included expanded ideas around the effort like having school children draw otters and post the pictures in the chamber; letting area artisans produce otter-themed items for sale that would be on display where the otter was each week, and engaging Talia Rose, a Piercy photographer with a wide selection of otter and other wildlife pictures, to have a display.

The project launches this spring.

Sharon noted she was making a sheet for people wanting to post fliers on our windows that suggests the minimum information requirements (who, what, where, when, why) and how long it can be up. She was making a new, more professional sign to promote the exercise group than the one there now, and proposed a policy for people wanting to actively promote something since the chamber is non-partisan.

An example that she suggested was out of line was the several people actively getting petition signers against the wind farm. It would be fine to have that activity on the sidewalk, it was agreed, or in a separate area inside with other commercial vendors and activists seeking support, but not confronting people at a holiday gathering. Nick asked her to draft up a policy to be reviewed and voted on by the board.

It was noted that the front door again needs fixing; that Nick will bring it up to Rory in a few months since he was recently faced with fixing the roof after storm damage.

The meeting concluded at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy O'Connell, Secretary