

Meriden/Ozawkie Area Chamber of Commerce Chamber Meeting Minutes – March 16th, 2017

Welcome

Chamber vice-president Chuck Wilson launched the meeting by giving everyone present the opportunity to introduce themselves and identify the business they represented.

Special Guest

Dave Jensen offered an informative presentation on AgMax Crop Insurance, owned and operated by Dave and his father, Rich, for the last 16 years. Rich has been in the crop insurance business for 40 years, with Dave a part of the team for nine.

Dave noted that in 2016, more than 298 million acres of farmland were protected through the Federal Crop Insurance program, meaning 90% of insurable farmland is now covered. Last year, over 1.2 million policies were issued by 17 different private-sector insurers, 13 of whom operate in Kansas.

Multi-peril crop insurance is a federally subsidized risk management tool protecting against loss of crops due to natural disasters such as hail, drought, freezes, floods, fire, insects, disease, and wildlife, or the loss of revenue due to a decline in price. Crop-Hail policies (not part of the federal crop insurance program) are sold by private and regulated by state insurance departments.

Through the financial protection it provides to farmers, crop insurance contributes to the stability of the American economy, and enables farmers to increase crop yields, improve efficiencies, and remain competitive in the world market. In recent years, crop insurance has been accepted as collateral for business loans, providing manageable cash flow through the entire farm business cycle.

Dave suggested that the personal service AgMax provides sets them apart. “We do everything,” he said. “We’re trying to protect as much of [the farmer’s] money as possible. We cover the details.” Dave can be reached at (785) 845-8658.

Announcements and Updates

Spring Pancake Feed – Chuck announced that this year’s feed served 376 people, plus 12 carry-out meals, for a total of 388. In total, \$2,308.75 was received, with net proceeds totaling \$1,769.40. All proceeds go to fund scholarships for JW grads. Chuck expressed his thanks to everyone for their great work and continuing support of this event!

Membership Renewals – A second invoice has been mailed to non-renewals. So far, fifty members have paid 2017 dues. Chuck reminded the chamber of the value in chamber membership and encouraged those who’d not yet renewed to do so promptly.

Chamber Gift Certificates – Kent Duncan reminded the members present that, with the “after-hours” giveaway in January and recent Facebook promotions, chamber gift certificates are in circulation. On the backside, gift certificates list all members current when the certificate was printed. Recent certificates are also embossed on the right-

hand side with the Chamber seal certifying their authenticity. Businesses can redeem gift certificates by mailing the signed certificate to the chamber at PO Box 175, Meriden.

2017 Golf Tournament – Stuart Bach informed the chamber that the golf tournament has been scheduled for June 16th, and distributed applications for potential benefiting partners. This will be the tenth annual Chamber golf tournament. In previous years, partners have received anywhere from \$1,500-\$5,000 as a result of their efforts.

F.W. Huston Community Appreciation Meal – Abby Swoyer announced that this annual event will be held on Thursday, April 13th, from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. Bingo will be available beginning at 5:00 PM on the sunporch. The event is free and open to the public.

F.W Huston Pharmacy – Abby also announced that, beginning April 1st, those who transfer their prescriptions from another pharmacy will qualify for a \$10 pharmacy gift card.

“Welcome to Meriden” Sign Landscaping – Lexie Surritt announced that work will begin soon on lighting and landscaping improvements at the chamber-provided signs on K-4 highway. R&S will be spearheading improvements to the solar-powered lighting system and Steve Buss and Jeff West Middle School students will handle the landscaping.

Chamber Gift Certificates – Scott also reminded the Chamber that any gift certificates received can be redeemed by bringing them to a chamber meeting or mailing the certificate to the Meriden-Ozawkie Area Chamber of Commerce at PO Box 175, Meriden, KS, 66512.

Community Easter Egg Hunt –Meriden Pride will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 8th, at 1:00 PM, at the Meriden City Park. As we’ve done in previous years, the Chamber will be providing bicycles for each “age division” planned for at the egg hunt as prizes. Participants are strongly urged to arrive early.

County Commissioner Wayne Ledbetter – Wayne noted that a recent test of emergency sirens revealed four that weren’t functioning. They have been repaired and the county will now test the sirens monthly throughout the entire year.

Wayne also noted that the county’s “Code Red” emergency notification system is up for renewal and, given the \$16,000 annual cost, Wayne invited the public’s feedback regarding any issues, problems, or concerns.

Economic Development – County Director Brittany Chaplin announced a “Social Media Marketing Workshop” designed specifically for business owners has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 4th, from 6 – 8:00 PM at The Barn Bed and Breakfast in Valley Falls. Seating is limited and registration (\$20) is required by Monday, March 27th.

Networking Opportunity – Judy May invited all interested parties to attend the “After Hours” of the Holton/Jackson County Chamber of Commerce scheduled for 5:30-7:30 PM on Thursday, March 23rd, at the Farmers State Bank, 209 Montana Ave, in Holton.

Upcoming Meetings

Chamber – Thursday, April 20th – Gambino’s Community Room – Meriden
Special Guest: County Commissioner Wayne Ledbetter