

WARREN AREA CHAMBER MEETING Minutes

Wednesday, December 6, 2023. Lunch provided by East of Chicago

Introduction of Chamber members and guests - Please be sure to sign the attendance sheet. Thank you for your investment in the Warren Community

Welcome – Pastor Troy Drayer opened in prayer.

Minutes of Previous Meeting – Minutes were reviewed. Joyce Buzzard motioned to accept, Patti Bustos seconded. Motion carried.

Previous Treasurer's Report – Report was reviewed with discussion. Tom Wall motioned to accept, John Boyanowski seconded. Motion carried.

Spotlight Businesses

Smekens Education –Brady Smekens shared they provide Professional Development Training to improve instruction for reading and writing and is research based. They are invited by schools to evaluate, then propose opportunities to help. COVID has dramatically enabled their geographic touch with virtual conferences all over the world. They have eight employees in Warren and five who work remotely.

Knight Bergman Center – Joyce Buzzard updated the new President is Larry Poulson. They are getting quotes for an all new gym floor, and tuck pointing for the bricks. They are a 501c3 and appreciate tax deductible donations, and investment giving. They have three new people running the basketball program and are adding the High School league again. They are looking for younger members to serve on their board.

Little Rebel Store - Ashton manages this ministry supplying clothing and hygiene products for Salamonie students. They opened in April 2022 and 24 of the first 25 students all needed a pair of shoes. They provide needs specifically for each child. They desire to exceed expectations. Thank you for partnering.

Edge Water Mill - Amy Ward announced they provide custom feed for farmers, show feed, show supplies and Country home decor. They are excited to be here and serve the community.

New Business

- **Announce new Board Officers** - President Tammy Zehner, 1st Vice President Krysta Fornal, 2nd Vice President Troy Drayer, Secretary Melinda Daniels and Treasurer Patti Bustos.
- **Chamber Membership 2024** - Please fill out applications with as much detail as possible to help us advertise as best as possible. Please sign up for the business spotlight openings for the meetings, and for the Facebook spotlight for a week.

Old Business

- **Taste of Warren** – Saturday, March 2, 2024 7-9 PM at Dogwood Glen. Our focus is all about promoting Warren. They currently have 7 sponsors and are looking for 4-5 more.
- **I69 Billboard** – North Bound Sign base is repaired and ready for the new billboard. After discussion Tammy Zehner made a motion to spend \$915 to print the new banner and have it installed. Tom Wall seconded. Motion carried.

- **Eclipse Party** – Monday, April 8, 2024. Next meeting will be Tuesday, 12/12/23 9:30 AM with Tina Disch at the Son-Rise Bakery. All are invited to attend who want to help.

Updates

- **HC Chamber** - Steve Kimmel reported they are hosting “Meet and Greet” opportunities for entrepreneurs with 50 people attending and opportunities to network. The first was in August in Huntington, November in Roanoke, 2/26/24 Smekens Education and Son-Rise Bakery will be involved in Warren. May 2024 will be in Markle.
- **HCCF** - Matt Ditzler is looking forward to 2024 and is asks that we send teachers and new projects to discuss available grants. Warren has \$60,000 in grants available, and they have a 50/50 matched giving opportunities. January cycle is coming up including higher education.
- **HCCSC** - Kari Heim says this is a busy year. In January they will by changing format to work sessions once a month, and meetings once a month. Please contact her with any concerns.
- **HC Council or Commissioner** – Tom Wall is pleased with the housing opportunities improving in Warren. Fort Wayne property group is continuing to fill their property. Further housing opportunities are in the works. I-69 is a major interstate from Canada to Mexico.
- **HCUED** - Mark Wickersham is thankful for the support of Steve Buzzard, Jeff Souder, Steve Kimmel and Tom Wall. This year there have been 8 industrial projects investing 68 million of their own capital. There are still many projects in the works here in Huntington County.
- **Historic Warren** – Becky Souder updated The Exchange work is focusing on building repairs and improvements with new paint, stucco work, new awnings etc. Thanks to all of the businesses who registered and volunteers who helped with the Holiday Walk and Festival of Trees with 50 registered businesses, 35 trees and 12 Gingerbread houses.
- **SSF** – Joyce Buzzard shared that plans are moving forward, 2 bands are booked and schedule is filling up. 2024 SSF theme is “*WARREN – A Small Hidden Treasure*”.
- **Warren Boys & Girls Club** - Audra Lahr and the kids will be Christmas Caroling and continue to enjoy working in the community.

Positions:

President – Cheryl DeWeese

1st Vice President – Tammy Zehner

2nd Vice President – Krysta Fornal

Secretary – Melinda Daniels

Treasurer – Patti Bustos

Terms:

Rose Broyles 2021-2023 – 1st Term

Cheryl DeWeese 2021-2023 – 2nd Term

Jeff Souder to fulfill 2023 term

Patti Bustos 2022-2024 – 2nd Term

Krysta Fornal 2022-2024 – 1st Term

Tammy Zehner 2022-2024 – 1st Term

Melinda Daniels 2023-2025 – 1st Term

Troy Drayer 2023-2025 – 1st Term

Robert Neuenschwander 2023-2025 – 1st Term