

**OROFINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 21, 2008  
PONDEROSA BANQUET ROOM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Ryan Smathers called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. There were 22 members and three guests present. Staff included Burnham.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the general membership meeting are now being emailed to the membership with the meeting reminders. The minutes of the general membership meeting were approved as presented.

**GUESTS**

Our guests were our program speakers, Idaho's District 8 Legislators; Senator Lee Heinrich, Representative Paul Shepherd and Representative Ken Roberts.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No Announcements.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The next Board of Director's meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup> at noon at the Ponderosa. The date change is due to the Memorial Day Holiday.

Big Thanks to all who helped out with the EnduroCross fundraiser this Saturday. We grossed \$3826.00, but do not have all expenses in yet for a net total.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Public Affairs-** The committee met last week with the Forest Service on the planning process as well as discussed the North South trail.

**Promotional-** No Report

**4<sup>th</sup> of July-** The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is fast approaching and we are still in search of a band. The fireworks have been ordered, we went with the bigger show this year and are getting 38% more product for a 28% price increase. Laura Wolverton will be the person in training for the BBQ. Meetings will begin soon.

**Welcome and Membership-** We welcome new member Boyd B's Handyman Service, owner Boyd Brookshier.

**Economic Development –** Next Thursday, the 29<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. there will be an energy efficiency meeting. All are encouraged to attend.

The County Commissioners signed a grant agreement on Monday which will add a \$50,000 compliment to the attenuator grants.

One half of the road between here will be realigned and paved.

**GEM-** No Report.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

No Report

## **PROGRAM**

**Programs-** June 4 – Eric Maceachern with ICIO  
June 18 – Diane Hairston with Clearwater Business Committee

Dr. Dennis Harper, Public Affairs Program Chair, introduced our program speakers, Senator Lee Heinrich, Representative Paul Shepherd and Representative Ken Roberts.

Senator Heinrich began by passing out a letter with the positive legislative accomplishments including grocery tax relief, driver's license for legal residents only, crop burning, identity theft, foreclosure rescue scams, making it a criminal act to coerce a woman to have an abortion, REAL ID, community infrastructure districts, wolves, economic development and personal property tax relief. He also discussed non-successful bills.

Senator Heinrich stated that this year the ATV bill that our chamber was having issues with passed, but the deficiencies will be corrected next year. He also assured the membership that next year there would be a funding solution for enforcement and education. The legislature will continue to fight the issuance of a REAL ID, which is viewed as an invasion of privacy. He also stated that he believes that Economic Development is the support of "mom and pop" businesses, shopping at home is the answer for rural Idaho's economic development.

Representative Paul Shepherd was next to address the membership. He wants to find out from us what he needs to be doing. He serves on the Health and Welfare committee which worked heavily on the midwife licensing issue this session. It failed to pass, but will be worked on again next session. 80% of Welfare money comes from the federal programs, the other 20% is matched at the State level. The federal money is being cut back, so the recipients are going to be screened more carefully. The state is going to hold the line on new programs and take care of existing programs.

Representative Shepherd also addressed Education. There is a new superintendent with new programs introduced, mainly pushing to reward progress. New legislation failed to pass this session but other options will be looked at next session. New program ideas favor dual credits which are a cost savings and incentive for students to continue on to higher education. Distance learning has had a lot of resistance in the past and that is changing. This option allows for rural schools to share higher level teachers which they would not have been able to afford on their own.

Shepherd also spoke about the Resource committee which is looking at a number of issues including raising rates for state land leases. Road maintenance is way behind schedule and there are funding issues, Shepherd believes that funding sources need to be fair, raising vehicle registration fees to \$150 was talked about, but perhaps a gas tax would be a more fair way to generate more funds for roads.

Representative Ken Roberts opened with personal property tax. The bill was amended and only comes into play if there is a 5% increase in the general fund revenue of the State. He also stated that the grocery tax credit will increase to \$100 per person. He also addressed water issues. Legislation targeting water in Southern Idaho will set the precedence for the rest of the state. The state had previously over allocated water in Southern Idaho.

Roberts addressed school funding stating that Craig Wyden money is still being anticipated, but if it doesn't come through, the state will step in with rainy day money and would appropriate about eleven million dollars to those who currently depend on Craig Wyden money. He expressed a need for the school funding formula to be changed. The issue is different now than it was in 1985 when it was created. There was more timber and mining in the rural economy. The per capita income in Boise is \$50,000 per year, other counties are substantially lower and the inequities need to be addressed and a new formula developed.

Roberts also spoke about the Transportation committee. They are in a situation now where in 18 months, ITD will be upside down in funding. Revenues will need to be increased just to maintain existing programs. They pledge to work on an audit to evaluate performance and give direction to ITD. He thanked Senator Heinrich and Representative Shepherd for working together so well and also expressed appreciation to the Chamber for their weekly conference calls with the legislators.

Dr. Harper reminded the membership of the conference calls during session and stated that the major complaint the committee had is that there is not supposed to be new bills introduced after a certain period during the session. This session we were blindsided by several bills including the controversial ATV bill.

The meeting was opened up to questions from the membership. Renewable energy, HB49-1301, drug and alcohol testing for Medicare recipients, EMS credential changes, and Parks and Recreation involvement were discussed further.

### **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

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Ryan Smathers, President

ATTESTED:

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Heather R. Burnham, Executive Director