

Greater Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce
Meeting Minutes for March 6, 2024

- I. Meeting Called to order at 5:30 p.m.
- II. Roll Call: Stephanie, Patty, Judy, Matt, Nancy, Pat V
Guests: Jane Danger, Brad Geesaman, Charlie Weeden, Kenny Kleviager (owner of the Wash and Dry)
- III. Approval of Minutes
Motion was made by Pat to accept minutes. Second by Matt.
All approved.
- IV. Treasurer's report
Motion to approve by Pat to accept the treasurer's report. Seconded by Stephanie. All approved
- V. Old Business
 - a. Strawberry Festival -June 7th and 8th - Sponsorship \$6,323.37- Money continues to come in, but as we get closer Patty predicts that we will get more this month and next.
 - b. Chamber 501(C)3 status (nonprofit) update: It should be coming through this month. Matt brought up that we should start looking at what other grants are available for us to go after. He will bring potential grants to us at the next meeting. Charlie asked if there was anything the chamber could do to encourage manufacturing or businesses into our town. Maybe we could talk to Zach at Market Van Buren as to what we can do to get the eye of manufacturing or businesses into our town. Also, it was mentioned we should embrace the Amish and encourage them to do more business here in town or start a store front in town.
 - c. Membership updated: As of today - we have 57 members out of the 72 we had last year.
 - d. Annual Banquet: Was a great success and we had a good crowd. We had 46 people in attendance. Everyone seemed to have a great time.
- V. New Business
 - a. Grand Marshal for the Strawberry Festival Parade. This was brought up if we were interested in having one. It was the consensus that this is something they don't want to pursue. We will encourage the elected officials to be part of the parade this year.
 - b. Next After-hours Event: We will look at one for May - VBC Senior Services - We could also help the Van Buren Shelter spring fundraiser which is May. Stephanie suggested that the Van Buren Shelter look into Bonna Vanderlyn's money over at the Berrien County Foundation - there is money available in a form of grant for animal shelters or help with animals.
 - c. Patty gave a report of the two blow-up strawberries and the Strawberry Festival Pins. The pins are in and will cost \$5 each. There are a limited number of them
 - d. Job Fair - There will be a job fair at the library for the Casino here in Hartford. They have a variety of positions that are open.
 - e. Sportsman Club will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt for the City in the park. The hunt will be at 1 pm on Saturday, March 23rd. They are filling eggs Saturday at 11 a.m. on March 9th at the Sportsman Club.
- VI. Motion to adjourn at 6:30 pm. Next Meeting will be April 3, 2024 at 5:30 pm.