

Meriden/Ozawkie Area Chamber of Commerce
Chamber Meeting Minutes – March 17th, 2016

Announcements and Updates

Spring Pancake Feed – On behalf of pancake feed chairperson Chuck Wilson, who was unable to be present, Scott Stanley announced that the March 5th Pancake Feed served 397 people (just 2 short of an all-time record) and collected \$2398 in donations. Expenses were not yet finalized at the time of the meeting, but were expected to be less than \$500. The chamber expressed its deep appreciation to Chuck for his excellent leadership of this event!

Membership Renewals – So far in 2016, thirty-eight 2015 members have renewed their memberships and 2 new members (AgMax Crop Insurance and Meriden Chiropractic Clinic) have joined. Chamber president Scott Stanley reminded the chamber that membership renewal invoices for 2016 have been mailed. Area businesses who are not active members have been sent an application via email. Any questions regarding membership applications or renewals can be directed to any Chamber board member.

Chamber Gift Certificates – Chamber 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 – The VFW and Meriden Pride will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 19th, at 1:00 PM, at the Meriden City Park. Again this year, the Chamber will be providing several bicycles as prizes (at least one for each “age division” planned for at the egg hunt). Any Chamber members who might be present at the egg hunt were encouraged to take a camera and snap some photos.

Facebook Page Update – Heather Williams reports that...

- ✓ The Chamber Facebook page has 282 “likes”! That is up 14 from last month!
- ✓ Think Local First After Hours/Coffee Talk post reached 127 people.
- ✓ The Pancake Feed flyer post reached 525 people—liked and reposted many times!
- ✓ The Meeting reminder post reached 109 people.
- ✓ The Easter Egg Hunt poster has reached 142 people so far.
- ✓ The Valentine’s Day post highlighting Bowers, Byte Em Snacks, Country Harvest, Crooked Post, Gambino’s, Lake Ridge Bar & Grill and Mulligans reached 202 people.

Bingo Night/Community Appreciation Dinner – Abby Swoyer, with F.W. Huston Medical Center, announced a Bingo night on the sun porch of the senior living center scheduled for March 24th from 6:30 to 7:30 PM—free will donation. Additionally, F.W. Huston is hosting the *Annual Customer Appreciation Dinner* on April 7th at 7:00 PM.

Jeff West Booster Club Carnival – On behalf of the Chamber, Alexa Surritt will be preparing a “Gift Basket” for auction at the Jeff West Booster Club Carnival scheduled for April 16th. This is a great opportunity to promote your business as part of the Chamber. To make a donation, or if you have questions, contact Lexie! (The chamber is also separately providing (5) \$20 gift certificates as carnival prizes.)

Economic Development Update – County Economic Development Director Brittany Chaplin introduced her new assistant, Michele Carter. Michelle is from the Meriden area, comes to the team with significant housing development and related experience. and is energized to help further develop our business communities. Michelle’s current primary focus is on the development of a county-wide business directory.

Brittany also reported a successful first “Think Local First” gathering in Oskaloosa on Wednesday evening, and reminded the chamber members that a second opportunity is scheduled for tonight, Thursday, March 17th, at the Crooked Post Winery in Ozawkie at 5:30 PM. Tonight’s event feature door prizes and great opportunities for networking.

Finally, on behalf of County Commissioner Wayne Ledbetter, Brittany reported that engineering studies have begun on potential improvements to 62nd street from K-4 west.

46th Street/K-4 Improvements – following a recent visit with KDOT representatives, USD340 Superintendent Pat Happer reported that sometime shortly after March 28th, work will begin on improvements to the 46th St/K-4 interchange. There will be no access between K-4 and 46th street to the west of K-4, potentially through the end of August.

Special Guest

Jefferson County Undersheriff Bob Chartier was present to briefly outline some of the challenges and responses to potential “active shooter” situations for local business owners. While school safety has received the bulk of active-shooter-related attention, recent incidents have highlighted the need for attention on safety within the business environment, as well. The US Department of Homeland Security defines an “active shooter” as “an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area. In most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to the selection of victims.”

Our attitude, typically, is that an active shooter incident “wouldn’t happen here” but the recent Hesston, Kansas, shooting proves that such incidents can occur anywhere. Since 1982, in businesses, 764 people have been killed in active shooter incidents, and 554 have been wounded. Business owners need to be aware that, in short, owners/operators cannot guarantee the safety of every person in that place of business, they cannot restrict anyone from carrying a weapon into that business. Recent developments in Kansas concealed carry laws make this an even greater concern.

Active shooter scenarios present three potential responses: run, hide, and fight. Of the three, the first is preferred—making familiarity with the business property essential. “Hiding” is the second option, with “fighting” considered only as a last resort. Chartier observed that, if armed and able to act against an active shooter, no kind of warning before acting is required.

Upcoming Meetings

Chamber – Thursday, April 21st – Gambinos Community Room – Meriden