

**Gouverneur Chamber of Commerce
53 Herm Towne Road
Gouverneur, New York 13642
315-287-0331**

Minutes of January 5, 2026 Meeting

The January 2026 meeting of the Chamber of Commerce was called to order at 8:00AM by President Brooke Plowman. Attendees were Executive Director Donna Besaw, Vice President Donna Lawrence, Directors CJ Fitzgerald, Melissa Simione, Dianne Cocco, Connie Stowell, Michelle Blackburn, Jessica Hentz, Tim Reddick, Kayla Ciambra, Mickael White, and members Dave Spilman from Town of Gouverneur, Rachel Hunter from the Tribune Press, Joe Fitzgerald and Jason White.

The minutes of the December meeting were approved by a motion from CJ and seconded by Connie.

Executive Director Donna Besaw gave the treasurer's report with \$3,363 collected in dues, donation & Festival of Trees income and expenses totaled \$8,273 leaving a balance of \$1,752 in the checking account. Donna L made the motion to accept the treasurer's report and Melissa seconded, the motion carried.

Correspondence: Donna Besaw reported that the Chamber received a January Elks Club newsletter, Thank You notes from Grace Food Pantry and Baskets of Hope for their donations, an ad offer from No Co This Week, handed out 'thank you' letters to all that entered a tree in the Festival of Trees, thank you's also sent to Methodist Church, Jay Bowhall & family, Gouv Savings & Loan, MacFadden Dier, Northern Credit Union and Dave & Lisa from Community Center. We received several miscellaneous emails as well.

Committee Reports: The DBA lists for December was just requested so not yet received.

Old Business: Festival of Trees Update: for our first year was a big success. We had 37 entries, mostly trees. Lots of excitement for next year. We had 4,276 'losers' who had entered the drawings for trees but did not win and 37 winners! For a total of 4,313 entries. Some attendees donated money but did not want to

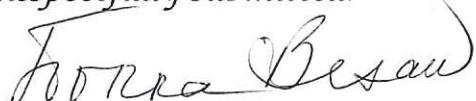
enter any drawings, so we actually turned out very well. Donna L thought the committee may want to meet in February this year to get an early start on the planning. **Christmas Parade Update:** The children's attendance was down a little as we handed out 95 stuffed animals which is a little less than previous years, the reindeer were a hit again and the cookies purchased (500) were the correct amount. We had a few left but not too many. Rob Macaulay won 'best float' in the parade. We did receive an advertisement for **Christmas Decorations** at 35% off in January and February and will bring it up again at our next meeting as the village has commented about the lights purchased locally not being as well made as the commercial lights we purchased earlier. The village DPW is very happy with the trailer that the Chamber helped purchase, it was badly needed for storage of decorations etc.

New Business: New Director: Donna Lawrence made a motion to appoint Emily Bush as a new director, Melissa seconded and motion carried. Welcome Emily! **Banquet Planning:** May 6th is the date this year. Brooke reminded everyone that the directors donate an item to be raffled off at our dinner. It was decided that we would start advertising for Business of the Year in February this year. We have a speaker lined up: Rita from Empire Mines.

Drawing for May Business of Month: Due to a couple businesses closing this year, we needed to draw a new name from the new members - for the month of May. Brooke drew Hair by Helen as the May business of the month. We will notify Shari and Arne of the change. **Committee Assignments:** Were discussed and a few changes made. Donna will update the list for next meeting.

Membership: Donna B will get the letters out this week for our membership and Melissa has agreed to pick up the membership forms weekly and update our directory as we go along. Rachel let us know that the clerics in the beginning of the directory also need to be updated. **Student of the Month of December** is Damion Law of Automotive Technologies. **Business of the Month of January** is Riutta Chiropractic. Shari does an excellent job reporting on our website - thank you Shari! This meeting was adjourned at 8:41.

Respectfully submitted:



Donna Besaw
Executive Director