



*The mission of the Whitehall Chamber of Commerce is to bring individuals, businesses and organizations together to enrich our community.*

## MINUTES

### BOARD MEETING

October 12, 2023 5:00 p.m.

Jefferson Inn

The Whitehall Chamber of Commerce Board Meeting was called to order at 5:14 PM by President Liz Pullman. In attendance were: Liz Pullman (President/Ledger), Pam Polachi (Past President/Western Legacy), Carey Burnside (Board Member/Arctic Heat), Sharon Macheel (Board Member/Copper Mtn Perfect Pup), and Chiara Schober (Executive Director)

### Current Business

#### a. Treasurer's Report

Chiara

Chiara reported for Sherre that the Main account has \$69,447.58, Rodeo account is \$25,431.37, and Savings account is \$10,019.25 for a total of \$104,898.20. Sherre might be interested in moving. Chiara brought up that she could rent the front office of the Chamber building. Chiara will email for an official vote.

#### b. Biz & Vol Recognition

Liz

The event on Thursday, September 21st was well attended for our first year. We had an abundance of food. Next year we will have more time to do more planning.

#### c. Fall Festival/BINGO Recap

Liz

Keep the kids' stuff in the hallway between the buildings. Move the pumpkin patch on the Green with decorating at the Community Center with stickers. Sharon has a tiny bounce house for little kids. Pie Auction will be in the kitchen next year. There was a vendor situation and it was discussed to have them schedule a meeting to meet with the Board. Bingo was good. We raised \$375 for the Chamber Kids Fund.

#### d. Christmas Festival

Liz

Chiara got Vendor Applications out early on October 2nd. We have 9 vendors already. Look into adding a "Niceness Clause" on the Vendor Applications.

### GENERAL MEETING

October 12, 2023 6:00 p.m.

Jefferson Inn

The Whitehall Chamber of Commerce General Meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM by President Liz Pullman. In attendance were: Liz Pullman (President/Ledger), Pam Polachi (Past President/Western Legacy), Sharon Macheel (Board Member/Copper Mtn Perfect Pup), Carey Burnside (Board Member/Arctic Heat), Chiara Schober (Executive Director), Monique Morris (M&M Vintage), Timothy Schober (White Hat Solutions/TSS), Taylor Stanhope (Whitehall Stageline), Greg Cowdry (Jefferson Inn), Veronica Cowdry (Jefferson Inn), Heaven Lee (Jefferson Inn), Amanda (Jefferson Inn), and Maxine Samuels.

### **Christmas Festival - Carey Burnside**

Too soon to do Christmas Village. At the December meeting set a budget to get Christmas decorations after Christmas. Start planning in July for 2024. Advertise at this year's Christmas Festival that we will do a competition in 2024 for a Christmas Village. Charge entrance to the Village and give a portion of the proceeds to the competition winner.

NOTE: Liz will take care of vendors for all Chamber events.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Pam made a motion to approve the September 2023 minutes as presented. Seconded by Sharon. Motion carried.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Chiara reported for Sherre that the Main account has \$69,447.58, Rodeo account is \$25,431.37, and Savings account is \$10,019.25 for a total of \$104,898.20.

### **Trunk or Treat - Liz Pullman**

Raven has volunteered to run the Trunk or Treat and Costume Contest on October 28th 4 to 6 pm in front of the Haunted House. There will be 2 food trucks. The road will be shut down from the alley through First.

### **Coordinator Report - Chiara Schober**

Our Constant Contact average email open rate is 57%, the reported business average is 21.5%.

The Chamber office was contacted by a company that offers self-service kayak and paddleboard rentals. It looks like an interesting opportunity and Chiara thought she'd see if anyone knows who might be interested in learning more. Chiara is also looking into information on becoming a Continental Divide Trail Gateway Community. The Continental Divide Trail Coalition just celebrated their one year anniversary. Greg suggested advertising to the hiking groups. One is called Trail Angles.

Chiara is attending several Safety Fest MT virtual education sessions all next week. This is offered free of charge by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry. She expects to gather information to share with our businesses. Chiara is also participating in a 3 day session to prepare for the Small Business Season. This event, Jingle all the way to the bank: Boosting Your Local Economy, offers 3 days of challenges.

Fall M.A.C.E. Conference in Helena. Chiara applied for and was awarded a \$250 Scholarship to help offset the cost of attending the conference. M.A.C.E. Stand for Montana Association of Chamber Executives. She continues to build strong relationships with Chamber Professionals from across the state. She looks forward to utilizing many of the tips and tricks she learned last week. One of them was to have prizes at meetings. Chiara has a gift bag curated by Kristy at the Western Legacy Center. The other was to keep your mind and body healthy, self-care is so important - have everyone pick a present to give yourself. Amelia Schober picked the winner - Maxine.

\*Chiara had a lady call the Chamber looking for help finding a man named Jim, a Highway Patrolman, and an Ambulance driver who helped on September 21st. when her husband had a medical emergency on the freeway outside of Whitehall. She would like to send them personal Thank You's. Information was given to Liz.

### **Additional Business/Public Comment**

-How do we connect with others to keep schedules from overlapping?

-Greg pointed out that Whitehall is growing, but we don't see it. How do we get businesses to put more effort into boosting the community?

-Change the negative narrative within the Community as Community Leaders. Stop the negativity as soon as you hear it. Remove the question: Where are you from? Montana is getting a terrible rap for being "not nice."

### **Business After Hours - Hosted by Jefferson Inn**

Submitted by:

Chiara Schober