

February 12, 2013

The membership of the South Platte United Chambers of Commerce met February 12, 2013 at Cunningham Seed and Feed restaurant.

President Tom Hastings welcomed the members. Membership approved the meeting agenda. Minutes were read and approved. The treasurer's report was unavailable. President Hastings estimated 15,000 in the savings account.

## **Old Business**

### Membership and Billing

Invoices for 2013 membership will be mailed to the membership.

### Recognition of former Senator Ben Nelson

The South Platte members want to commemorate and recognize former Senator Nelson for his service to Nebraska as Governor and the United States of America as a U. S. Senate. We will honor and recognize Senator Nelson's service to Nebraska during the Legislative Reception scheduled for April 9, 2012, Nebraska Club, 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. All Nebraska State Senators are invited.

### Tri-City Legislative Luncheon Reminder

President Hastings announced the dates of the Tri-Cities Legislative Luncheons. All South Platte United Chambers of Commerce members are invited to participate. The Tri-City Legislative Luncheons take place in the State Capitol in Lincoln, room 1126 between 12 and 1 p.m. Reservations required.

Dates of the Tri-Cities Legislative Luncheons;

February 27, 2012

March 27, 2012

May 1, 2012

Reservations are required. Contact Tom Hastings by telephone - #+1 (402) 461-8400 or E-mail the Hastings Chamber office

[Lshielebein@Hastingschamber.com](mailto:Lshielebein@Hastingschamber.com)

## **New Business**

### Future meetings

President Hastings announced the program for the March 2013 South Platte meeting. The South Platte United Chambers of Commerce is addressing the question: What do we need to do and are doing to fill our labor force?

# Meeting Minutes

President Hastings said that we are arranging a panel of speakers representing 3 manufacturing firms and 3 education institutions. We invited representatives from Allmand Bros. Inc. in Holdrege, Kauffmann Trailers in Beaver City, and Valmont Industries in McCook to speak on labor needs. We also invited representatives from University of Nebraska at Kearney, McCook College and CCC to speak on ways their institutions are working with industry to respond to the same question. President Hastings inquired about the needs for skilled people to work on farms in the South Platte region. Dale Loschen and Ron Knaus said that employees on farms today need farming knowledge and skills, and skilled employees are difficult to find. They suggested that we invite NCTA representatives to the meeting. Rex Nelson agreed to present an invitation to NCTA to attend and participate in the March 12 meeting in Holdrege.

Meeting: South Platte United Chambers of Commerce  
 Topic: Meeting labor force needs in rural Nebraska  
 Date: March 12, 2013  
 Place: Holdrege Country Club  
 Time: 5:30 p.m.

Legislative Bills and topics that interest the South Platte members:

LB 551 – Recreation and tourism limited liability insurance. The hearing is scheduled for 2/13/2013 at 1:30 p.m.

Testing Nebraska elder's ability to drive safely via a written driver's test. Comment: many rural residents lack access to public transportation, and this bill if passed adds a burden to elders who live in rural Nebraska.

Eliminating the personal property tax and the income tax – South Platte towns and cities use inheritance tax dollars and eliminating this source of income would be harmful. Eliminating income tax and adding sales tax will press a need for “better highways to Kansas.”

## Comments from the Communities

Clay Center – 5k and 10k Fun Run scheduled for April 20, 2013 in Clay Center

McCook – McCook is working on a project called the Eternal Light to honor former McCook Senator, George Norris who promoted rural electrification. The city is celebrating the completion of 4 public buildings, i.e. Municipal Building, McCook College Events Center, Army Reserve Center, and an extensive addition to the hospital.

Twila Witt, Nebraska Tourism – Advised membership to visit the website, [www.VisitNebraska.com](http://www.VisitNebraska.com) Tourism's first annual report is published on the site.

Campbell – Zoellner's are celebrating their 10th wedding anniversary on February 12, 2013 and also Doug Zoellner's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday! Doug mentioned that the village is advertising the Campbell nursing home for sale.

Monica Crowe, Director of the Furnas/Harlan Partnership and representing Oxford and Orleans announced that the Governor is accepting applications for the Governor's Your Advisory Council. This opportunity to acquire leadership skills is open to Nebraska youth.

# Meeting Minutes

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Sayers, Secretary

Tom Tabor, Nebraska Eco-Tourism, T.J. Walker, Naturalist and Biologist for Nebraska Game & Parks, Pat Underwood, Alma Tourism Director, Carol Schlegel, Red Willow Tourism Director, and Betty Sayers, partner in managing The Chicken Dance Trail wildlife viewing website presented information on wildlife tourism in rural Nebraska. They spoke on how to get started, elements of wildlife tourism, and public interest in wildlife tourism and especially birding, signature species in Nebraska, The Pelican Watch Birding event scheduled for March in Alma, NE, and Prairie Chicken Viewing scheduled for April in McCook.