

Ownership Manual

...

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY

THE DIXON AREA
Chamber of Commerce

and Industry

THE *Chamber . . .*

. . . FOCUSED ON OUR MISSION

Our mission . . .

“The mission of the Dixon Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry is to promote and enhance the business and economic climate of the area.”

The Dixon Area Chamber of Commerce is an organization of business and professional men and women who have joined together for the solution of their mutual business and community problems. Funded through membership dues and fund-raisers, the Chamber depends upon volunteers working together effectively to make our community a better place in which to live and work. The Chamber is *not* a part of city, county or state government, a political faction, civic or social club, or directed by or answerable to the Illinois Chamber, U.S. Chamber or any other organization.

The purpose of the Chamber of Commerce is to strive toward maintaining a stable and dynamic economy in the area that will provide high employment for all economic resources. The Chamber also seeks to encourage a unified public spirit among citizens and groups interested in the general welfare of the community.

To achieve these purposes, the Chamber fulfills its role as a catalyst and promoter in strengthening the overall well-being of the area. Business recognizes that the community environment has a direct relationship with its own economic progress. Thus the Chamber involves itself in the broad spectrum of

community needs. These include education, government, planning and development for social programs, facilities, services and cultural needs as well as the more direct factors involved in business operations.

Chamber efforts are directed to the area as a whole and concentrate on creating an environment that will allow all aspects of the community to flourish. This is why the Chamber does not work for individual businesses or any single group within the community.

A key to success is the Chamber's ability to anticipate future community needs. It must keep alert to issues, situations and potential problems that could affect the area's ability to prosper. This means being proactive rather than reactive. The Chamber works to create positive change to address needs before they become crises.

The Chamber draws upon the talents of capable people in its membership willing to volunteer by sharing knowledge, skills and leadership to further community projects and progress.

The work of the Chamber is a never-ending process. The job of building the community is never complete with many projects taking years to accomplish. The true value of the Chamber lies in its cumulative worth.

The Dixon Chamber . . . Since 1887.

THE Chamber . . .

. . . PROVIDING VISION & LEADERSHIP

Our Board of Directors

2015 Chamber Officers

Chairman of the Board:

Dana Considine
*Ehrmann Gehlbach Badger Lee &
Considine, LLC*

Vice Chairman:

Jennifer Baratta
Sauk Valley Media

Second Vice Chairman:

Matt Keegan
Ward, Murray, Pace & Johnson, P.C.

Treasurer:

Jenny Koch
United Way of Lee County

Kirsten Crawford

Crawford Realty, LLC

Melissa Glessner

U S Bank

David Gross

ComEd

Tom Houck

Willett, Hofmann & Associates, Inc.

Brenda Humphrey

Humphrey Show Cattle

Ryan Marshall

The Stables

Dave Noble

Walmart

Bonnie O'Connell

Heritage Square

Gary Presley

State Farm Insurance

David Schreiner

KSB Hospital

Deb Trancoso

BorgWarner Inc.

Chad Weigle

Edward Jones

One representative of the

*Lee County Industrial
Development Association*

(Ex-officio Members)

James Burke - City of Dixon, Mayor

Manager - Dixon Main Street

Greg Hicks, Immediate Past Board Chairman

Rick Ketchum - Lee County Board, Chairman

Jonna Russell - Chamber Ambassadors, President

Our Staff

JOHN R. THOMPSON

President/CEO

VICKI L. CARLSON

Vice President

KAYE KING

Executive Secretary

The Dixon Chamber is proud of our volunteer leadership. These individuals, representing a broad cross-section of our membership, prepare the Chamber's business plan and share their knowledge, skills and leadership for the benefit of the membership and the community.

Professional management and staff make visiting the Dixon Chamber offices a pleasant and productive experience. Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Carlson are both graduates of the Institute for Organization Management, a nationally recognized leadership development program.

THE *Chamber . . .*

. . . STRIVING TO ACHIEVE OUR ACTION PLAN

BUSINESS PLAN

There are four essential ingredients in any Chamber of Commerce: volunteers, finances, staff and a business plan. The basis for the organization is the business plan which is defined as “the sum total of programs and activities currently being carried out by the Chamber of Commerce.” The preparation of the business plan, or the Chamber’s “action plan,” is possibly the most important responsibility of the Board of Directors.

Each year, the Chamber board sets goals and prioritizes areas of need. Some of the Chamber programs that have evolved from this format include the annual Chamber Gala, Business After Business, the Dixon Collectible Series, our Drug Free Workplace Program and Testing Initiative, and the Chamber website. Each of these initiatives has addressed an opportunity expressed in our annual planning exercise and influenced by our networks with other community leaders.

