

Attending: Bob Chapman, Pam Uthoff, Emily Griswold, Peter Mountzoures, George Young, Cindi Taylor, Cathy Frank, Charlie Delinks (board members); Tony Sheridan, Sheri Cote (ECT); Steve Ross, Pat McCarthy

Absent: John Stratton, Betsy Dill

Call to Order

Bob Chapman called the meeting to order at 8:10am

Reports from Steve Ross

- Steve presented an update on the CMRK St Vincent DePaul clothing collection bins located at Shoreline Mowers, the Bowerbird, Route 1 near Oriental Cafe and at Lyme Firehouse. The program resulted in \$2700 in Chamber revenues last year – more than any other Chamber event, according to Steve. He & Charlie Delinks have keys to the collection boxes. Bowerbird's has the most traffic (based upon # of pick ups). The Chamber receives one check annually – the next is due in April 2010.
- The second Destination Lyme/Old Lyme brochure is due by Memorial Day. Essex Printing will distribute 15,000 copies. Although the Chamber subsidized the first brochure (@ \$10 per member), it is not doing so for this edition.

Eastern CT

- Copies of a new LOL Chamber/ECT Banner design were distributed. Sheri Cote requested an approval by the board for production of the banner. A motion was made by George, seconded by Cindi to approve the banner design & authorize production. Motion passed 5 to 1.
- There have been no ECT Board meetings since the last LOLCC board meeting.
- Tony Sheridan distributed copies of the current 3 year agreement between ECT and LOL. (attached) Steve has been negotiating a Proposed Dues Structure (for after the 3 year period).

The proposal calls for 2 basic membership options: a social/individual membership under a person's name with no access to ECT services outside of informational resources; and a business membership which includes all employees under the business name and gives full access to all ECT services. The LOL Council would determine eligibility for the social option, which ECT will be offering to all members. Previous discussions have suggested that small business owners in LOL could be social members (at a lower membership fee), but Tony stated that ECT cannot agree to that. The social membership category is designed specifically with retired businesspeople in mind.

The questions members need to ask, said Tony, is "do I get my money's worth from the Chamber?" Current member fees are \$280 annually. There has been no increase in 4 years. ECT's membership directory reaches 40,000; a recently produced video featuring Old Lyme (Flo Gris Museum and Lyme Academy College) will be played on all ferry crossings (reaching 1.5 million people annually). The ECT website draws 47,000 page views monthly. ECT's purpose is to promote the business community in southeastern CT.

George Young suggested there may be a philosophical difference between ECT and the LOL Chamber, noting the question for LOL members is "what does the Old Lyme Chamber want to be?"

Steve indicated that a 3rd membership option for LOL might be to reinstate its previous relationship with ECT. He recommended that a sub-committee draft guidelines for social membership to be presented to ECT. A motion was made by Pam, seconded by Cindi to form a sub-committee. Motion passed unanimously. George Young and Pam Uthoff agreed to be the sub-committee. Pam suggested that Betsy Dill also serve on the sub-committee. Charlie expressed a concern that ECT "tends to take over" projects and responsibilities instead of assisting with them. Others pointed to some communication issues with some ECT staff.

Tony, Sheri & Steve spoke about the ECT Chamber Foundation which makes charitable donations to organizations in its member councils. A letter from Bob Chapman requesting funding for LYSB programs will be drafted & sent to the Foundation.

Correspondence

- Donation requests will be discussed later in the meeting
- A letter from Neil Gottfried describing the history of the Chamber's Historic District benches was passed around and is attached.

•

Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by George, seconded by Emily to approve the minutes of January 13 (*previously distributed*). Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

- Cathy pointed out that only \$5,223 has been allocated for donations, including scholarships, in the 2010 budget prepared by Eastern CT for LOL. If the Chamber makes donations comparable to previous years, we will be over budget and may need to request a budget increase from ECT. Steve questioned the low donations budget allocation and stated that the budget for scholarships should not be less than \$4,000.
- The LOL account balances from January were presented (attached). Steve suggested that the word "scholarship" be dropped from an Essex account. He also suggested that, due to current interest rates, the CD be closed upon maturity with funds transferred to savings. Cathy will submit debit card and Got V Mail expenses to ECT until a new Treasurer is in place.

Old Business

- Cathy suggested that Charlie Delinks, Steve Ross, and Pam Stevens (who negotiated the existing LOL agreement with ECT) initiate the Merger Discussion at the March Dinner Meeting by presenting a brief history/explanation of the merger. The board agreed to the format, and Charlie & Steve agreed to speak. Pam will be contacted. Tony Sheridan (or his designate) will attend the meeting to answer questions if necessary. Bob Chapman will be out of town, so John Stratton will chair the meeting.
- Scholarship Committee Recommendation: purchase artwork from graduating scholarship recipient & donate to community TABLED
- Scholarships *recommendation from member to add post HS graduation support to scholarship program* TABLED
- The board was reminded of its decision to relocate Historic District benches from corner of Lyme Street to Halls when weather permits.

2009-2010 Events

- Emily Griswold updated the board on plans for Taste of the Lymes on Sunday, April 18 at Lyme Art Association. Tickets will be mailed to members this week.
- Steve Ross volunteered to order Memorial Day flags and was given the folder from the Treasurer's files.
- Midsummer Festival fireworks (glow sticks, water) July TABLED
- Pam suggested November as a date for the new Author Event. (for publication in Destination Lyme/Old Lyme)
- Pet Parade Saturday, October 9 (rain date October 10). Charlie suggested contacting Missy Colburn at the LYSB to suggest collaboration on the event.
- Toys for Tots; local toy needs TABLED
- Tree Lighting & Carol Sing: pizza & coupons TABLED

New Business

- Speakers/Dinner Programs *April & May*. Cathy reported that Hans Hartman from Comcast Cable will be in the Chamber Spotlight in March.
- Bob recently named Emily Griswold to the nominating committee (with Pam Uthoff & Cathy Frank). The committee will meet soon & hope to have a new Treasurer in place shortly. In the meanwhile, Cathy said she would maintain the records so that information remains current.
- A list of "unpaid" members was circulated. Board members initialed next to members they will contact. (Annotated list is attached)

- Donation requests

The Board reviewed prior years' donation requests. The Chamber sponsors BS Troop 26 but a Boy Scout request has not been received this year.

Steve Ross spoke against donating to a Girl Scout community service project in Ghana and the high school graduation party, indicating that the Chamber had historically declined to fund those kinds of activities. Cathy spoke in favor of supporting community service and the alcohol-free event.

A motion to donate \$100 to Jennifer Chapman & Amy Lee for their Girl Scout service project was made by Cathy, seconded by Emily and passed 3 to 2.

A motion to donate \$100 to the LOLHS Graduation Party was made by Cathy, seconded by Emily and passed 4 to 1.

A motion to donate \$400 to the Midsummer Festival was made by Pam, seconded by Peter and passed unanimously.

A motion to donate \$250 to the OL Visiting Nurse Association was made by George, seconded by Pam and passed unanimously.

A motion to donate \$200 to the OL Fire Dept was made by Pam, seconded by Cathy and passed unanimously.

A motion to donate \$350 to Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Food Pantries was made by Pam, seconded by George and passed unanimously.

The next board meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 5, 8am at the Town Hall.
Meeting adjourned at 10:15am.

Cathy Frank
13 March 2010

