

Astoria Area Chamber of Commerce

April 11, 2002

Pres. Beck called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. at the town library. There were 10 members present. The treasurer's report showed a current balance of \$1258.46. Gary Sheets made the motion to accept the treasurer's report with Angela Blickenstaff seconding.

A motion to approve the minutes of the March meeting as read was made by Kathleen Behymer and seconded by Bill Branson.

The featured guest for the evening Mark Baker representing DECCA. This organization is able to help find out what funds are available to help enhance businesses, work on projects to help obtain and retain jobs. The work with obtaining funds through the following sources: Participation Loan Fund, CDAP grants, Revolving Loan Fund, GAP grants and also can provide money for job training. This organization has a database of available business sites around the State of Illinois. They typically do not support loans to the retail side of business leaning more towards manufacturing, which in turn can generate more retail jobs and revenue. He will be working with Mrs. Connor on the funding needed for the sale of the Fiber Steel building. June Connor was also present to report on this project. She indicated that it is still moving forward but at a slow pace. The buyer and seller have reached a price agreement. They are in the process of obtaining the necessary funding and completing all the necessary paperwork. She hopes by the next chamber meeting to have good news to report.

Committee Reports:

Easter - The Easter Hunt was declared a success. Many children were present and participated in the hunt. The final bills were presented for payment. They were able to stay under budget.

Parks and Recreation - The board of directors at their next meeting will come up with an amount to donate to the Astoria Park District for the basketball court project and an amount to be donated to the Habitat for Humanity House. Gary Sheets was present at the meeting with progress on the house.

Approximately 1/3 of the needed \$10,000 has been promised as to date. He complimented the Astoria South Fulton Argus on always being there to help publicize the progress. A grant from the Lions

Foundation is being applied for in the amount of \$20,000 which is half the cost of the house. They have asked permission to start preparing the lot for the house. If this is granted work will begin in mid-May if not work is hopefully scheduled to begin around the middle of July. The house should be completed anywhere from 90 to 120 days from the start. Volunteers have been appearing from all walks of life in the form of money, labor and materials. Donations are still being sought. If you would like to donate either money or time, contact Gary.

Dues and membership - All members were reminded that **May 1** is the deadline to pay the 2002-2003 annual dues which are \$100 per business and \$20 per individual. Dues may be sent to Steve Butler for deposit.

Retail and Promotion - It was announced that the All Town Yard Sales and Sidewalk Sales will be May 3 & 4 with Gabby Days to be May 10 & 11.

Public Relations - A motion was made by Marty Bair and seconded by Angela Blickenstaff to become a member of the Fulton County Tourism Council with membership dues of \$25. All members voted aye. It was announced a new business would be coming to town the first of May. MTS (Midwest Truck Shopper) will be moving into the building presently occupied by Kenton Shawgo. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held the morning of May 7.

Gary Sheets made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Kathleen Behymer seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.