

Bremen Area Chamber of Commerce minutes of the November 14, 2024 annual meeting

President David Foltz welcomed members and the public to the chamber's annual meeting at the Bremen Area Historical Society at 6:30 p.m. He defined the chamber's purposes as working to make local businesses and their agricultural partners thrive and to support the needs of the community. David then introduced the chamber's officers and speakers Rick Moyer and Chad Ashbaugh of Rushcreek Township Trustees and Chad Belville, superintendent of Fairfield Union Local School District. Presenters from the village were detained by a council meeting.

In old business, minutes of the October meeting were approved on a motion by Marilyn Boyd, seconded by Dee Mowry. The treasurer passed out her report; Dee Mowry moved to receive it, seconded by Rich Lines and carried.

In new business, David reminded us that election of the executive board is to take place in even numbered years. Those nominated were:

President - Rich Lines
Vice president - David Foltz
Secretary - Sue Schmitz
Treasurer - Sue Henwood
Trustee - Heather Yontz
Trustee - Marilyn Boyd

There being no nominations from the floor for any of these positions, the slate was elected to serve for 2025 and 2026.

Announcements:

December 8 - *Santa in the Village*, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Marilyn Boyd moved that the chamber donate \$100 toward supplies; motion seconded by Heather Yontz and carried.

December 20 - *Assembly Singers* Christmas performance at Bremen Elementary. The chamber is invited to attend as our December meeting; please arrive by **9:00 a.m.** so we can be seated before the students. Following the performance, as it will be early for lunch, we will gather at the *Sweets to Taste Bakery* for refreshments and fellowship.

Presentations:

Chad Belville noted two current endeavors: collecting names of alumni who've served in the military, and celebrating "no shave month" in solidarity with staff and students fighting cancer. He then reviewed his tenure at Fairfield Union since his arrival in 2016 with the board's mandate to make the district excellent again. His 5 pronged approach:

1. "Hand Turkeys" - represented by student hall art in the buildings, to make the students love coming to school and education
2. "Mac necklaces" - extracurricular activities that tie them to the school and community - shown in increased band participation
3. "Kids feel safe" - first schools in the county to have a sheriff's deputy in the building daily
4. "Kids are loved and cared for" - federal funding for free breakfast and lunch programs has resulted in a 300% decrease in morning clinic visits
5. Educate after basic needs have been met - the latest state report card gave Fairfield Union 4.5 out of 5 stars, with a 97% graduation rate.

Financially, the district is in good shape currently, but there are concerns about the decreases in enrollment due to open enrollment and population shifts.

Chad Ashbaugh spoke for the Rushcreek Township Trustees. He reported 12 miles of roads chipped and tarred this year. There are 6 full-time fire and EMT staff, with 316 runs to date in 2024. The township participates in the regional planning commission so that growth is controlled; there are 10 new housing permits in the works. Financially, the township is okay.

Bremen Mayor Anthony Taylor reported work on the village's water: cleaning of the water tower, new softener, new water meters that replace in-house ones and read usage monthly so that leaks are discovered quicker. In recreation needs, the basketball courts were relined, the park improved in ADA compliance, the pool had its sand filter replaced and has new lighting and windows in the pool house. The reintroduced Oktoberfest broke even, thanks to donations. Bartlett Street's repaving is to be completed by Thanksgiving!.

Those present then enjoyed refreshments and time to visit and question the presenters further.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Schmitz, secretary