

SYLVESTER-WORTH COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 16, 2021
SYLVESTER-WORTH COUNTY CHAMBER/EDA

The following committee members were in attendance: Chris Shipp – Chair, Jean Brooks, Laura Searcy, John McPhaul, Nehemiah Cummings, Ashley Giddens and Karen Rackley.

CALL TO ORDER: This meeting was called to order at 11:07 AM by Chris Shipp.

PRAYER AND PLEDGE: Prayer led by Chris Shipp and Pledge led by Laura Searcy

AGENDA: John McPhaul made a motion to accept the agenda as submitted. Laura Searcy seconded the motion the motion passed.

MINUTES: November 17, 2020 Minutes. Jean Brooks motioned to accept the minutes as submitted. John McPhaul seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Member Count at start: 302
Drops in the last year: 42
Adds in the last year: 42
Member Count at end: 302

Cancellation Rate: 13.9
Retention Rate: 86.1

- **COVID-19 Efforts- Unemployment** - Our unemployment rate is below the state average. Con Agra Employees that wanted to go back to work have all been absorbed back into the workplace.
- **2020 4th Quarter Matrix – (attached)** – Record number of Ribbon Cuttings, Membership and Business openings in 2020 despite COVID-19.
- **Valentine Give-A-Way** – The Employees were tasked with engaging membership as well as community for a Valentine Give-A-Way. We had over 50 businesses participate, and the value of the basket was over \$1200.00. It was decided to engage on Social Media. You had to like our post, tag 3 people, name your favorite business and like our page on Instagram to be entered.
- **Social Media – Chamber Group Page Dedicated to Chamber Members – Engagement Crucial**
Engagement on these social media platforms is crucial. The Chamber is the core/center of the community and where everybody goes to find out about events and what businesses we have in our community. Please be sure and follow us on social media and share our posts.

FOLLOW ON FB, Twitter, and Instagram - UPDATE

Facebook: Sylvester-Worth County Chamber of Commerce

Instagram: swcountychamber

Twitter: swcountychamber

#swcountychamber

- **Membership Renewal/New Member Letters / Dropped** - Over 80% of our membership has renewed their membership for the upcoming year. We have drafted Membership Renewal Letters, New Member Letters, and a Dropped letter with a survey for feedback. The staff calls each renewal and updates their information on the backend of the Website so that we have the most up to date information on our members.
- **Scheduled Business Visits – Last Visits were made in Sylvester Area – Set Date – Warwick** - Mr. Chris Shipp, Johnny Bryan, Karen Rackley and Kayla Pierson visited over 25 members on December 12, 2020. We delivered Decal letters as well as a Chamber Cookie. The visits were welcomed and informative. We also got to hear 1st hand on the wellness of most the businesses we visited and how they are maneuvering COVID 19 within their business.

- **Zoom Meetings / Tech ready Conference Room** - We would like to thank CTSI and Worth County Board of Education for their help. We are set up for future meetings to be mirrored on the TV so that we can cut down on paper. We also are ZOOM ready if we want to host virtual meetings.
- **SBDC – Business Webinars - Visit their Website – Due to COVID-19 Funding they can offer free Virtual Webinars.** We blast out the informative Webinars to our membership. This week the Webinar was on how you can best optimize your presence on Google.
- **Business Testimony's - Start with Chamber Directors/Ambassador Businesses** - Karen asked that each member send in a Testimony on why you should join the Chamber of Commerce.
- **Monthly Video's – Start Scheduling for a Business a Month. Will reach out to those who want to be highlighted. 1st Come / 1st Serve basis –**
An open discussion was held on the Business Spotlight of the Month. We can video the Business Spotlight of the week/month and it will be done on a 1st come 1st serve basis. It was decided not to charge. We will Email our Membership and ask for a Testimony and the first on to respond will be highlighted on our Social Media.
- **Signs – Double Sided - I am a Chamber Member (Date??) – Option Sign or Decal – Both?**
2 Color Double Sided \$11.00 / 50 Each
1 Color Double Sided \$9.00 / 50 Each - It was decided to order 50 EA double sided one color I am a Chamber Member signs. Karen will get a proof and send out to everyone for approval.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **RAMTech – College and Career Academy** – The College and Career Academy is now ready to market its services to the community and encourage more students to sign up for the available pathways. The Committee was updated on the Program and was asked to help get out the word about RamTECH.
- **Director/Ambassador Cards - QR Code- Scans to Join the Chamber** - Karen presented the idea for Business Cards for the Directors/Ambassadors that have our QR Code on them that when scanned takes you to the Join the Chamber link on the Webpage. The committee discussed whether to have the Director's Ambassadors names on the Card and it was decided to do a generic card. Karen will get the staff to work on the card and present to our Directors and Ambassadors at our next meetings.
- **Community Magazine – New Launch - Plant the Seed/Watch it Grow/Reap the Benefits in Sylvester-Worth County - Businesses will be receiving letters to advertise in Magazine soon.** We will launch the advertising and solicitation for Adds for our next magazine in the next few weeks. The committee was asked to help spread the word. We give out over 3,000 of the magazines in two years and we have it available online.
- **Membership Dues - Review Dues Structure / Raise Dues?**
Karen stated that our dues have not risen in over 10 years. She suggested a few options. After discussion, the membership committee stated that they would like to see a tier of the dues. Karen will work on it and get out to the committee.
- **Annual Dinner – The Annual Dinner was postponed.** Karen suggested that instead of picking a Business of the year we RECOGNIZE ALL SMALL BUSINESSES IN WORTH COUNTY. Same with Good Will Ambassador and Farmers. We will submit to our events committee for approval.
- **New Businesses in Sylvester-Worth County** – We had a total of 17 Ribbon Cuttings – Record new businesses opening in Sylvester-Worth County as well as expansions. We saw very few closures during COVID>
- **Ribbon Cutting** – March 3 at 1:30 PM– Dental Partners - Ribbon Cutting
- **Diversity and Inclusion** - Chris Shipp stated that he would like to see, during Black History Month, a focus on Black Businesses or posts recognizing Black History Month.

ADJOURNMENT – The next committee meeting for the Membership Committee will be held on May 18, 2021 @ 11:00 AM

MISSION STATEMENT: Create and maintain good public relationships and chamber etiquette through increasing membership and revenue, visiting local businesses and supporting initiatives that highlight local businesses and our community.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Order Chamber Member Signs - 50 EA one Color – Send Proof to Membership Committee
- Cards for Directors/Chamber with QR Code – Staff – **Deadline Feb 25 Meeting**
- Testimonies – Committee Members – Send to info@swcountychamber.com
- Membership Visits – Warwick, GA – March 4, 2021 **OR** March 8, 2021– 10:00 AM Departure from the Chamber – Scheduled
Kayla – Add to all Calendars
Schedule Email Reminder to Committee for Friday Before
Schedule Call Reminder Day Before
- Dues Structure – **COMPLETED** (Attached)
- Diversity and Inclusion – Chris Shipp stated he would like to see posts concerning Black History Month **Staff**