

**Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)**  
**September 8, 2017**  
**Meeting Notes**

David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. The following were present: Stacy Davis, Susan Delaire, Bill Deutscher, Trevor Elliott, Michele Gallagher, Meri Hamre, Terry Harris, Flossie Heymann, Jason Mattson, Larry McGee, Randy Mueller, Vicki Muething, Allyn Roe, Chris Sampson, Lindsey Senter, Andy Skinner, Annalee Tobey, Lilly Wall, Hunter Weeks, and Brian Wilkins.

**1. Welcome and Introduction of Guests.** David welcomed Meri Hamre and Martha Hunt of Title Guaranty and Ralph and Rogette Hubbert with Jester Auto Museum and Event Center.

**2. Partner Updates & News**

**Title Guaranty Company of Lewis County:** Meri Hamre, Title Guaranty Manager, shared information on the High School Hero Project (HS Hero.) The company's mission statement of "Growing Lewis County one family at a time" goes hand in hand with this beneficial scholarship program for Lewis County high school seniors. They select one high school senior each month, September through June, from students nominated for the award. The nominated seniors have the following qualities: a leadership role in the school, outstanding academic performance in the classroom, and citizenship through volunteer work in their communities. The selection committee reviews all nominations and selects a monthly senior High School Hero. The winners each month are presented a jacket and a plaque at an assembly in their high school. At the end of the year, Title Guaranty Company hosts a banquet for all of the senior nominees at Riverside Golf Club's outside pavilion. Last year they were able to present two seniors with a scholarship. The goal this year is to present all ten Senior HS Hero's with a scholarship at the end of the year banquet. The nominations are accepted via online nominations. If you would like to nominate a senior from any high school in Lewis County, go to their website link at: <http://titlegco.com/hs-hero-3>. Title Guaranty has started the HS Hero Foundation, a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization to collect donations from local businesses and individuals for the Senior HS Hero scholarships. All monies collected will go to the scholarship fund.

**Jester Auto Museum & Event Center:** Ralph and Rogette Hubbert shared information on the new Jester Auto Museum and Event Center located on Hamilton Road, Chehalis. They previously rescued and remodeled the Chehalis Theatre in Downtown Chehalis. Ralph and Rogette Hubbert have partnered with Don Jester on this project. This remodeled facility is the first commercial event center in Lewis County. The 6,000 square foot building houses a private automobile collection along with the commercial event center. There is a catering bay and work area, elaborate updated bathrooms, and large screens have been installed on the walls for corporate presentations in the event center. This is a single-story building on 3 acres with ample parking. The building meets the ADA accessibility requirements and can seat up to 299 people. The building took approximately eight months to complete using all local contractors. Rogette will be running the facility, scheduling events (special events, weddings, galas, auctions, class reunions). She will also be providing the marketing/advertising for the event center. A press release and photo shoot to be released next week (September 11-15.) They will be hosting an Open House in October with the date to be determined. They have a Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/jesterautomuseum/>. They will be hosting the Providence Hospital Gala on October 14, 2017 and will be hosting the Pope's Kids Place Gala next year.

Mayor Pro-tem Harris suggested that they deal with the hoteliers directly when scheduling large events to assure that there will be lodging rooms available for the attendees. He suggested contacting the hotels to block out a number of rooms for each scheduled event. Rogette advised that they are using local vendor lists and will be contacting local hotels to coordinate lodging for attendees at events.

David Hartz suggested hosting a CCRT monthly membership meeting at this location in the future. The Hubbert's were open to this suggestion.

**Chehalis Boys & Girls Club:** Chris Sampson, Director, shared that the Boys & Girls Club opened this week. They are currently servicing 100 children per day without the kindergarten students. Kindergarten starts next week on September 11. This will bring approximately 25 more students per day. They are having a positive response from both parents and students. The children do not want to leave at the end of the day which is a good thing. They currently have 50 children on a waiting list and they expect that number to increase. They have three age/grade groups in the club: K-2, 3-5, and teens. They are

currently reaching out into the community for volunteers age 16 and older. They host volunteer orientation every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. They are currently working on three large grants. One of these is a \$19,000 technology grant. The Boys & Girls Club may increase their fundraising activities to meet the needs of the community. They will be enrolling for a summer program after the end of the school year. After the summer program, the first two weeks will be set aside for existing children to re-enroll for the upcoming school year.

**Rainier Rail (Formerly DBA W WA Railroad):** Bill Deutscher shared that the WWRR dissolved on 7/31/17 and as of 8/1/17 is Rainier Rail. Bill will be introducing the new General Manager of Rainier Rail at the October CCRT meeting.

**Executive Director:** Annalee Tobey shared that they are currently working on projects and the budget for next year. Please bring your future ideas to Annalee at [annalee@experiencechehalis.com](mailto:annalee@experiencechehalis.com). They are working on the Lodging Tax Application for Tourism funds from the City of Chehalis. This application is due on September 14, 2017. CCRT will be asking businesses for B&O Tax credit donations for 2018. This year the process has changed and businesses will have the first three months of 2018 to make their B&O Tax donations. Washington State has 34 Main Street Programs that share a pool of funds. CCRT will be able to collect donations in the amount of \$133,333 in 2018. If total/per city contributions are not collected by a Main Street Program city by April 1, 2018, the remaining Main Street Program cities will be able to via for these remaining additional dollars through additional B&O tax donations.

