

**Norwood Chamber of Commerce of Wright's Mesa
Executive Board Meeting - Minutes
March 8, 2022, Lone Cone Library**

I. Called to Order at 12:06 p.m.

Board members present in person were: John Metzger, Gretchen Wells, Nola Svoboda, Terri Lamers, Becky Hannigan, Bernice White

Guest members present were: Carrie Andrew, Amanda Pierce, Sonny Lopez, Deana Sheriff

II. Approve Minutes

Becky made the motion to approve the minutes from January, Bernice seconded, all in favor.

III. Officers' Reports

John Metzger / President

- **Fire Department**

- John reported that the fire department is about to annex in size, increasing in 1200 in square miles from 750 which will require a \$40,000 per year increase in the mil levy.

- **Deana Sheriff - WEEDC**

- **Businesses and Housing**

- Deana said WEEDC has been very busy for the past three years. At the moment when working with small businesses, there are eight coming to the area.
- They are in the process of helping three companies transition to employee-owned businesses.
- She said there are very few commercial buildings in the area. They will be focusing on bringing in more main street commercial business. However there will need to be more housing in order to make this happen. They have helped with the Norwood project. But did not get the Nucla property, but are looking for new property opportunities.
- WEEDC does not want to bring in huge subdivisions. They want to grow slowly and responsibly.
- Deana said they are feeling a pinch for long-term rentals and Norwood might want to consider a limit on STRs. Carrie said there are now 74 applicants of those interested 25 of them live/work in Norwood. If they are approved for mortgages, the project will be fully funded and housed.
- As far as progress, Carrie reported people could be moving in by October/November.

- The town partnered with the company for a DOLA grant to help keep the costs down.
- Overall, WEEDC is still seeing businesses and families that are desperate to move to the West End.
- **Senior Meals**
 - WEEDC has suddenly been involved in the Senior Centers and Senior Meals. WEEDC is getting involved in the senior community meals program because Volunteers of America has pulled out to get people interactive with each other. WEEDC is looking at options with Region 10 to find ways to self-fund the meals program through the communities and keep the home delivered meals in Region 20's network. WEEDC wants to get involved in the community development portion to help get seniors interactive with each other. There was a luncheon on Nucla that was very well attended. Food was provided by the culinary program. They would like to have one in Norwood and Carrie has offered the library space. Carrie said the library could help in a non federal regulation level due to the fact that the kitchen is not a commercial kitchen.
 - They are looking at funding options to get the program going. If WEEDC isn't bound by federal regulation, it opens the doors of who they can work and partner with.
 - One of the fundraiser ideas for a membership model which could "sponsor a senior."
- **Tourism**
 - Deana just finished a massive month of grant writing. One is for the Colorado Tourism Management Plan for a program called Travel Storyz, which takes a destination area and puts in 20 gps points which people can download on their phones. They agreed to give a \$5,000 contract, but upped it to \$7,000 to fix the billboard at Whitewater.
 - Brock Benson is doing a program called Wecast, a monthly podcast about the West End. He has agreed to be the narrator for the app.
 - The idea is to get people to stop at specific locations along their journey and linger longer.
 - John brought up the changes going on at the Montrose airport. Deana said Montrose County had promised the full \$8 million would go to Nucla/Naturita and Olathe. Now just 1.5 million will be split between the three communities for infrastructure. She is sure the rest of the funds will be going toward a new jail in Montrose.

- CampV will be having a large event this summer called “Planet V” in which they anticipate the event will bring a large number of people to the region and will need lodging.
 - Deana reported the RV park in Naturita is fully booked for the summer thanks to construction companies.
- **Sonny Lopez - Thrive Investment Group**
 - Jelly ball is like pee wee baseball for paintball, specifically for kids. Adults love it too. A lot like Orbeez.
 - They’ve done a couple fundraisers that have been successful. They are willing to work with anyone on fundraisers.
 - Sonny talked about his new business venture, his paintball park and campground.
 - Sonny mentioned cryptocurrency and the role it will play in the future, and about NFTs and possible ways businesses might be able to utilize them. Sonny believes the quicker business owners learn about crypto and NFTs the better off the community will be.
 - Sonny has created an NFT project for his campground in which he plans to sell NFTs for nightly stays at his campground, and giving away NFTs in return for supporting his project.
 - Sonny would like to host a class for the community to educate everyone about cryptocurrency and NFTs. John would love to see a class such as this that the chamber could sponsor.
 - Nola reiterated Sonny’s sentiments about the importance of educating the community about cryptocurrency, blockchains, Web 3, and the future financial system.

