

Bremen Area Chamber of Commerce

Minutes of the July 27, 2023 meeting

Those present: Alyssa Barnecut, Cenell Boch, Marilyn Boyd, Tim Byers, Brenda Carney, Vincent Carpico, Lydia Coakley, Sue Henwood, Toni Harper, Laura Kennedy, Nolan Lemar, Dee Mowry, Billy Robinette, Sue Schmitz, Ken Shofter, Linda Ward, David Weber, Heather Yontz, Denise Wingard, Jonette Haberfield, David Maple, Jessica Martinez, and speaker Jeff Fix

Vice president Cenell Boch called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and led the group in the pledge of allegiance. Pastor Linda Ward gave the invocation, and the ladies of the Bremen Bethel Presbyterian church served lunch. The secretary's report of the last meeting was approved as published on a motion by Dee Mowry, seconded by David Weber. Treasurer Sue Henwood reported the following account balances:

checking account:	\$ 4 189.60*
community fund:	5 889.08
CD:	13 434.23
CD:	12 138.64

*new CD opened 7/8/'23: 5 000.00 (with funds from the checking account as approved on a motion at the June 22, 2023 meeting)

She noted the interest on the CD's opened in March of this year is \$364.91; the chamber is now a member of the Bremen Area Historical Society, and the school supplies voted on in June will be purchased as there are Back-to-School specials. Last but not notable, our newest member, *Inline Underground HDD*, has indicated interest in the SOCA insurance program and has been forwarded the information.

In old business, there was some discussion about the chamber meetings - time? frequency? location? Concerns were expressed about likelihood of members coming to meetings held after their business day and the lack of consistency if we went to alternate months. Cenell as vice president will do a questionnaire to the membership looking for suggestions on marketing the chamber to the community and feasibility of collaborating with the Lancaster/Fairfield County, as well as Perry and Hocking county, chambers. Marilyn Boyd made a motion to have the information gathered taken to the executive board for action; Tim Byers seconded the motion, which carried. The BACofC was represented in the Bremen 4th of July parade; we need a committee to plan future participation, and interest can be assessed in the questionnaire.

Announcements:

Bremen Area Historical Society has a new facebook page and a membership level for businesses.

Fairfield County's first *Senior Expo*, at the fairgrounds, 8/ 25, 10 to 3, vendors FAIRHOPE Hospice *Wine, Vines & Fall Times* at Hocking Hills Winery, 9/7, 5:30 *Strike Out Breast Cancer!* at Tiki Lanes, 10/22, 10 a.m. or 1p.m.

Speaker for the day was County Commissioner Jeff Fix, representing the three commissioners, who oversee 20 boards, 18 departments and 13 elected officials. He noted that our county is the 4th fastest growing in the state and that townships and villages are up-dating their zoning codes and regulations for builders wanting to meet the housing needs resulting from this growth and for concerns about solar panel fields. The latter are being addressed in frequent meetings with property owners, township trustees and the commissioners. Commissioner Fix indicated that the "war on generational poverty" began in September of 2022 has been divided into three areas of emphasis: jobs and training by Mr. Levacy, transportation by Mr. Davis, and affordable housing by Mr. Fix. The Hicks Group is collaborating on grant applications that can help in each area for villages, townships and the county.

Employers are partnering with the county to get the workforce they need. Impediments like drug addiction and illiteracy are countered by emphasis on literacy at the juvenile detention center and participation in *Dolly's Imagination Station* that puts books in the hands of babies through 5 year olds, to get them an early start.

Recognizing a need for employees to get to their jobs, the county is studying the possibility of taking over the Lancaster transit system and expanding it to get people to the new businesses not associated with housing centers.

A housing symposium in 2022 involved villages and townships, And tax incentives may help build the workforce housing needed - not subsidized like Section 8, but affordable. There are 60 units currently going up in Lancaster.

The meeting was adjourned. We will meet on August 24.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Schmitz, secretary