

## ***Girard Chamber of Commerce Report***

### ***Courtesy Chamber Website***

Newly elected President Steve O'Dell opened the May 14, 2025 Girard Chamber of Commerce meeting at Courtyard Estates with Bill and Peggy Giles as sponsors. Also attending, new officers, Nita Hamilton vice president, Michelle Hoover secretary, members Jeanette Earley, Deb Burnett, Leigh Anne Baer, Wayman Meredith, Will Downs, Myrna Bomkamp and Janice Smith.

Previous minutes and treasurer's report were unanimously approved followed by announcements; the 2025 scholarship recipient (Nick Lancaster) will be introduced during graduation ceremonies; 2025 event dates will include June 7 City Wide Yard Sales, to be posted on Facebook the week prior for addresses/times in the comments, Festival Days celebration set for July 25, 26, 27, and Pumpkin Festival scheduled for October 11.

The next planning meeting for Festival will be 4:30 p.m. May 27, at Doc's, prior to the Tri-County meeting at 6 p.m. Jeanette Earley presented planning information settled thus far, including: the event page to appear on Facebook has been finalized; park vendor fees are \$35 non-profit, \$50 profit, size is 10x10 with larger at \$75; parade signup will be online; sound and lighting have been secured; bingo will be offered all three days of the Festival, with license applied for; car show, volleyball tourney and Pageant committee members are in preparation; yearly vendors will again include Firemen's Food Tent, Methodist Men Ice Cream Social and Girard Township Library Book Sale; the Lift-A-Thon sponsored by The Zone will begin at noon Sunday; plastic wrist bands will be utilized for this year's children's events including the inflatables, with one main prize awarded at the close of the Festival; plans are also underway for a 50/50 drawing.

Under President's Report, O'Dell outlined positive conversation with Girard Mayor Joe Marko, with plans to meet newly elected City Council members, all with the objective of working together, moving forward, with common interests. The Ambassadors program (Chamber members welcoming new businesses) will be explored for a current email list of representatives; Chamber website will be updated; Sara Millward and Jeanette Earley are Promotion representatives (Earley stating that \$12,000 has thus far been raised targeting the purchase of the city's north side entrance sign).

Police Chief Wayman Meredith announced Gino Serra of Springfield as the department's newly hired officer and a \$10,000 grant has been awarded for the purchase of taser equipment. Meredith will additionally take part as one of many local departments pace cars in the Father's Day Indy Car event at Madison's Gateway National Raceway.

Nita Hamilton reported for Virden Chamber, upcoming city events to include a golf outing at Oak Hills, a May 20 Park Initiative chicken dinner sales, the opening of SIPS Coffee Company at the city's north edge, the Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Rt. 66 Main Street Mingle which will include vendors, and the June 14 Fred Britenstine Car Show.

Concrete forms are being poured at Girard's newly acquired firehouse site.

Courtyard Estates sales and marketing director, Michelle Hoover, spoke on related events for seniors: the May 21 Senior Celebration hosted at the Orr Building State Fairgrounds 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., with a Senior Expo event planned for June 3, from 3 to 6 a.m., at the Macoupin County Fairgrounds, Carlinville; a June 6 free coffee and donuts event from 8 to 9 a.m. at County Market Cafe, sponsored by both Courtyard and Carlinville Area Hospital & Clinics; it is currently Skilled Nursing Week, followed by Police Officer Week and later EMS Week; a June 13 Father's Day Tractor Show is scheduled at Courtyard, with a goal of raising \$1,000 for the Alzheimer Association. The app "Group Me" was briefly discussed, used for various community/organizational purposes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 a.m., with the next meeting scheduled for 7 a.m. June 11 at Oak Hills Country Club, Steve O'Dell as sponsor.