Terri Lamers / Treasurer

- **Treasurer’s Report**
 - There was not a Treasurer’s report to present.
 - Terri is going to move some of the advertising money down to digital marketing.
 - Terri did talk to a brochure company about getting stocking brochures in the visitor’s center. She will be sharing more info on this. The end of April is the deadline to have an ad ready to go.

Nola Svoboda / Secretary

- **Marketing Report; website and social media**
 - Nola explained more about Discord and showed the board around the server and channels she had set up.
 - Nola will send an invite for the board to join again.
- **Nola’s new budget**
 - The board discussed Nola’s request for a rate increase.

- Carrie suggested moving some of the “advertising” funds over to digital marketing, especially because John has been so great about writing articles for the paper.
- Bernice made a motion to increase Nola’s budget to \$700 per month. Becky seconded, all in favor. This increase will take effect next month.
- **Blog**
 - March’s blog will be a feature on the importance of honey bees.
 - April Quarterly business feature - Nola asked the board to think about businesses to feature.
 - May’s topic could be on Liza Tanguay’s return of her dinner theater event at The Livery.

Gretchen Wells / VP

- **Pioneer Day/MTD**
 - Gretchen said that the MTD would like to hang a banner below the chamber’s banner. Amanda said that CDOT wouldn’t allow the height requirement.
 - Becky asked Gretchen if they would like to purchase half of the banner space, but it would have to be coordinated through Coach’s Mother.
 - Amanda reminded the board that all things with the banner have to go through the town first.

Becky Hannigan / New Member At-Large

- **Quarterly Business meeting**
 - Becky reported her and Gretchen had a lot of success with a town walk around.
 - Becky thinks the membership drive is falling in place with the walk around.

Bernice White / Member At-Large

- Nothing to share.

IV. Old Business:

- **Quarterly Membership Meeting**
 - Becky asked about chairs, whether to furnish chairs or leave it standing.
 - Gretchen said the candidates needed to know whether they needed to speak or if it was a meet and greet mingle.
 - Becky said she reached out to them to decide what they would like to do.
 - Everyone agreed that the candidates should speak.
 - Terri suggested allotting the candidates a certain amount of time to speak. Nola suggested giving the candidates around 10 minutes.
 - Tanya will speak about her business.

- Gratchen ordered wine, beer and food trays from Clarks. Becky will get cups. Whoever picks up meat and cheese should grab crackers and bottle water also. Terri will bring a cooler. Chairs will be supplied by town.
 - Cost for Clarks is \$120 (not including cups or crackers), for alcohol is TBA.
 - Terri could give Clark's a check ahead of time, or when she and Bernice pick up the trays Thursday afternoon.
- **Banner Pole on Main Street**
 - Gretchen asked about progress. Carrie had an update from Demian that he is meeting with Hank to discuss construction and hopefully the pole will be up in April.

V. New Business

- **Town Updates**
 - Amanda reported housing - Pinion Park is breaking ground next week.
 - Town board meeting will be in the final step of the annexation for the mountain village subdivision. Fire department has bowed out of purchasing the 19 acres so the town can have the possibility.
 - The town is working with the DOLA University Technical Assistance CU Denver program to create plans for each open space in town. Trail connectivity is part of the town's master plan. There are three plans for each open space that will be narrowed down.
 - The town will now feature a special agenda item for stakeholders to share updates, questions or concerns.
- **Rural Philanthropy Days**
 - Carrie said she and Amanda are on the planning committee for Rural Philanthropy Days June 7-9, which is to bring the front range grant makers to rural communities. It will be in Ridgway two days and in Norwood on June 9, bringing the grant makers to Norwood. They are holding to feature many of the projects that are near breaking ground.
 - Carrie said this is an opportunity to bring these grant makers to Norwood and showcase that Norwood is on the cusp of change and there are opportunities for non profits or government entities to be involved.
 - She said the chamber could be involved by preparing marketing materials, having brochures ready, the banner ready and any imagery the chamber would like to have on the tv in the visitor center.

V. Public Comment

- Carrie said she would like to offer an in-kind membership for the library in exchange for a return for the space the chamber is using. Carrie said that if the chamber rented the room for two hours a month for 12 months at \$5 per hour, it would cost the chamber a lot more than the library is requesting in-kind trade. Bernice made the motion for an in-kind

trade for the time that the chamber is using the library's visitor center. Terri seconded, all in favor.

- Carrie talked about the library's plan to coordinate with the rest of town and the parks.

VI. Adjournment: All in favor of adjourning. Meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

Next Chamber Executive Board Meeting: Tuesday, April 12, 2021 at 12:00 p.m., at the Lone Cone Library.

Submitted by Nola Svoboda