

Fremont Chamber of Commerce Board Meeting
October 29, 2014
History House of Greater Seattle

Attending: Pete Hanning, Kathy Moeller, Sean Erhardt, Kerston Swartz, Riq Molina, Paul Nordstrand, Susan Fuller, Rodman Miller

Jessica Vets, Caroline Sherman

Guests: Kirby Lindsay, Jennifer Beus--PCC Natural Markets, Paul Doak, ID Financial/Finance Committee

The meeting was called to order at 8:07 AM by Pete Hanning

Introductions around the room

Motion to approve the September Board Meeting Minutes made by **Paul Nordstrand**, seconded by **Kathy Moeller** and were **APPROVED**.

Executive Director's Report:

- Membership update. Numbers seem low due to culling of lapsed members that happens prior to Walking Guide.
- Only In Seattle Grant continuing. Chamber Dashboard has had over 600-700 downloads around the world! Next year, a global app.
- FAC—Jessica met with them--will explore long-term funding for them. They are losing their float storage space. Please pass along any tips for space. Kirby said City is creating Arts Centers around the City.
- 5-tiers for Only in Seattle Grants. Deadline is coming up.

Member Drive Training

- Membership Drive: Need to get the board (YOU!) involved.
- Launching 2-week concentrated effort.
- Marketing Committee has developed materials to make it easy and fun (see Membership Drive Toolkit that was distributed.)
- It's important to have Board Members invite new members, because you have a passion for it, and you are not a paid flunky.
- So, WHY are you passionate about FCC? Pass this on. WHY now? Walking Guide (targeted at tourists) effort is happening now, so prospective members have a good view of Chamber. Business Directory is coming up and is targeted at residents and attracts older people and is good for service as well as retailer businesses. See Jessica's handout for talking points.
- Talk to 10 and hope for 3.
- Meet with Jessica for background on individual businesses. Consider also businesses you know that aren't on the list. Consider walking the neighborhood with Jessica.
- Non-profits are all about community (more so than for-profits.) The Chamber partners with the non-profits to showcase what they do and how they help the community. Also provides non-profits with resources. Every member gets access to the database of over 1,000 emails & addresses.
- Change in dues structure should also help.

Executive Committee: Pete

Suzie, Ken, Marco, Pete. Talked about membership. Talked about board retreat—working on date in January.

Finance Dashboard: Riq

See back of agenda. Trying to switch to a Calendar year. Working on figuring out fixed costs to

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See back of agenda. Trying to switch to a Calendar year. Working on figuring out fixed costs to show where we are and how we are budgeting for this year. Managing liquidity and funding grants.

Finance Committee:

Credit cards: 3 different systems: Gravity Payments in office, PayPal, & Square. Cumbersome system, costly—takes time to go to three different systems to collect information and the fees are high (around 4%). Looked at consolidating. The website can't handle a high-end system.

Reviewed four different systems. Platinum Payment processing is being used by Ballard Chamber who speaks very highly of them. Will bring rate down to 2.49% or lower. There will be one statement each month and lower cost overall. Includes mobile, online & desktop payment options. Why so low? Leads to a good rep for Platinum. Will be switching over 1st of December after WG is done. Will provide unlimited training for staff.

Paul Doak, CFP's Presentation:

- Total Income for the Year: \$108,000/yr
- Total Expenses for the Year: <\$100,520>
- Charitable Grants: <\$8,000>
- 3 Main Sources of Revenue: Membership, Oktober Fest & Fremont Fair, and none of these are guaranteed.
- Expenses do NOT include grants/charitable contributions: \$8,000
- We had a good healthy reserve, but we used it up, so we need to return to building it back up.
- Modest Goal: to get 6 months expenses reserve (prefer a year.) So we need to sock away at least 6 x \$6k = \$36,000 minimum.
- Working on this new budget and switching to calendar year. One of the items is: Will we fund the full Grant Cycle? We will discuss a percentage of what we will fund. If we are willing to suspend the Grant Cycle in December and June, and use those monies to build the reserve, then we can use new funds for subsequent grants. We may facilitate grants from other organizations, so we are still seen as supportive, even as we are not using our own monies. Aside from that, it's difficult to say what percentage to use or how long it will take to build the reserves back up. It may take a few years of ratcheting back the Grant Cycle. Look at board expenses to trim.
- Finance Meetings are the Monday prior to the Board meeting. In November, all meetings are shifting one week early due to Thanksgiving. See agenda for dates.

