

**Springdale Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors Minutes – May 21, 2019**

The May meeting of the Springdale Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors was held on Tuesday, May 21 in the Zachary Conference Room of the Springdale Chamber. Board members present at the meeting were: Murry Cline, Sam Hollis, Mike Morgenthaler, Perry Webb, Patrick Swope, Joel Kelsey, Danny McGinley, Sarah Brothers, Kent Williamson, Mayor Doug Sprouse, Jason Appel, Stephanie Robinson, Eddie Vega, Bob Arthur, Dr. Jim Rollins, Don Elmore and Diana McDaniel.

Staff members present included Rhonda Hughes, Sarah Gordley, Bill Rogers, Jim Ed Reed, Lance Eads and Aerial Courdin.

Chairman Cline called the meeting to order and introduced new Board member Diana McDaniel of Arkansas Children's Northwest.

The Board reviewed minutes of its March meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes and the motion passed.

In a review of financials, the Board heard that as expected March and April were loss months and down approximately \$25,000 more than the same time a year ago. The months are budgeted accordingly as the Chamber typically has few events and reduced event revenue at this time. Also, the Chamber no longer has revenue derived from its Ignite Springdale program. Sponsor payments were also slow in coming in during those months but renewed collection efforts in May have helped address that issue. Webb explained the key will be to maximize revenues from a half dozen events scheduled for the second half of 2019. A motion was made and seconded to approve the financials and the motion passed.

In a report of events, the Board heard that applications are being accepted for the 2019-20 Leadership Springdale class. Twenty-two members of the approximately 35 member class have registered. Ticket sales are ongoing for the June 20 Invest Springdale Summit at The Apollo to accelerate development in Downtown Springdale. Attendees will be the first to hear details of pending downtown developments. Dates have been set for the Teacher Appreciation Event (August 8), the final Experience Springdale class of the year (October 8), Fall Golf Scramble (September 23) and Chickin, Peelin' & Politickin' (Oct. 3)

In government affairs, Sen. Eads framed the recent General Assembly as a success largely due to the legislature dealing with long-term highway funding. He also noted the income tax cuts for top wage earners and business tax reform that was passed. A county transparency bill he sponsored should insure property tax assessments are fair in cities where large national companies have previously sought unequitable comps. The annual Washington D.C. Fly-In is scheduled for October 27-29. Twenty six business leaders have already registered.

In workforce, the fourth-annual ACES Conference that pairs Springdale high school educators with industry leaders for a three-day meeting will feature 43 educators and a record-high 35 industry representatives. The group will be touring the new MHC diesel repair facility in addition to industry panels and networking. Twenty six advertorials have been sold for the Springdale workforce magazine. Staff is also progressing on a workforce magazine partnership with Harrison.

In economic development, Springdale's strong economy continues with 1,404 new jobs from Jan. 1-March 30, a 2.3% unemployment rate that is the second lowest in the state and year-over-year sales tax receipt growth of 6.1%.

The Chamber's marketing department is set to show the Springdale A&P Commission a final version of a new tourism/visitor app. Post-production work on the two workforce magazines is also moving forward. Social media participation goals set for the year have already been achieved in February. The number of Chamber Facebook followers has increased 66% and Twitter followers increased 17% since May of 2017.

Sponsorship sales have risen to \$530,000 since the \$493,535 mark at the end of April. Current efforts are focused on the Teacher Appreciation Event and the Springdale workforce magazine. Sponsorship revenue was down \$77,000 to budget in January but that deficit has been made up as of the third week of May.

The Chamber's new car show, Rise & Rally, scheduled for the third Saturday of May was cancelled due to expected severe weather. The initial show will be June 15 at the Arts Center of the Ozarks parking lot.

Webb explained the strategic plan by Ted Abernathy for improving NWTI had been received. He said it calls for significantly improving the physical plant and programming at the school, a move that could cost at minimum \$3-5 million per program. He said discussions are underway with Governor Hutchinson about state assistance but that corporate partnerships would also be critical to success. It is thought that Hutchinson might include a statewide overhaul of workforce at the next legislative session.

The Chamber's efforts to secure a Congressional resolution in support of the Marshallese had advanced to the Senate Cloak Room where each party must give final approval. The president of the Marshall Islands is in the United States and will be meeting with President Trump at the White House May 22. The resolution will be helpful in the Chamber's other initiative to gain a maximum Census count of Springdale Marshallese in 2020. Staff will be attending parts of the annual Marshallese Memorial Day Festival in Springdale to evaluate how the 2020 festival can be part of a full-count strategy.

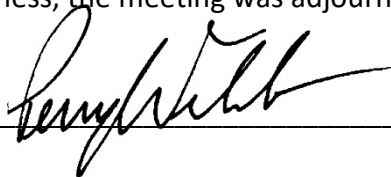
Webb explained the initial draft of the Convergent strategic plan research had been received. The Board will receive a final report from Convergent representatives at their July meeting. He said workforce was by far the most important need from the business leaders interviewed. Inclusion and diversity, transportation and entrepreneurship were also highly ranked.

Rollins reported that 1,450 Springdale students graduated over the weekend from four different schools including the first graduating class of the Don Tyson School of Innovation. He reported a renewed partnership with Northwest Health led Springdale CEO Hans Driessnack to interview and hire 10 applicants from DTSOI last week.

Sprouse said the city is in the process of designing, approving and constructing projects that are part of the city's bond program. A June 21 ground break is scheduled for the new Criminal Justice Center. Construction on Shaw Family Park should begin soon and the city council had approved \$5 million in renovations to Randal Tyson Sports Park.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by: _____



Date: May 21, 2019