

**Greater Wheatland Area**  
**Chamber of Commerce**  
Minutes from June 11, 2005

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

To begin the first official meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, Elizabeth Murray welcomed all the members and guests in attendance, and invited the local officials to say a few words. Below are some comments shared by these area leaders:

**Jeff Adair:** *In the last five years, there have been significant strides made in the community such as the creation of a Comprehensive Plan, voter approval for renovation of the town/village hall, and involvement with the Genesee Finger Lakes Planning Council. Currently, Scottsville and Mumfords are top contenders (out of 50-60 towns) for a Main Street renovation project that is being sponsored by the council. The Chamber will help keep Wheatland at the top of that list. There are issues in our community that need to be addressed, but we need to remain focused on the positives.*

**Linda Dobson:** *It is important for the town, village, Economic Development Commission, and Chamber of Commerce to continue working together. We need to concentrate on things like zoning so that we're not at a disadvantage when changes occur. Working together will make things easier in terms of growth and will cut down on duplication of efforts.*

**Michael Souers:** *Groups like the Chamber will help us to work together and stay positive in our efforts. As we address things like our wastewater treatment facility, it is critical that we work collaboratively.*

**Glenn Balch:** *This can be the group for enacting positive change in our community!*

**II. Mission and Mantra**

Elizabeth read the Chamber's Mission and Vision statements as a means of addressing what the Chamber stands for and strives to accomplish. Members are encouraged to act as ambassadors for the Chamber by sharing brochures and information with other business owners and residents. The mission is meant to encompass the overall welfare of the community.

Elizabeth shared Glenn's "litmus test" for Chamber initiatives: *"Does this benefit our businesses?"*

When businesses flourish, the community usually benefits. When businesses fail, the community often suffers as well. The Chamber will continuously work towards supporting our members through education, patronage, and marketing.

### III. Membership

Without conducting an official membership campaign, Chamber membership has grown by 30% in one month.

We have business lists generated by the Rotary and Village. We need to develop a Membership committee that will focus on expanding our roster. As our membership grows, we will continue to recognize and promote members by advertising supporters on the Chamber brochure. Members will also be acknowledged with membership certificates, which may be publicly displayed in businesses and offices. The Chamber is also considering a website that lists all members and links to business websites.

### IV. Increasing Chamber Visibility

The Chamber will look for opportunities to promote our organizations and its members. These opportunities may include:

- distribution of Chamber certificates to all members
- listing on the Chamber directory and brochure
- creation of various types of literature, such as a business newsletter, map of Wheatland, welcome packet for new residents and businesses, and tourism brochures (let's make Wheatland a DESTINATION, not just a pass-thru)
- sponsorship of community events (*Festival on the Oatka*)
- endorsement of projects
- grand openings and ribbon cutting ceremonies
- networking events
- sponsorship of business forums, seminars, and workshops
- collaboration with Economic Development Commission and other local organizations

### V. Feedback from Business Owners: *What do you want to see from the Chamber?*

This question was posed in a two-part format: What can we do **internally** for our members? What can we do as an organization for our community (i.e. service projects and scholarship programs)?

Members shared the following suggestions and comments:

- *We need to assess what we have in our community, consider what we need, and determine how to market ourselves to consumers inside and outside Wheatland.*
- *We need to foster good communication between businesses and municipalities, especially with regards to issues like code enforcement and items that may affect economic success.*
- *We should find out what developers look for when considering potential sites.*

- *The Chamber should consider holding sessions on Customer Service for businesses, the town and village.*
- *We need to network with each other and share what our businesses do. Have members give brief information sessions so that we can support our existing members.*
- *Consider ways for businesses to share costs such as joint advertising.*
- *Share information about the Chamber and its programming with the Sentinel and other media.*
- *Consider ways of getting information to all residents, such as piggybacking the Village's annual recycling calendar, which is distributed by the Boy Scouts.*
- *Create Chamber of Commerce stickers for businesses to display on their front window or door.*
- *We need to have better signage when entering the Town of Wheatland.*
- *The Village needs a website.*

## **VI. Slate of Candidates**

The proposed Board composition includes: 4 officers, 4 committee chairs, and 3 liaisons (town/Economic Development Commission, village, and school district). We are suggesting a one-year term for now. The new officers will begin developing a constitution, which will include procedures for future nominations and elections.

The slate of candidates for 2005-2006 includes:

President: Elizabeth Murray  
 Vice President: Carole Dakin  
 Treasurer: Jim Musshafen  
 Secretary: Dan Murray

Glenn Balch moved to accept the slate of candidates. Phil Brown seconded the motion. No opposed.

Tom Gallagher has offered to serve as the school district liaison. We still need volunteers to serve as liaisons for the town and village (Rick VenVertloh has indicated an interest in the village position.)

## **VII. Committee Opportunities**

For now, we are suggesting the formation of the following committees:

- *Membership*
- *Marketing: marketing our organizations and businesses*
- *Business programming: organizing seminars, guest speakers, and workshops for members*
- *Event planning: coordinating networking socials, ribbon-cutting ceremonies, and public events (i.e. Festival on the Oatka)*

## **VIII. Closing Remarks**

- We are asking everyone to sign up for one of the aforementioned committees.
- Please indicate whether you would like to serve as a committee chair.
- Chamber directories will be continuously updated and distributed.
- We will hold quarterly meetings, but will keep continual contact through emails and mailings.
- Become a positive ambassador for our organization and community!

*Thank you for supporting our community!*