Membership:

Had a great Speed Networking event! We do a number of these multi-chamber events per year. This one was hosted by Queen Anne and held at Courtyard Marriott. Green Lake Chamber ran the sessions. Went really well. Learned some things and everyone had a fun time.

This Saturday is Fremont Clean-Up Day! Jessica will be at the Troll for 2 hours collecting signups. Has 2 signups--would love to get 40. Hours: 10-noon. Free Starbucks & PIE's mini-pie for volunteers.

How many individuals join the Chamber? It's a great way to do a "starter membership". It is great to have this low entry-point. Dues are shifting so what was Individual is now Friend (\$75 to \$50.) Won't be listed in business directory on website. Incentive for small businesses to join at \$150. "Club of Awesomeness" for individuals. Individuals steer away from a Chamber of "Commerce", because they may not be about commerce. It's more about Community. Blends consumers with businesses.

Consider a Board Membership Drive Contest! Jessica will find prize, but let her know what you would like. Wine, whiskey, Red Door, etc. Last year was the first stroke of paint on Fremont Bridge. Unique, intangible items.

Programs:

Speed Networking went well. Good attendance. This was a multi-Chamber event and was good to partner with Queen Anne as the host.

We have a Fremont Clean Up, this Saturday, 10a meeting at the Troll. Jessica needs volunteers.

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Retail Committee:

20 businesses will participate in the Shop Fremont for the Holidays Campaign. Half-page ad in the Seattle Times for \$2,700 dollars plus impressions on website, normally \$4,700. Partnering with C-89.5 Radio--Nathan Hale High School; FCC get announcements in exchange for their Chamber membership.

Major Events:

Kirby: 3 minor events:

- Trick-Or-Treat—nearly 150 businesses participating. Great calendar on website.
- December—Fremont Festivus. Fremocentrist is sponsoring this. This event will be the kick-off to Fremont holiday shopping season. Will be doing ads on website fremocentrist.com/festivus. Lenin lighting, dancing, etc. Possibly Fremont Philharmonic, Santa?, etc. The week after Black Friday. Fremont Art Walk—Molly Bryant getting a replacement for herself. Will have a Holiday Bazaar.
- Fremont Fireside Chat—Fremont history 1850-1900.
- Start working on underwriting for event next year.

Trolloween this Friday

- Bars doing costume contest
- Troll-a-gogo at Doric Lodge

Technology Committee:

Chamber Dashboard Training Nov 6 afternoon (~2:00pm). 20 min overview followed by 1.5 hour hands on training. Free tool for WordPress websites. CRM, calendaring, directory.

Community Groups:

Fremont Neighborhood Council is desperately recruiting board members. Looking at becoming a 501(c)3. Railing on Aurora Bridge to be painted and de-rusted. Will replace caps, take rust off & paint. 2-year project starting summer of 2015-2017. One lane closures for duration. Will do painting at night. Containment underneath which will impact businesses. Is this being timed with other projects on Aurora? Yes and no—the bridge won't be shut down, however, folks are concerned that traffic will be stalled. Contact is: Juan Hay at WA DOT. WA DOT website is excellent. Need to bring a WA DOT rep to board meeting.

Safety & Transportation:

Scheduling time with SDOT to walk downtown core looking for areas that can accept bike corrals to get bike parking off the sidewalks. This will allow for more parking of bicycles and better pedestrian movement and improves view corridor.

Governmental Committee:

Ann went to Westlake Cycle Track meeting. Very contentious issue. City *is* listening a bit to residents & businesses. Will add dedicated bike path along Westlake. If they put it in, it makes it bad for freight movement. Will design for 10 mph which is slow for bicyclists, but is fast if they are whizzing by you. Would lead to 10% loss of parking at least, more likely 50%. Will try to work with SPD & SDOT on this. Sunday Market is having trouble with cyclists whizzing through. We want to be supportive of all kinds of transportation but also encourage safety.

Westlake put in a sidewalk/bike trail a few years ago. Bicyclists & pedestrians both feel threatened as do the businesses that must cross it to load & unload. Debating putting it on outside of parking lot.

NOTE: Please tell SDOT that pedestrians NEED to be able to cross when the Fremont Bridge is up! Change pedestrian lights to GREEN!

Adjourned at 9:28 am.

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Minutes submitted by **Caroline Sherman**

FCC Board Minutes

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