

The Cowan Commercial and Community Club met on Thursday, November 23, 2015 at Cowan Center for the Arts with the following members in attendance: Mary Bledsoe, Helen Brown, Cheryl Boswell, Mark Ledbetter, Ryan Miller, Jarod Pearson, and Russell Sells. We also recognized a group of visitors from the Monteagle Mountain Chamber of Commerce: Boo Beavers, Bridgett Roark, and Mike Roark.

The minutes from the previous meeting were presented and accepted as read.

Cheryl gave an update on the treasury and noted that we have received \$240 dollars in membership dues so far.

The representatives of the Monteagle Mountain Chamber gave a brief presentation. The organization is re-organizing and re-adapting. Boo noted that several suggestions made by the Cowan Commercial Club have been received by the Chamber Board for implementation. One of those is to try a new naming convention that better fits the regional goals of the organization. Another is to implement a new e-mail blast system similar to the Cowan Clipboard. Another is to try and recruit board members from outside the immediate Monteagle area to encourage broader representation.

Russell gave a presentation on the Cowan Christmas Parade. From a historical standpoint, it's one of the oldest parades in the State of Tennessee and one of the largest as well. It was started, in fact, by the Cowan Commercial Club. With some leadership changes in the works, the parade needs some renewed direction. Russell proposed that the Cowan Commercial Club adopt the Cowan Christmas Parade as a flagship project.

After some discussion, Jarod made a motion that the Cowan Commercial Club adopt the parade as a flagship project at this meeting, but that we follow today's vote with a "second reading" of the motion and a subsequent at the next meeting. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Ryan moved that Cowan Commercial Club adopt the Christmas Parade as a flagship project. The motion was seconded and passed. (Jarod abstained from voting on the motion and asked that it be noted in the minutes.)

Halloween-in-the-Park is another project that needs underwriting. A group of people are already involved in the project, but it too needs ownership and coordination. Mark moved that the Cowan Commercial Club adopt Halloween-in-the-Park as a project of the Cowan Commercial Club. The motion passed unanimously.

Russell updated the members on his proposal to order door stickers for businesses participating in the Commercial Club. He found some he can order for \$4.95 apiece or for \$50 for a roll. Jarod moved that we proceed with ordering a roll. The motion was seconded and approved.

Russell mentioned the railroad park as a continuing core project for the Commercial Club. As it stands, and as we have discussed in recent meetings, Commercial Club received the monies from the Railroad Park Maintenance Fund that was established in the mid-1970's. These funds are in an account, but with interest rates extremely low the money is doing very little to advance the park. Our collective decision

has been to spend the money on sustainable improvements to the park so that the money goes to an effective long-term use.

After some discussion, the members agreed to the following:

- Work with the CRM Railroad Park Committee to tear down the white gazebo and replace it with a new fixture that complements the historic CTC building in that same quadrant.
- Spend up to \$1000 on study new trash cans
- Spend up to \$1000 on further improvements to the log cabin
- Contribute \$600 to the Cowan Railroad Museum earmarked for electrical improvements.
- Set aside \$1,000 in rainy day funds to use at a later.

Another project we need to move forward on in the New Year is to move the information kiosk to a new location next to the Welcome Center and populate it with information. With that project Russell also mention building a well house structure to highlight the old hotel well that's located in front of the Welcome Center. The members agreed to table that particular project until some of our existing efforts are brought to completion.

A question was raised about whether or not we had approved our working budget proposed in September. Jarod moved that we accept the budget as proposed, which was seconded and passed unanimously.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jarod Pearson, Secretary