

President's Update
Tahlequah Area Chamber Board of Directors
September 23, 2014
Submitted by Dr. Steve Turner

You are aware the 2-month agreement between the Chamber and Tahlequah Main Street ended in August. Drew Haley did a great job getting us through a difficult time and we sincerely appreciate his leadership. Drew's leadership enabled the Executive Committee to focus on providing information to those conducting the criminal investigation. Additionally, we were able to fill all vice president positions and complete the mandatory training. In June following the resignation of the former Chamber Executive Director, I met with Trae Ratliff, Amy Carter and Drew Haley of Tahlequah Main Street to discuss their views of allowing Drew to help the Chamber for a 60-day period. My commitment was to keep this special agreement in place only for a short period. We are at a place now to use the Executive Committee and the VPs to keep things moving forward. We are also using the expertise of Mindy Barnard, and her 8 years of experience to help with day-to-day operations. It is most appropriate to enable Drew to focus on Main Street activities and spend time with his family. Thank you Drew and the Main Street Board.

Today the Board of Directors approved the following motion related to job duties for Mindy Barnard.

- Assist Vice President of Membership Development to increase and retain Chamber Membership
- Assist the President, Executive Committee and all VP's to maintain schedules and produce related documents
- Schedule and coordinate Ribbon Cutting events and Business After Hours
- Respond to all requests to the Chamber for statistical data for the Tahlequah Area
- Develop and publish electronically the Chamber Newsletter
- Develop a new Chamber Web Page
- Other duties as assigned by the Board

Furthermore, this motion includes a recommendation to increase in her hourly rate from \$12.00 to \$15.00. These additional duties and the supplemental compensation will end when the new Executive Director's employment begins.

The remaining two Directors who were unable to attend the required mandatory training on August 25 will complete the training immediately following today's meeting. The facilitator from the non-profit resource center will be here at 9:30. Today, all Chamber Directors have completed the mandatory training program

In 2010, the Chamber lost its IRS 501C6 Status. On Saturday, September 6, the renewal application, along with the required application fee, were mailed to the IRS. According to IRS regulations, at the time of the postmark, the Chamber began again to function again as a 501c6. I want to thank Stephen Highers for taking the lead on this effort assisted by Anna Knight.

Friday, September 26 through Friday, October 3, Chamber Directors will work at the Chamber Office in four or 8 hour shifts to answer the phone and provide information while Mindy Barnard takes some time off. The work schedule is in your packet. Thanks for volunteering to work.

	Friday - 26th	Monday- 29th	Tuesday- 30th	Wednesday- 1st	Thursday- 2nd	Friday- 3rd
9:00	Tinsley	Worth	Baker	Mutzig	Turner	Spears
10:00	Tinsley	Worth	Baker	Mutzig	Turner	Spears
11:00	Tinsley	Worth	Baker	Mutzig	Turner	Spears
12:00	Tinsley	Worth	Baker	Mutzig	Turner	Spears
1:00	Highers	Worth	Elliott	Isaacs	Meredith	Cook
2:00	Highers	Worth	Elliott	Isaacs	Meredith	Cook
3:00	Highers	Worth	Elliott	Isaacs	Meredith	Cook
4:00	Highers	Worth	Elliott	Isaacs	Meredith	Cook

The 18th Class of Leadership Tahlequah had its first meeting last Thursday with 20 participants.

The Organizational Development Committee led by Jodeen Worth continues their work to update the Chamber Bylaws.

The Community Development Committee led by Angela Tinsley has scheduled a “Taste of Tahlequah and Silent Auction” on Tuesday, November 18. The event will be held in the University Center at Northeastern State University.

The Tourism Council will soon be renamed the Convention and Visitors Bureau and is seeking applications for the Tourism Director.

I am also happy to report that on Monday, September 15, the Chamber paid the property taxes for 2011, 2012, 2013 along with the penalties. Although the Board approved using the line of credit at BancFirst if necessary to pay the taxes and penalties, we were able to pay the expense with available funds. Today we have real property insurance, we are paying our current federal and state payroll taxes, and we have workers compensation insurance.

The Executive Director Screening Committee met on Tuesday, September 16, 2014 to review the first draft of the Position Announcement to be published in appropriate outlets. The initial draft was modified based on the collective comments. We present it today for approval. I anticipate the review of applicants will begin in early November with the goal of having the next Chamber Executive Director on the job by January 1, 2015.

Chamber Executive Director Screening Committee

Dr. Steve Turner, Chair
 Isabel Baker, Chamber Director
 Mayor Jason Nichols, City of Tahlequah
 Jim Berry, Member
 Mark Gish, Tahlequah Industrial Authority
 Danielle Coursey, Member
 Elizabeth Bird, Member
 Genny Maiden, Tourism Council
 Drew Haley, Main Street Program

Below is the position announcement for the Executive Director position.

Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce

Executive Director

The Board of Directors of the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce seeks qualified and dynamic applicants for the position of Executive Director. The Executive Director is the chief executive and administrative officer responsible for the day-to-day operations and for carrying out the programs developed and defined by the Board of Directors. The ability of the Executive Director to motivate and inspire volunteers to creative and fruitful action is key to the effectiveness of the Chamber.

The Executive Director is responsible for identification of Chamber and community needs and challenges and, in collaboration with the proper Chamber committee, for the preparation of an annual program of work designed to meet those needs. The program of work is expected to be based on proper research and should anticipate emerging community opportunities and issues.

In addition to other revenue sources, the Chamber receives funding from the City of Tahlequah to promote tourism in the area. The Executive Director works in collaboration with the Tourism Council (soon to be re-named the Tahlequah Area Convention and Visitors Bureau) to oversee the day-to-day work of the Tourism Director.

The Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce, originally formed in 1897, has an engaged and dedicated membership of approximately 540 individuals, businesses, institutions and organizations across Cherokee County.

Nestled in the foothills of the Ozarks, Tahlequah is one of Oklahoma's fastest growing communities. It is home for two tribes: the Cherokee Nation and the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, and one of the state's leading regional institutions of higher education: Northeastern State University. Cherokee County is a paradise for those who love the outdoors, boasting two of the area's most beautiful natural resources – Lake Tenkiller and the Illinois River. Throughout the year, tens of thousands of tourists flock to the exciting North End district for dining, entertainment and shopping. Tahlequah is a regional center for healthcare and offers a unique mix of special events and cultural opportunities.

Applicants must possess, at minimum, a bachelor's degree in a related discipline, five years of documented Chamber or equivalent experience (chamber experience preferred), and must be willing to earn and maintain the respect and confidence of the Board, individually and collectively.

Interested persons should send a current resume, a statement outlining your leadership philosophy, academic transcript, and three references to:

Executive Director Search
Dr. Steve Turner, President
Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce
123 East Delaware Street
Tahlequah, OK 74464

The review of applicants will begin November 1, 2014. The selected candidate should be prepared to begin employment as the Executive Director on or before January 1, 2015.

<http://www.tahlequahchamber.com>

In conclusion, I want to thank the Vice Presidents for submitting their reports in writing in advance of today's meeting. Having this information included in the Regular Meeting Packet allows Directors to be better prepared to ask questions and vote. Going forward, all reports should be submitted in writing to Mindy Barnard by 5:00 PM on the Thursday before the Regular Meeting. Directors will receive the packet via email no later than 5:00 PM on the Friday before the Regular Meeting.

Thank you for your contributions to the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce. We are moving forward and supporting our valued Chamber members. The future is bright!

--

Steve Turner Ph.D.
President
Northeastern State University
(918) 444-2000