**Minutes of the Cowan Commercial Club**

The Cowan Commercial Club met on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 in the banquet hall at The Franklin House in Cowan.

Mary Bledsoe called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. with the following members and guests in attendance: Mary Bledsoe, Kallie Britt, Kristina Britt, Benjamin Money, Jarod Pearson, Emily Pickett, Jeremy Pickett, Kim Shelton, and Rachel Thompson.

Mary opened the meeting with news that we have a new business already open in Cowan – the Hidden Gem at 104 S. Tennessee Avenue. We also have a new business in the process of opening – The Franklin House in Cowan.

Kallie provided copies of the minutes from the January meeting, which were approved as written. It was noted that our February meeting was a guest reception for employees of the City of Cowan. The event was hosted on February 17th at Nick’s Pizza and Pasta and had many compliments and positive reviews!

Kristina reported a balance of $1,258.59 in the operating account and $742 in the special account. Our expenses last month were largely in support of the worker event.

Mary asked for ideas and input for fundraising in the Year 2021. Hopefully we will have more flexibility in planning now that the COVID-19 pandemic is waning and public gatherings are starting again.

Mary also reminded the members that the Cowan Railroad Museum annual meeting in March 25th, 5:00 p.m. at Cowan Center for the Arts. This is a meeting to elect a 2-year board. Jarod moved that Commercial Club remit a $20 annual membership. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote.

Jarod briefly discussed the Year 2022, which will be the centennial year for the Cowan City Charter, Cowan Commercial Club, and Cowan Public School. We will seek ideas and input on how and when to celebrate our 100th Year.

Mary invited Rachel Thompson, owner of The Franklin House in Cowan, to introduce herself and talk about her business plans. Rachel is from Florida, but has deep family roots in Cowan. Rachel is descended from the Caperton family and is the niece of Mrs. Polly Hughes, Cowan’s oldest resident. Rachel is an artist and painter by profession, and is redecorating the old hotel with an art-centered décor. Besides overnight accommodations, the facility will host art programs, lectures, small group gatherings, and business meetings.

We are very pleased to see one of Cowan’s oldest properties re-opening as a business. The group also thanked Rachel for the elegant reception she provided for this meeting.

The next meeting of Cowan Commercial Club will be on Tuesday, April 20th, 6:00 p.m. at Nick’s Pizza and Pasta.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

L. Jarod Pearson, Secretary