Gouverneur Chamber of Commerce

53 Herm Towne Road

Gouverneur, New York 13642

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Minutes of November 2, 2026 Meeting

The November 2026 meeting of the Chamber of Commerce was called to order at 8:00 AM by President Brooke Plowman. Attendees were Vice President Donna Lawrence, Executive Director Donna Besaw, Directors CJ Fitzgerald, Michelle Blackburn, Melissa Simione, Jessica Hentz, Dianne Cocco, Ray Babowicz, Mickael White, Kayla Ciambra, Connie Stowell, Emily Bush, Christian Gillan, Carlene & Erin from Gardenshare, Morgan Leeson our Farmer's Market Manager and Joe Fitzgerald.

The minutes of the October meeting were approved by a motion from Melissa and seconded by Ray.

Executive Director Donna Besaw gave the treasurer's report showing no money collected in October and expenses totaled $1,509 leaving a balance of $13,605 in the checking account. Connie made the motion to accept the treasurer's report and Christian seconded, the motion carried.

Correspondence: Donna Besaw reported that the Chamber received a November Newsletter from the Elks Club, North Country Now / This Week Advertising Offer, Community Bank notice of Service Charges starting (although we are excluded) and a NNY Business Newspaper

Committee Reports: The DBA list for September shows new businesses A & J Superior Services, Jaded & Co, Pretty Girls Esthetics & Car Locker of Gouverneur and BG Consulting of Hermon. They will be sent welcome / membership letters soon.

Old Business: Trunk or Treat: Melissa reported that there were a lot of kids but not as many as in the past. Ray did not have the count yet, but Brooke said we gave out 600 cups of cider, both children & adults. Two remaining bags of candy were donated to the Rec Center.

New Business: Winter Blast 2027: We are looking for events during weekdays. We have the logo contest by the school age children and will decide on a winner at the close of this meeting. Shari will scan the entries and put them on our webpage and

Rachel will put them in the paper. Advertising was discussed and Ray suggested that we run an ad on Facebook as opposed to boosting the event. Running an ad gets to a lot of people where boosting only goes to the people who are following our page. We will ask Shari to check into it for us. Shari will also create a page where people can purchase Winterblast gear online. The opening ceremony will be on Saturday morning in the village park and Friday evening will be music with Cory at the Casablanca. **Christmas Lights - Village Park:** CJ reported that the village just received the package and some of it is not correct. We ordered 12 strings of lights to go around the lights poles in the park and only received one adapter that allows them to be plugged in. Only enough lights for one big tree were received so an additional spool of lights for $425 and bulbs for that string of $708 are still needed. Michelle made a motion that we purchase those, Donna Lawrence seconded and all were in favor. **Festival of Trees & Santa's Village:** 62 trees have signed up and we cannot accept anymore as it would break the fire code of the Community Center. Next year we may need to put some trees on the patio outside or set up a tent near the entrance. A budget of $2,000 for the festival drinks and hors d'oeuvres were discussed, Michelle made a motion that we spend up to $2,000, Donna Lawrence seconded and motion carried. Advertising was also brought up, and we believe $700 should cover the advertising costs. Connie made a motion to spend up to $700, Michelle seconded and motion carried. **Christmas Parade:** Donna B will send out invitations soon and CJ asked if we could put a notice that attendees come to a tent that is set up by the funeral home - to sign up and be placed in line. The parade is again at 5:00 and line up is at 4:00. Christine Darrow will attend in the church basement and read her book like she did last year. Brooke has contacted the school to see if the band or orchestra would like to do Christmas music that evening and also, we need some students to wear costumes and march in the parade. They'll discuss and see if they are able. **Gardenshare & Farmer's Market** was discussed. Carlene and Erin attended from Gardenshare as well as our market manager Morgan Leeson. Morgan has agreed to continue to run the machine to accept Snap and other state & federal incentives. Gardenshare will take care of the licensing for us. For 2026, we had 8 regular vendors and 9 non-profits show up different times. Morgan said that at a vendor meeting, the vendors like Gardenshare, they would like to keep Thursday as the market day and if the Food Trucks come on Mondays, some of the FM vendors may like to attend in the afternoon on Mondays as long as that was okay with the Chamber. We also discussed the vendor fee and believe it to be sufficient. **Bouncy House** that was previously owned by Aubuchon was purchased by St James School for $400. Connie contacted the school and they agreed that with a $200 donation, we can use the

bouncy house at our July Flag Day parade each year. A contract was sent asking for a signature when we send the $200. Connie made a motion that we donate $200 towards the future use of the equipment, Donna Lawrence seconded and motion carried. Donna B will sign the contract and get a check right out. **Channel 50 ABC TV** Offer for advertising was discussed, and for $1,800 the chamber can get 180 spots at varying times and days. They suggest the chamber pay $1,800 and get 5 more businesses to sign up also and they would reimburse the Chamber $300 each (if there are 5 others so 6 in total). This was quickly discussed and Donna was asked to send an email to the businesses to see if there is interest in advertising. Channel 50 will visit the businesses, and they will do the rest. **Directory 2027:** We received an unsolicited bid from Cornerstone, one of our member businesses. They gave an estimate of printing our directory, making the chamber door clings, addressing and sending out to all of our member businesses for $2,745. They would do 500 directories and mail out 200 to the members. We will discuss it again but that may be a good option instead of hand delivering the directories when they arrive. **Student of the Month** of October is Lily Macaulay of Building Trades and **Business of the Month** of November is Bowman's Gun Shop. Next month's meeting is December 7th. This meeting was adjourned at 9:13.

Respectfully submitted:

Donna Besaw

Donna Besaw, Executive Director