The following are abbreviated portions of the Dixon Chamber’s continuing Business Plan.

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

- Provide for financial oversight, budget process, salary administration, and office facilities.
- Contract for management of LCIDA functions.
- Conduct Gala fund raiser for facilities needs.
- Monitor dues structure to adequately fund Chamber operations.

MEMBER SERVICES/MEMBERSHIP

- Conduct membership events including: Business After Business, Golf Outing, Radio Day, & Annual Meeting.
- Maintain Chamber website, including the Chamber membership directory
- Hold legislative events, topical seminars, job fair, new member orientations
- Continue relationships with the Illinois Retail Merchants Association, and the Illinois and U.S. Chambers to benefit members
- Evaluate & recommend programs for members

RETAIL SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

- Retail/Service Seminars
- Annual Dixon Christmas Walk
- Evaluate & recommend retail/service programs

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION

- Conduct Citizen of the Year program
- Conduct Government Affairs Program as related to community development
- Act as business interface to the Business Education Community Partnership (BCEP)
- Continue networking relationships, as needed, with other community based programs and organizations including:
 - Lee County Industrial Development Association
 - City of Dixon
 - Dixon Main Street
 - Dixon Petunia Festival Corporation
 - and many others.

THE Chamber . . .

. . . MEMBERSHIP INVESTMENT SCHEDULE 2015

Business Classifications:

1. Generally classified retail and service businesses -
 - A. 1-2 Employees \$328.00
 - B. 3-6 " \$390.00
 - C. 7-12 " \$490.00
 - D. 13-19 " \$652.00
 - E. 20-29 " \$876.00
 - F. 30+ " \$1010.00
+ \$4.66/emp. above 30.
2. Manufacturers, General Contractors, Distributors, Publishers -
\$363.00
+ \$9.27 each/first 20 emp. and \$4.66/additional.
3. Professional -
Physicians, Dentists, Veterinarians, Realtors,
Optometrists, Chiropractors, Engineers,
Architects, Accountants, Attorneys.
\$363.00
+ \$120.36 per principal/owner
+ \$18.50/each prof. staff.
4. Utilities -
Negotiated Fair Share.
5. Hotels, Motels, Bed and Breakfasts -
\$5.13/unit (\$363.00 minimum)
+ \$93.00 with restaurant,
+ \$185.00 with bar,
+ \$288.00 with banquet facilities.
6. Hospitals & Nursing Homes -
\$5.13/unit (\$363.00 minimum)
+ \$120.36/professional directly employed
(see # 3 above).
7. Financial Institutions -
\$966.00
+ \$40.00 per employee
[employed within institution's market office(s)]
8. Special Memberships -
Retired Business Persons, Clergy & Churches,
Individual Educators, Civic Officials, Not-for-Profit
Clubs and Organizations
\$129.00
9. Associate Business Membership - (non-voting)
From outside the Dixon area market, presently
a full member in a "Home" chamber, and not
doing a major portion, or equivalent competing
position, of the company business in the Dixon
area.
Lesser of \$328.00 or
one-half the full member dues.

*Please make calculations of dues
based on above formulas
and round to the nearest
whole dollar amount.*

Membership dues in the Chamber of Commerce may be tax deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense. Dues paid to the Chamber are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal income tax purposes. The chamber is not a charity, but serves as an advocacy organization for area business.

THE *Chamber* . . .

. . . CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY PROMOTION

The Chamber acts as the business advocate and “front door” for the community. Each year we handle thousands of requests for information regarding our community. We provide Community Profiles and View books and expose our members to countless newcomers. The Chamber office is regularly visited by business men and women, tourists and other travelers seeking information about the community. A Chamber produced map of Dixon and Lee County is available as are tourism brochures and information about area events. The Chamber truly is the ambassador for Dixon.

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

The Chamber is the main conduit to the business community for the award-winning Business Education Community Partnership. Chamber members have served on all committees of this organization since its creation in 1989 by the Dixon (now Lee County) Industrial Development Association. The Chamber encourages our members to participate in partnership activities with the schools. We advocate getting students and educators into the business environment and business persons into schools so that each may experience the other's daily environment.

THE “VOICE” OF BUSINESS

Through the Dixon Chamber's legislative affairs programs, the Grassroots Action Center of the Illinois Chamber, and the U.S. Chamber's advocacy network, we track pending legislation which affects Chamber member's cost of doing business. Leveraging the voice of business with contacts to legislators, we provide you with the background materials you need and provide the key contact information for legislators that need to hear from you.

