

**General Meeting
Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2008**

Call to Order- Ryan Smathers called the General Membership meeting to order @ 12:16pm.

Guests- Danelle Peterson with Clearwater Health & Rehab

Announcements-

The Community Choir is holding a concert “The Wonders of his Love” held at the St. Theresa’s- Friday Dec. 5 and Saturday Dec 6th, at 730pm, and Sunday afternoon at 230pm. A reception will be held following the concerts in the Little Flower room. Ev Olsen 476-5453

Mrs. Pence invited the Chamber of Commerce to attend the School Board meeting December 15, 7pm. She had concerned about the rankings for Salutatorian and Valedictorian for the Seniors, who graduated High School. She is trying to gather support to take to the School Board for stricter guidelines to help push academic standards to the students in our school district.

Executive Director’s Report-

Monday some of the members of the city and the Chamber members helped welcome Colonel Paul Lemke of the US military. He is in the process of purchasing jet boats from Steve Stachowski. The Colonel was very pleased with the hospitality he had received from everyone in our town. There will also be a 2 star General from the country of Ecuador visiting our town the 14th and 15th of December.

Committee Reports

Nomination Committee-Neal Johnson, Mike Clay

-There are 4 positions open for the board this year. There are 4 members nominated so far. These are Dan Burnham, Bobbie Samuels, Joe Pippenger, Connie Robison. December 17th will be election day for the board members.

Public Affairs - Dennis Harper

The Committee is working on the Policy statement. Dennis will be meeting with Phillip Shriver to come up with a draft to present to the board of directors. We will be focusing on 2 or 3 things that we would like to see accomplished and push toward those things. We met with Mitch and he had enlightened us about the delegation to the Federal Government. Dennis encourages everyone to look at the policy statement and give input on those things in the statement and try to help decide the 2 or 3 things that are most important to see accomplished.

Promotional – Laura Wolverton

-After hours- December 11th (US Bank hosting) 5-7pm. There are still openings for an after hours event for the months of February, March, and April. If you would like to have us host an event at your locations call us and let us know.

-Orofino Gold Rush at Kings December 13th

Special Events- Christmas Festival

Christmas Festival will be held December 4th-6th and parade starts at 530pm.

Welcome & Membership- Pam Jones /Phillip Shriver

We will be having a Business Welcome

-December 11th “Material Girls Quilting” 9:00am

Programs – Connie Robison

The Program for December 17th will be the Christmas program.

Tom Reilly is our guest speaker today

Tom is manager at the US Forest Service. He is talking today about programs that impact Orofino the most. He is talking to us about timber and timber sales. Vegetation Management with the 4 W's which are wood, water, wildlife, and wildlife/ urban interface. The latter talks about how wildlife affects our urban life and city limits. The US Forest Service focuses on these things before planning projects. The US Forest Service looks to use projects to help influence the 4 W's and this may include timber sales to improve vegetation for wildlife. This also helps our local economy in return by keeping logging in production.

Tom talked about some of the numbers of production for the projects they have done in the past few years. In his graph, Fire activities were slow in 2008, compared to 2007. There was some fire use last year for vegetation management, but less than in previous years. Dennis Harper brought up a question about Winter and Summer habitat affected by prescribed burns. Dennis asked Tom if there were any numbers recorded on how the burn of winter habitat was affecting the wildlife (specifically Elk). Tom said he had no numbers.

Tom talked to us about NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) work. These are pre-planning and analysis for projects to be accomplished. There is so much planning and testing to be done to an area before a project can be attempted to have a fair impact on the environment. This is the major part of what they do. All NEPA work is open to the public and often is appealed. Some of the decisions are argued and some get appealed and possibly litigated.

Travel Plan is the next topic Tom discussed to us. There was a proposed action rolled out last year and focuses on roads and trails within their forest. Within their focus there will be a National Map from the US Forest Service that designates Motorized trails and

Roadways for recreational travel. There were many comments from every state of the country. It will be uniform throughout the country because these are Federal lands not State Lands.

Another initiative they are working on is selling some of the US Forest land in trade with lands that are not checkerboard or are closer to already existing US lands so that maintaining these lands will be easier. The only way at this time to obtain these lands is by exchange, because the Federal Government cannot afford to buyout private lands.

Clearwater Basin Collaborative is a group of conservationist in our area that works to improve Conservation of our public lands in our area. They are meeting recently to work together to create mission statements and projects that they can send to the Senate for approval. These meetings are open to the public, and they seek input from others. The US Forest Service supports their efforts of conservation.

The federal government has come up with a new formula on how Government monies are spent. They are spending money on per use basis. This gives more money to heavily populated areas and restricts funds for areas like ours because of smaller population. Tom also is hoping with the new Administration and Congress that there will be a new forest plan set to replace the old and outdated plan that is in affect right now.

Tom talked to us about the workforce demographics in the Forest Service and he discussed how there is a large gap in the workforce that is currently their. A large number of employees are older employees that will be reaching retirement age soon and the other is young employees with little experience. There is also not as much money to hire replacements. He also addressed some of the budget issues the USFS is going thru right now. They are combining leadership and giving leadership broader areas of work. The employees at the local office are half of what they were in the 90's. They are working on making changes in their structure to be more efficient that is transparent to the public.

There were a couple of questions after Tom's program, which were centered toward enforcement of regulations within the Forest Service. A couple of examples were brought to his attention. He responded that the enforcement officers that work for the USFS are trained officers but are people still. If there are problems with enforcement issues they should be brought up to the officer's supervisor to resolve the issue. Tom said that there weren't an extraordinary amount of tickets written this past year, but if someone had been mean or belligerent with the officer they probably were cited.

Adjourn-

Before adjourning Ryan Smathers thanked Kim Hoffman for her excellent work on the Newsletter.

Ryan Adjourned at 12:10pm