

**OROFINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 6, 2010
PONDEROSA BANQUET ROOM**

CALL TO ORDER

President John Goffinet called the meeting to order at 12:17 p.m. There were 35 members and 8 guests present. Staff included Burnham.

MINUTES

General Membership Meeting minutes are emailed to members.
The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as presented.

GUESTS

Chris Laws introduced Marvin Anderson, new owner of Perfection Tire in Orofino. He also has other stores in the Tri Cities area. Jeff Jones introduced Dale Watson, new owner of Glenwood IGA. Phil Shriver introduced Brandon Rogers who is working with Clearwater Technical Group. Other guests included Ron Haynes, who was invited by Teri Bolling, Bobbi Kaufman with the County, I.C.I.O. Sgt. Huen, County Commissioner John Allen and our program speaker County Commissioner Don Ebert.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Officer Elections will take place at the next Board of Directors meeting.

Burnham will be gone for the next General Membership meeting. Since a new Vice-President/Programs Chair has not yet been elected, we do not have a program scheduled. Do we want to cancel the meeting, or go ahead and find a program and have a meeting? The membership decided that the January 20th regularly scheduled General Membership meeting will be cancelled. The next General Membership Meeting will take place on February 3, 2010.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The office will be closed starting next Friday, the 15th of January until Monday, January 25th.

If you need to cash in Chamber Cash during that time, call John Goffinet, he will have the checkbook and be happy to write a check.

So far in 2010, 1 relocation and 1 tourism packet have gone out.

Chamber Cash has been a greatly successful program so far, with 12,375.00 being sold. We have taken back in 4939.00 so there is still 7436.00 in circulations. Don't forget that we will sell this year round, so if you need to buy it for gifts, or bonuses, or incentives, it is always available.

Dues invoices are going out this week, be sure to look for yours in the mail.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Affairs- Legislative conference calls with our legislators will start on the 20th at 7:00 a.m. Details to follow.

Promotional- No Report

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Auction- The date for the 2010 Chamber Auction has been set for May 7th at the Best Western Lodge at Rivers Edge. Committee meetings will begin in early February. Committee members are being sought.

Economic Development- No Report

North Idaho Chamber of Commerce- No Report

PROGRAM

Programs- The next General Membership meeting scheduled for January 20th has been cancelled.

Vice-President Stephanie Deyo introduced our program speaker, Clearwater County Commissioner Don Ebert.

Commissioner Ebert updated the membership on the situation with Dworshak State Park. Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation had announced late in 2009 that they would no longer be able to operate the park and were planning on turning their lease back to the U.S. Army Corp. of Engineers. The Corp. does not have the funds to run the park, and several discussions and meetings have taken place as to how to keep the park open and who will be able to take over operations.

Ebert stated that the County got news late in the game that Dworshak State Park was closing. By law, Counties are allowed to run parks, though Clearwater County was not looking for an opportunity to run a park. They do feel that they can run it cheaper than the State, though they haven't been able to find any substantial monetary support as yet. The County was looking into the possibility of taking over operations of the park and it came out in the media that they for sure were going to do this. What was said was "we are looking into it". This would be no small task since they also have an entire county to run.

Ebert said that at this point they are in fact finding mode and he is committed to learn all that he can about it, then take that information back to the other Commissioners. The State has started taking property out of the park for what they have said is to keep it safe and storage. As far as other upkeep on structures, the Corp. is responsible for anything under the water and over \$5000 according to their lease with the State which is why the County is interested in looking into a sub-lease with the State. Ebert also said how great he feels that the local Corp. guys are to work with.

Ebert asked the question: "What should we do with the Park, is it important to the local businesses, what is the perspective of the Chamber members?" Discussion continued on the importance to the local economy of Dworshak State Park remaining open. There are some people who do not want to see the County take over operations of the park. Their concerns are money and they feel that the County should be spending time on other things. The Commissioners have heard a lot of comments and are happy to hear concerns, but ask that they are presented in a respectful manner and not be personal attacks.

Ebert stated that a letter has gone out to the State asking for \$100,000 to help with the initial operations of the Park, as a negotiation starting place. Minnick and Ferguson are still lobbying federally to get dollars. At this point, time is of the essence because reservations are being made now and the Park could begin to lose revenue. A business plan has not been put together yet, but is being worked on. One money savings would be wages, since the County does not pay as much as the State did. Taking over operations is going to be tight, financially, but Ebert believes that it can be done. Latah County has been generous and has committed \$15,000 of their Waterways Committee dollars to the cause.

Ebert also answered questions about the length of the sub-lease they are looking at. He stated that the County would want to make sure that the sub-lease was written in a way that they could get out of it if it became a financial burden. They don't want to have to quit in the middle of July, but would not sign an agreement that they could not get out of. Ebert also stated that the Tribe has not yet been contacted but that they may need to do so.

According to Ebert, a new Park department within the County would have to be created in order to operate the Park, which they are authorized to do by law. Budgetary it is possible to do this. Dworshak Rec. is their own taxing entity and any money that they contributed would be at their discretion.

Mayor Smathers commended the Commissioners for at least looking at taking over the operations. Commissioner Ebert thanked Mayor Smathers and again mentioned that ideas are welcome and can be submitted to the Commissioners in writing or in person. Criticism is also welcome, but please be respectful. The operation would likely employ 6-8 people, and only 1-2 would be full time, the rest would be full time part of the year. Volunteers would also be necessary.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, President Goffinet adjourned the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

John Goffinet, President

ATTESTED:

Heather R. Burnham, Executive Director