

***Girard Chamber of Commerce Report***  
***Courtesy Chamber Website***

Pledge and prayer led by Chamber President Jeanette Earley opened the Feb. 14 breakfast meeting hosted by Myrna and Craig Bomkamp at Madison House. Deb Burnett, Casey Claypool, the Bomkamps, Bill Giles, John Earley, Wayman Meredith, Michelle Hoover, Vicki Walker, Pam Hawkins, Addison Earley, Steve O'Dell and Janice Smith were in attendance.

Previous minutes and treasurer's report were filed for audit, with the announcements that Chamber dues notices had been forwarded, June 8 was suggested for City Wide Garage Sales, and Festival Days Committee will meet at 4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 18 at Community Center.

Miss Girard Addison Earley reviewed upcoming events including several pageant attendances and meetings, with the Queen's Tea to take place in April.

President Earley reported Royell Communications are scheduled to install WIFI at the Community Center Thursday; Police Chief Wayman Meredith announced the latest hiring of an additional police officer; and Pam Hawkins reported for Virden Association of Commerce, announcing a Job Fair set for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 20 at North Mac High School Cafeteria, inviting Girard Chamber to take part.

Girard Fire District and Prairieland Ambulance spokesman John Earley reported County officials met recently at the Sangamon County Building to approach establishing service area for tax purposes in support of Prairieland, adding the effort will be a slow process; stated solar farming covering thousands of acres will generate tax dollars for ambulance service and schools; reported the Fire Department is working through the acquisition of the Kruse property.

Michelle Hoover representing Courtyard Estates reported the facility will vote for Valentine's Day King and Queen; host a Krispy Crème fundraiser through Feb. 24 benefitting the Activity Fund; and a "Barbie" party will be sponsored March 9. Additional activities sponsored by Carlinville Area Hospital were announced by Vicki Walker, including a previous visit by Macoupin County Animal Control officials and an upcoming Health Fair in the works sponsored by Carlinville Chamber of Commerce. Walker stated reviews from patients utilizing Virden's Mobile Clinic have been good.

Planning concerning sewer issues on Illinois Route 4 located adjacent to North Mac's Intermediate School is continuing by engineers, as is the updating of the city's sewer system maps.

Girard Chamber will again award a \$500 scholarship to a graduating North Mac senior; applications for Festival Days Citizen of the Year and Teen Citizen of the Year awards may be obtained at city hall.

Casey Claypool made Chamber aware of several grant applications in the works, including \$50,000 for Covid-affected communities and city signage grants, stating many additional grants are available including revitalization grants; a sign barring climbing on the new Route 66 park sign will soon be installed. Owner of Doc's Just Off Route 66, Claypool suggested adding music and vendors to her cruise-in events; proposed a farmers market again be stationed downtown once a month during growing season; reported the building of a Chamber website is half completed; stated Illinois Scenic Biway membership is due (shared by Chamber and City, \$125 each); the next Business After Hours is set for the fourth Tuesday, from 5 to 7 p.m., at Doc's, an opportunity for small business owners to network.

Related to Festival Days, a plan to include several inflatables is underway, Penny Pitch volunteers are needed, the focus on local groups is targeted for stage entertainment, parade planning was suggested with various committees to be formed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 a.m. with next meeting scheduled for 7 a.m. Wednesday, March 13, at Courtyard Estates.