

**West Jefferson Business Association**

Regular Meeting Minutes

February 7th, 2012

A meeting of the West Jefferson Business Association (WJBA) was held at the West Jefferson Coffee House on Tuesday, February 7, 2012 at 8:30 a.m. Those attending included Lisa Willingham, Wesley Barker, Bill Bishop, Rebecca Lane, Marjorie Shinkle, Vivian Miller, Cliff Clark, Cabot Hamilton, Shelley Felder, Barbara Wirgowski and Rex Goss.

Bill began the meeting giving a short overview of the organizational structure of the WJBA which include the Board of Directors and the due-paying members. He then turned the meeting over to the events coordinator, Rebecca Lane. Rebecca said that the Sweetheart Saturday would be held this Saturday, February 11th and so far 9 businesses in downtown are participating which includes 5 restaurants and 4 shops. Also, Rebecca has sent out thank you cards to those who participated in the Pub Crawl last month. Those participating in this crawl were informed that in order for them to participate in the future they must be due-paying members of the WJBA. Further, Rebecca passed around a new membership application for any edits or comments from the group. There were none. A template for a West Jefferson Visitor’s Guide was also passed around for any comment or suggestions. This guide would mirror the guide that was produced in years past by the Association and would feature a listing of restaurants, art galleries, other businesses and a revised map pinpointing each business in downtown.

Vivian discussed getting businesses in downtown motivated about membership in the WJBA and wants them to know the advantages the WJBA membership offers as well as the difference between its membership and the Chamber membership. Vivian also discussed more promotion of West Jefferson through the Chamber’s website as they currently do not feature any West Jefferson specific events. Cabot from the Chamber agreed to work with Vivian to market West Jefferson on the Chamber’s website as he said most people that visit Ashe County do in fact make West Jefferson their primary destination. Vivian also talked about the possibility of a weekend music event and utilizing the town park to draw folks into downtown West Jefferson.

It was made clear that recruiting new membership was essential because the dues that members would pay would be used to sponsor events.

Cabot announced that Jefferson is reforming their Business Association and the group discussed working in conjunction with their Association. There was a consensus made among the group to wait until WJBA is strongly formed and acquires more due-paying members before considering this conjunction. No action was taken on this item at this time.

Further discussion of the visitor’s guide brochure took place which included printing and quantity costs, setting a deadline for businesses to pay their dues in order to be featured on the brochure and scheduling the printing to be ready to distribute by spring. According to previous meeting minutes, the last time these brochures were printed, approximately 40,000 were printed with a total cost of approximately $4,600. Marjorie stated that currently $2,930 was in the bank for the WJBA. The group agreed that March 16, 2012 would be the last day businesses can pay their dues in order to be included on the visitor’s guide with the printing of the guides to be completed by April.

A paid position was briefly discussed which included how the person would be paid, what their job duties would be and how they would benefit the WJBA, TDA and Town as a whole. No action for this position has yet been determined by the Town or any organization.

Details from the WJBA By-laws were mentioned which includes the use of the calendar year (January 1- December 31) as the financial year for the Association. Also, pro-rating dues to members who might initially join the WJBA half way through the year was mentioned with the renewal for membership being sent out the following year when all other renewals are sent out. Terms of officers were also questioned to the group whether to have a two year renewable or non renewable term where the officers would remain for an unlimited number of terms, or if they are to be rotated off the Board of Directors after so many terms.

The group unanimously approved the following for the By-laws with no objections: using the calendar year as the financial year for the Association (January 1- December 31), pro-rating dues to members who join half way through the year ($50 instead of $100), and having an unlimited amount of terms that each officer on the Board of Directors must serve, with the minimum being a 2 year term.

Community partners of the WJBA that do not actually pay membership dues, but are active in the Association by means of donating resources and time were briefly discussed. These partners include: the Town of West Jefferson, Ashe County Chamber of Commerce, Ashe County Farmer’s Market, Ashe County Public Library, and Christmas in July.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, March 6th, 2012 at Bohemia at 8:30 a.m. With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned.