



Dirk Norris, President; Warren Malkerson, Vice President

*Donna Harkey, Treasurer; Cindy Thompson, Recording Secretary;
Gail Major, Corresponding Secretary and Visitor Center Coordinator*

Minutes

General Membership Meeting May 13, 2008

Officers Present: Dirk Norris, President; Donna Harkey, Treasurer; Gail Major, Corresponding Secretary

Members Present: Lucy Rickman, Fran Altieri, Eileen Lovelace, Judy Fitzpatrick (taking minutes for Cindy Thompson), Jamie Gieb, Scott Shafer, Bob Hemphill, Russ Bandemer, Alisa Kenyon, Roland Caster and Joe Lane, representing TBTC.

Guests: Nathan Fuchs, Veronica Hardison, Chris Jones and Jeremiah Coe from Tularosa Basin Telephone Company; Knollene McDaniel (guest of Eileen Lovelace), Rory McMinn, Carrie Rice (from the Girl Scouts Council), and Alex and Cindy Thompson (new property owners at Valle del Sol).

The Regular Meeting of the Carrizozo Chamber of Commerce was held at the Four Winds Restaurant and was called to order at 12 noon by President Dirk Norris.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance and New Mexico Pledge, guests were introduced.

Minutes of April 8, 2008. The President reiterated that the Chamber is cutting down on paper copies, so Minutes of the previous meeting were mailed with the monthly newsletter to all members and are also available on the Chamber website. There are no comments or changes to these Minutes.

Motion: A motion was made by Eileen Lovelace, seconded by Scott Shafer, to accept the Minutes as posted. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Speaker: Scott Shafer introduced Joe Lane who had met with Carrizozo Works and wanted to share with the Chamber members information about facilities available to residents and businesses for internet access, telephone and cellphone usage. Upgrading the Town's capabilities with fiber optic cable is already in the planning stage; Valle del Sol had ditches dug and ready to receive the cable, so they got their system first. Chris Jones of Network Support urged businesses and residences to give them requests for desired functionality. He also explained that WiFi is not being used as much these days because of the high cost of installation and maintenance. Cellular service via Verizon collaboration, however, is part of their current offerings – in addition to customers being able to reach a 'live' person instead of having to listen to frustrating voicemail!

The second speaker was Roland Caster from the Carrizozo Cowboy Days (a new events member) explaining that the group will host a dinner, dance and pie auction at the Country Club on June 14 to raise funds for Day of the Cowboy festivities in 2009. He requested that tickets to this event be sold at the caboose as is to be done in the Capitan and Ruidoso chambers of commerce. Support was given for this request.

The third speaker was Rory McMinn who is running for State Senator in District 33. He's a two term County Commissioner from Chavez County whose focus is on economic development and public safety.

Treasurer's Report: Donna Harkey presented a written report to all members present showing the checking account balance is \$3,407.43 and the Luminaria Fund balance is \$880.40. She also reported that membership dues collected this year equal \$3,100, not including an additional \$50 received at today's meeting.

Visitor Center Report: Gail Major reported that 24 people visited the Caboose in April, down 30 from last year but up 11 from the year before that.

Website Report: Dirk Norris reported 1,282 unique visits to the website in April for a total of 60,046 hits. These numbers were down a little from March, but that is normal.

Committee Reports:

Membership Committee: Gail Major reported the 2008 Membership Directory is now being distributed. Membership totals to date include 53 businesses, 4 events and 15 individuals for a total of 72 members.

Events Committee: Fran Altieri reported the July 4th activities will be held near the gazebo at Valle del Sol, and she is still working on several details. The Volunteer Fire Department will do their fireworks display, but weather will determine whether individuals will be able to set off theirs. Refreshments will be provided from a little red wagon. A kids' game will be available (she needs a \$140 sponsor donation to cover that cost), and she hopes to also have some other entertainment. A boot collection for the Fire Department will be held at the gate as all parking enters inside the Valle del Sol area.

Efforts are also being planned for a large fundraiser for 2009, and she plans for the luminaria functions to occur with some additional activities as well.

Advertising Committee: Dirk and Cindy attended the Department of Tourism Workshop and learned 50% matching funds are available quarterly from the State if approved and covering advertising outside a 50 mile radius of Carrizozo. Cindy has prepared a budget of \$2,000 for this fiscal year, including website costs of \$624 plus ads in *The Ink*, *Steppin' out*, *NM Magazine* and the *Capitan's Visitors' Guide*. Plans are to ask the City and County Lodgers Tax groups for advertising funds as well. The goal is to get name recognition now and then focus on specific events.

Budget Committee: Lucy Rickman had no report at this time.

New Business: Dirk asked the Chamber members to be aware of the need to increase dues costs next year. Current business memberships are \$50 for the first business and \$25 for each additional one; individual memberships are \$25; and event memberships are \$35. This is a means of financial support, and benefits include a link to the Chamber's website for members who have websites and/or a page of information for their business if they do not.

Dirk also asked for approval to set the Scholarship Award at \$500 again this year. A committee will evaluate the applications already received and choose this year's recipient.

Motion: Bob Hemphill moved, seconded by Scott Shafer, to approve the \$500 award value. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Dirk reported he had talked to the website person for the Capitan Chamber, and corrections and updates to old Carrizozo information are being made. He also has updated information on the Carrizozo Chamber's website, including new details about the Municipal Airport, and asked that suggestions to improve what is currently on the website be provided to him. Mayor Bob commented that having the Town Council agenda online is a great help and asked what it would take to get the minutes online, too.

Announcements: The Mayor reported that two new owners at Valle del Sol are in the process of getting building permits (and have had some problems doing so) and have said the owner across the street from them will be in next week to do the same. Plans are to use these homes as vacation for now and then eventually move here.

Someone commented that it would be nice to have Carrizozo Joe's Coffee Shop back, and as of June 1 we are to have a coffee shop in that location again! There's nothing but rumors on the grocery store opening, however; speculation is perhaps in Julyber?

Adjourn: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Submitted by Judy Fitzpatrick, filling in for
Cindy Thompson, Recording Secretary