

Meriden/Ozawkie Chamber of Commerce Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 15th, 2016

Announcements/Updates

Law Enforcement Appreciation Days – Chamber President Scott Stanley introduced Lonny Houk, who announced a “Law Enforcement Appreciation Day” on both Sept 23rd and Sept 30th. The event provides an opportunity to express community support for our local officers in light of recent negative publicity directed against law enforcement nationally. All activities will begin at 6:00 PM and will be held at Rockin’ Angel Ranch, 9736 West Lake Road, Ozawkie. Both evenings will feature free BBQ, live music, horse rides, speakers, and games. Several area businesses (Lonny specifically mentioned Bowers, Mulligans, Country Harvest, and Denison State Bank) have contributed goods and services for this event. The event is also sponsored by Eternal Promises, a 501c3 organization, for which Lonny serves a board member. Chamber members welcome!

Meriden Fall Festival & Street Dance – The Chamber of Commerce will again conduct a watermelon feed and “seed spitting contest” as part of this year’s festival behind held Saturday, Sept 17th. Festivities will begin at noon, and include the Air National Guard jousting pit and climbing wall, carnival games, Mulligan’s “pulled pork” fundraiser (supporting Jeff West Educational Foundation), a beer garden hosted by the Game Day Bar & Grill, and a live band. The celebration is scheduled to continue until 10:00 PM.

Chamber Board Elections will be held in November. DeDee Skaggs, Alexa Surritt, and Stuart Bach comprise this year’s nominating committee. The terms of Pat Happer, Diane Shaw, and Chuck Wilson are expiring. All three have expressed their willingness to let their names stand for election again, but board president Scott Stanley affirmed the interest of the entire board in welcoming “new blood” to the team. Anyone interested in potential nomination, or anyone with a potential nominee to suggest, is encouraged to contact any member of the nominating committee or chamber board.

The Fall Chamber of Commerce Pancake Feed will be held at the Jeff West Elementary School on Saturday, October 8th. Chairperson Chuck Wilson distributed a volunteer sign-up sheet and promotional flyers. This event funds \$2,000 in chamber college scholarships to Jeff West graduates every year.

The 2016 Trunk or Treat will be held on Friday, October 28th, at Countryside Square, Meriden, from 3:45 to 5:00 PM. Participating businesses are encouraged to arrive by 3:15 PM. The date had previously been announced for the following Monday, but—as it turns out—students at Jeff West will not have school that day.

Facebook Tidbits – Heather Williams sent word that the chamber FB page has added fourteen additional “likes” this month—for a total of 323. The photos of chamber check presentations to USD 340 and the JW Baseball team were seen by 4,267 people—that

total aided through the post being shared by 17 different FB users. Submissions for posting are encouraged and can be made to Heather at heatherlwilliams@live.com.

Friends of Hospice of Jefferson County will host their annual “Taste of Elegance” fund raiser on October 15th at Perry-Lecompton High School. Tickets remain available. Proceeds from this event help fund patient care, most typically for needs not covered by insurance or other funding. For more information, contact DeDee Skaggs.

FW Huston representative Abby Swoyer reminded chamber members of the county health assessment underway. The assessment is being conducted jointly by FW Huston, the Jeff County Health Dept, and the Jeff County Wellness Coalition. Paper copies of the survey can be secured at many local businesses or the survey can be found online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/healthassessmentjeffersoncounty2016>.

Additionally, FW Huston will host its annual fall fundraiser at Jeff County North High School on October 8th. Tickets are available at the door. As FW Huston is a not-for-profit organization, all proceeds go toward improving health care in Jefferson County.

Economic Development – County Economic Development director Brittany Chaplin reports that good progress continues to be made on several fronts. The Housing and Redevelopment committee has made contact with an individual with significant experience in housing assessments specifically in smaller, rural communities. This connection increases the likelihood of being able to complete an affordable Jefferson County assessment of current conditions and needs. The committee meets again on Wednesday, September 21st, at 6:30 PM at Highland Community College. The Food Council has developed a logo and is connecting with web designers with a mind to coordinating and promoting available resources in the county.

Special Guest

Denise Selbee-Koch was invited to discuss **Dirty Girl Adventures**—an organization she launched to “encourage, empower, and motivate people to do what our moms told us to do—go outside and play!” Research reflects what we all know—that obesity rates and stress levels are up, and something as simple as a walk outdoors can positively impact both. Denise noted that northeast Kansas offers some of the best opportunities in the country for healthy outdoor activities with some of the finest hiking and biking trails in the state. More information can be found at dirtygirladventures.net.

Next Meeting

The Chamber meets again at noon at the Gambino’s “community room” on Thurs, Oct 20th.