

**Cochran-Bleckley Chamber of Commerce Meeting Minutes
In Person at City Auditorium
Tuesday, August 11, 2020
9:00 AM**

Present: Mike Stoy – Chairperson, Dani Dykes – Vice Chairperson, Catherine Mullis Secretary – Treasurer, Rusty Lloyd – Past Chair, Ann Bennett, Lisa Chastain, Quincy Nobles, Brock Wilcher, Henry Whitfield – Call in and Bob Brockman

Absent: Scott Cox, Mike Davis, Matt Fordham, Billy Yeomans, Steve Smith

Recognition of Guests: Richard Newbern, City of Cochran, James Tidwell, Times Journal Post.

Minutes

Items Discussed:

Since Monday, May 4th our office hours Chamber/IDA/DDA lobby hours have been:
Monday 8-5 Tuesday 8-5 Wednesday 8-12 Thursday 8-5 Friday 8-12

2020 Chamber Business of the Month:

January – McDonald's	February – Paulk Landscaping
March – Dairy Queen	April – Davis Propane
May – State Farm	June – Food Depot Market Place
July – Bleckley County Hospital	August – Heartland
September – At Home	

It has been difficult to continue this program with COVID-19 and being limited staff. Accepted nomination from the board for August. Motion by Brock Wilcher with second Ann Bennett. Board passed unanimous. September Motion by Dani Dykes with Rusty Lloyd. Board passed unanimous.

Discussion Items:

Chairman Stoy – general comments

Executive Committee (Dr. Stoy, Dani Dykes, Cat Mullis, & Rusty Lloyd) met July 24 to discuss moving forward with personnel position for the Chamber. Our Chamber membership revenue runs based on current/past membership around \$25,000 per year. With current COVID-19 and current/past expenses it would place the Chamber in hardship on hiring a replacement for Robin with little to no income generating in sponsorship for events. Option as we move forward, keep as is, Maybe look at a part time professional position. Need someone to provide leadership to marketing, public relations, communication, member support services, event planner.

Digital Sign Process falls within the current Zoning Ordinance under Variable Message Signs.

Chamber Events in 2020 discussion into should we cancel, postpone, and/or move forward. Country Fest – Motion made by Brock Wilcher to cancel/postpone Country Fest until 2021 with Lisa Chastain second. Board passed unanimous.

Middle Georgia State University is only accepting events with attendance of 50 or less. This would impact any plans to move forward with an annual banquet in 2021.

Cochran-Bleckley Chamber of Commerce Mission Statement
To promote local business growth and healthy community relationships.

Online Candidate Forum with no audience and broadcast to Facebook/Youtube. Chamber is contracted with Two Nine Production – Joseph Kelly. In additional candidates' responses to the questions will be ran in the Times Journal Post.

Copier – Email Electronic Vote to Purchase Copier took place July 27 – 29, 2020. Mike Stoy Yes, Dani Dykes Yes, Rusty Lloyd Yes, Ann Bennet Yes, Lisa Chastain Yes, Scott Cox Yes, Mike Davis Yes, Quincy Nobles Yes, Brock Wilcher Yes, Cat Mullis Yes. Copier ordered July 28, 2020. To be sure we took another vote with Dani Dykes made the motion with the second from Lisa Chastain/Rusty Lloyd. Board passed unanimous.

Statewide General Election is November 3, 2020. Advance/Early Voting will begin on October 12, 2020.

Please encourage others to complete their 2020 Census online! The 2020 Census will determine congressional representation, deliver hundreds of billions in federal funding every year, and provide data that will impact communities for the next decade.

August 20th Mobile Food Pantry – Volunteers needed and would be appreciated. Pre work starts at 8:30 and distribution follow as soon as food packaged.

Back to School Drive in Bash – Heartland July 31st. Chamber gave \$500 to help purchase supplies for the event.

Fireworks inventory – Purchased for Country Fest 2019. Board agree to establish a committee to make a recommendation. Rusty and Brock will provide leadership to the committee as to when we will have a social distancing firework event soon.

DDA/City of Cochran update. Rusty Lloyd discuss the benches are being updated with new wood slates, the comments received around the community of the pressure washing of the sidewalks, edging the sidewalks, improvement to State Bank Lane, Planters downtown was planted with new plants.

Hotel Motel Tax - discussion for city council to consider raising the tax to increase revenue for tourism and festival promotions. Rusty Lloyd made the motion with the second from Ann Bennett. Board passed unanimous. Richard and Andy will work to have a discussion at an upcoming work session schedule.

Cochran Clean-up Day Saturday, September 19, 2020 – City of Cochran, DDA and Chamber sponsors event from 9 am until noon. Need Volunteers to help pick up litter and someone to do a welcome. Dr. Stoy will assist with welcome.

Transportation Investment Act which authorized a one percent regional sales tax for transportation known as TSPLOST is to be on the ballot in November. Motion made by Dr. Stoy/Lisa Stoy to endorse the Regional TSPLOST with Brock Wilcher second. Board passed unanimous.

Next meeting date: September 11, 2020

Motion by Dani Dykes to adjourn the meeting. Second by Cat Mullis. Motion carried.