



April 3, 2008

Minutes of the Meeting

The meeting was held in the Community Building located at 908 Huron Street, Benkelman, NE. Members present: Rita Jones, Linda Melchert, Scott Vanderford, Joya Neville, Harlan Cansler, Rod Wiese Bob Prangle, Jerry Preston and Gary Clark.

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by President, Rita Jones. She welcomed guests Rod Wiese and Robert Holland. Minutes of the previous meeting were read, motion to approve the minutes was made by Bob Prangle and second by Jerry Preston; motion carried.
2. Treasurer report – Gary Clark submitted a copy for all to review, motion to approve was made by Harlan Cansler and seconded by Rita Jones; motion carried. Gary Clark made a motion for membership goals for 2008 be set at 100%; motion was seconded by Jerry Preston; motion carried.
3. Old Business:
 - a. Action groups:
 - i. Benkelman Beautification/Community Improvement : Gary Clark
 1. Main street tree rings project complete, additional mulch may be added to some sites.
 2. The Spring Restoration 95% complete, additional structures will be added in the future.
 3. Handicapped hand rails project complete.
 4. Legion sign – work in process.
 5. Weed free zones discussed, trying to start joint effort with landowners to “Adopt a curb”; perimeter around fair ground needs attention, Gary will begin maintenance project there.
 6. Wood Shed – effort under way to paint it.
 7. School corridor – effort under way to remove dead trees and improve the appearance of this corridor.
 8. Street sign post painting project is in the works.

9. Preparation is under way to compete and win the 2009 Nebraska Community Improvement program (NCIP).
10. A grant has been applied for from “Hamburger Helper” to provide funding for “Restoration of Old Glory” flag at the Legion Hall.

- ii. Website Communications: Scott Vanderford. A membership application is available at the Chamber website www.bestofneb.com
- iii. Retail/Business Development: Bob Prangley and Jerry Preston.
 1. Progress is underway to establish one of the following
 - a. Dollar General
 - b. Big Lots
 - c. Alco

Current buildings identified as candidates are: The Wagon Wheel Antiques with 2500 square feet on the main floor; League Building Supply with 3275 square feet for display and 625 square feet for office space; Sale Barn facility stretched over 4 acres; and former Ballroom as a site for a new building.
- iv. New business acquisition by Jason Mathews and Ben Blecha is now in operation
- v. New business enterprise is underway. Robert Holland gave a presentation regarding a “wine forum” he has established. He encouraged everyone to go to www.vintageidiot.biz to view it. It offers timely topics for wine connoisseurs wanting to increase their knowledge on the subject.

4. New Business:
 - a. West Central NE Development meeting is scheduled for 4-09-2008 in McCook.
 - b. Winsome Paulman, Business Development Specialist with West Central Nebraska Development District has offered to provide training on entrepreneurship, for more information contact her at 308-284-6077 (office) or 308-289-2231 (cell).
5. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

/s/ Linda Melchert, Secretary