### **3. Committee Reports**

**Economic Restructuring-** Susan DeLaire shared that Trevor Elliott and Randy Mueller left the CCRT meeting to present an application to the Lewis County .09 Committee. They are applying for .09 funds to support the CCRT and Port of Chehalis pilot coworking space program in downtown Chehalis. The committee is finalizing a business plan and are hoping that this unmanned facility will be available for use in the next 6-12 months. She also shared that they have accepted 3 façade program applications. Each of the \$2,500 cost match projects has a total project cost of approximately \$25,000. One project has been completed and the 2 remaining approved projects are still in process. The committee is also reviewing 4 additional façade program applications at this time. They are continuing to update the downtown building inventory list on the website and are planning an "Opportunity Tour" on October 12, 2017, to bring investors, building owners, real estate agents and buyers together for a tour of available buildings in the downtown area. There will be a catered networking event after the tour sponsored by the LC EDC. The next committee meeting is September 22, noon at Sweet Inspirations.

**Design-**Michele Gallagher shared that 23 banners have been ordered and City of Chehalis staff (as time allows) will be building the brackets for the banners. Due to upcoming holiday decorations, the new banners will be installed the first of the year 2018. These new banners will be installed on Pacific, Chehalis and Park Avenue. Allyn Roe suggested future banners be installed on Louisiana Avenue. The committee researched purchasing new benches for downtown but have decided to work with the Rotary Club to restore the existing benches. CCRT will provide the supplies and the Rotary members will rehabilitate the benches. They will be putting up signs as each bench is removed for repair. This project will be completed by next spring. The Bathroom Mural Project was awarded to local artist, Emily Von Flotow. She will be starting the mural next weekend, September 16 and will be working after school and weekends until completed. A press release will be issued naming the artist selected for the mural project and photos of her working on the mural. United Way of Lewis County and the Veterans Museum will be creating window displays for the vacant downtown windows in the near future. The next committee meeting is Thursday, October 5, at 9 am at the CCRT office.

**Organization-**David Hartz shared that they are working on establishing policies and procedures for the board. They are also reviewing the original CCRT plan and are working to revise/update this plan.

**Promotion-** Tanya Laeger is in Colorado visiting family so Annalee Tobey reported on the Promotion Committee. Tanya will be visiting a coworking space in Montrose, Colorado that has been named as the one of the best coworking space in the world by Forbes Magazine... She will be visiting this space and bring back some ideas for the CCRT

coworking space project. The committee continues to work on the downtown relocation guide for local business to bring more businesses to Chehalis. A possible title is "Where Business and Lifestyle Meet." The printing bid for this project to come back next week. They are providing professional photos for this brochure and the target completion date is October 12, 2017. The website research and development continues and they will be sending out a RFP for website creation and development by the end of next week. They will also be working on the 2018 LTAC funds applications that are due by September 14, 2017. The next meeting is Wednesday, September 20 at 9:00 a.m. at City Hall.

#### **4. Other Updates/Announcements/Good of the Order**

Marcy Anholt with ARTrails distributed the 2017 ARTrails Studio Guide. This annual event begins on Friday, September 15 with a Gala Opening Reception being held at Centralia's Historic Train Depot from 4-8 p.m. The self-guided tours are scheduled for September 16-17 and September 23-24. Studios open on these weekends from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Each artist has one piece of work on display at the Exhibition Gallery located in Centralia's Historic Train Depot. The Exhibition Gallery is also open from 10 am to 5 pm and this is a great place to start the weekend studio tour.

Flossie Heymann shared the upcoming Chehalis Valley Wine Tour event on September 23-24. There are 5 wineries on this self-guided tour. Tickets are available at Brown Paper Tickets for \$20 or can be purchased at Heymann Winery during the event for \$25.

Vicki Muething from the Chehalis Farmer's Market said that the Friday Farmer's Market pilot program was a success this year. They are looking into a possible beer garden, sponsored by M & K Market, for next year. The Board may be looking at the possibility of holding it on a different night or they may keep it on Friday nights next year. Vicki reminded everyone of the upcoming fundraising event for the Farmer's Market. This Harvest Dinner is scheduled for October 1, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. at the Creekside Event Center on Jackson Highway. Tickets \$35/adults, \$20/children age 12 and under are available for purchase at the Tuesday Farmers Market, Book 'N Brush, or online at Brown Paper Tickets, <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3084831>.

Jason Mattson from the LC Historical Museum shared that his first month as the museum director has gone well. They are working on the upcoming Halloween event.

Wanda Thompson from the Chehalis-Centralia Steam Trains shared that tickets for the Polar Express and the Santa Train are for sale now and can be purchased online at <http://steamtrainride.com/ride/>.

Lilly Wall, City of Chehalis Parks & Recreation Manager, shared that tomorrow, Saturday, September 9 is a National Day of Service. She has been working with 2 large groups to arrange a variety of projects to enhance City facilities. She said that you may see them working in Chehalis on Saturday.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

**Next Meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. City Hall Basement Meeting Room**

Meeting Notes respectfully submitted by Denny Peace, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.