The Chamber conducts periodic legislative and candidate forums to inform our members and the public about local candidates and important issues.

SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

Noting that small business generates a great deal of growth potential in our area, the Chamber provides several programs geared to this segment of our membership. Quality seminars are offered on selected subjects throughout the year intended to provide business owners with information close to their businesses.

The Chamber works with our area Small Business Development Center in providing support for existing businesses as well as start-ups. In addition, the Chamber offers a myriad of demographic and business resource information available to assist businesses in making crucial development decisions.

COMMUNITY GROWTH

The Chamber helps create job opportunities through the stimulation of industrial and commercial growth. We seek improvements in community infrastructure and human resources. The Chamber works in partnership with the Lee County Industrial Development Association, Dixon Main Street, the City of Dixon and others, to foster growth, new development, and business retention.

WHY SHOULD YOU BECOME A MEMBER OF THE DIXON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY?

You have a business at stake in the community which can best be safeguarded by working with others through the Chamber to protect and advance all businesses.

Your support is returned to the community yielding benefits in new industry, increased payroll, legislation, business protection, and community advancement.

The Chamber cannot carry out its broad program of work to protect and advance business without your personal financial support.

Through the Chamber, you can best discharge your obligations to the community in which you live and earn your living.

THE *Chamber* . . .

. . . OFFERING ADDITIONAL MEMBER BENEFITS

In addition to the current program of work and the continuing programs of the Chamber, members are afforded an additional return on their Chamber investment.

Some of these benefits include:

www.dixonillinoischamber.com

The Chamber's website provides 24/7 exposure for our members. The business directory on our website provides information on all our Chamber members and offers free links to our members' websites. The site contains community and relocation information, a community calendar, member news, and economic and business development data.

Ribbon Cutting Service

The Chamber's Ribbon Cutting Service, using our big scissors, is the perfect way for your new business to get noticed. The ribbon cutting results in a "free" ad in the local newspaper highlighting your business.

U.S. Chamber Federation Membership

The Dixon Chamber has partnered with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to bring a stronger voice to the legislative issues that affect small business. Through the U.S. Chamber's Federation Membership program, eligible small business members of the Dixon Chamber receive access to members-only sections of the U.S. Chamber's online Small Business Center; discounts on products and services; *uschamber.com Weekly*, the U.S. Chamber's small business e-newsletter; and other communications that provide action alerts to pressing legislation or policy initiatives.

Chamber Membership as a Business Strategy

A Chamber membership adds to the credibility of your business. Customers put a lot of trust in the Chamber plaque...and businesses that display it.

Consumers trust affiliations and involvement.

If your business is a member of a Chamber or a similar organization, consumers generally consider it to be an indicator of good business practices, a reputable organization, and a leader in the business community.

Source: "The Real Value of Joining a Chamber of Commerce—A Research Study", December 2012, The Schapiro Group

Access through Networking and Referrals

Members may take advantage of the Chamber network through our *Membership and Business Directory* and our monthly newsletter, *Dixon Area Business News*, published monthly and available for viewing on the Chamber's website. Businesses may effectively advertise to over 500 key business contacts through this exclusive Chamber resource.

The Chamber receives thousands of inquiries throughout the year — from local residents to individual and business relocation prospects. Your dues are truly an investment, for the Chamber refers business to member companies.

Chamber Ambassadors

The Chamber Ambassadors, a group of 30 of our best volunteers, function as a good-will organization to develop a better overall image of the Chamber. Ambassadors serve as hosts at Chamber events and welcome new businesses at ribbon cuttings and open houses. This provides Ambassadors first access to many of the new businesses as they locate in the Dixon area.

THE *Chamber* . . .

. . . MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE DIXON AREA!

Our proud chronology . . .

- 1887** Citizens Association of Dixon incorporated.
- 1912** Charter Member of Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America.
- 1915** Citizens Association name changed to Chamber of Commerce.
- 1920** Chamber reorganized under American City Bureau . . . retains Chamber of Commerce name.
- 1925** Member of Illinois Chamber of Commerce.
- 1926** Moves to a City building located along the Rock River close to the Abraham Lincoln Bridge.
- 1997** Chamber President (John R. Thompson) elected to serve as President of the Illinois Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.
- 1998** Chamber contracts with Lee County Industrial Development Association (LCIDA) to provide management responsibilities for the development association.
- 2000** After 74 years at its previous site, Chamber moves to a modern office building located in the heart of downtown Dixon. The site of the previous building was acquired by the State as part of a bridge reconstruction project.
- 2011** We celebrated our 125th year promoting the Dixon Area!

THE DIXON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE and INDUSTRY
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