



July 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, Harlan Cansler, Robert Holland, Bob Prangley and Gary Clark.

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by President Rita Jones. Motion to approve the prior months minutes was made by Harlan Cansler and seconded by Bob Prangley; motion carried.
2. Treasurer's report: Gary Clark submitted a copy for all to review which included expenditures for items purchased under \$500 for community improvements. A motion to approve the treasurer report was made Bob Prangley and second was made by Harlan Cansler; motion carried.
3. Old Business:
 - a. Action Groups
 - i. Benkelman Beautification/Community Improvement – Gary Clark gave an update on the various projects in process. July 12th from 9-4 was set as work day at the fair grounds anyone that can help is appreciated.
 - ii. Website Communications –
 1. To build on the current advertising being done by NTV it was decided a have a link added from the Chamber web site to NTV.
 2. Am-First Bank was selected as “Business Spotlight of the month”.
 - iii. Graphic Communications – Ben Blecha, negative report
 - iv. Funding – Pat Rotherham, negative report
 - v. Housing – Linda Jones, negative report
 - vi. Retail/Business Development – Jerry Preston, negative report.

5 New Businesses:

a. The Chicken Dance Trail “Tourism Advantage Grant” proposal for 2008 was awarded as a matching grant. Counties and their respective match are as follows:

Red Willow	\$2000
Phelps	\$2000
Kearney	\$1000
Frontier	\$500
Dundy	\$1000

The money will be requested from each county once the Grant awards are announced on August 15, 2008. The money will be spent as follows:

1. Design, print and distribute 100 “Chicken Dance Trail” posters in tourism offices in Nebraska and contiguous states.
2. Advertise in “Wild Bird” magazine.
3. Publish and email 12 issue of “Chicken Dance Trail” newsletter with accompanying press releases to an email data base of 1400 wild life enthusiasts.
4. Add the Republican River Adventure to the brochure and distribute 4000 brochures.
5. Coupon system for a product of interest to a wildlife enthusiast. The product advertised on the Chicken Dance Trail website, and tracks visitors to the trail from 100 miles out of the region.
6. Participate in 1 birding festival/event.
7. Develop direct mail marketing packages for bird watching tour companies to invite them to south central/southwest Nebraska.

The board agreed t forward the money when requested to participate in this exciting tourism grant.

b. Sales tax initiative – results of the recent public meeting were discussed and additional help is needed to continue to identify all areas of concern and the best use of the money to help re-vitalize this area.

4. Next Meeting: August 7, 2008

5. Adjournment at 7:30 pm

/s/ Linda Melchert, Secretary