

Contact the Chamber office at  
724-465-2511

# The Chamber Connection

[www.indianacountychamber.us](http://www.indianacountychamber.us)

FEBRUARY 2024, ISSUE 2

Editor Sydney Bower



## BOARD MINUTES

### Call to Order

Chamber Chairman Dave Reed with First Commonwealth Bank started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. The November 2023 board meeting minutes and financial reports were reviewed.

### Chamber Update

Chamber President Mark Hilliard began his report by discussing the vision for the coming year. Hilliard said that the Chamber is in the early stages of developing a new five-year strategic plan.

### WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- *January Board Minutes*
- *Home Slice Pizzeria Ribbon Cutting*
- *KCAC Upcoming Events*
- *Riziki Coffee Talk Invitation*
- *Levity Business After Hours Invitation*
- *Renewing Members*

# BOARD MINUTES

## *Continued*

“A lot has happened in the past five years and it has changed the way many businesses operate,” Hilliard said. “We have to create a framework that acknowledges that and develop a pathway to create success for our Indiana County businesses and economy for years to come.”

Hilliard highlighted to the board that the first step in the process is restructuring the Chamber sub-committees to adapt to the new business climate. The new committees include Economic Development/Tourism, Education, Events, Government Relations, Membership/Marketing, and Nominations/Board Development.

“We feel the new committee structure will allow us to engage with many of our partners and organizations throughout the county to work together in identifying the challenges and developing solutions for success,” Hilliard stated.

Hilliard concluded the Chamber report by informing the Board that his team is still developing a business roundtable event with the goal of allowing the businesses throughout the county to be a part of the discussion and to bring their ideas, thoughts, and challenges to the table. The event is targeting a spring 2024 date and will be free and open to any business throughout the county.

### **County Government**

Indiana County Commissioner Sherene Hess began the county update by reporting on county operations, beginning with a synopsis of the delivery of human services. The county has established an opioid settlement fund advisory committee to distribute the millions of dollars that are now available to organizations and agencies that address treatment for those in recovery and access for those dealing with substance use disorders.

# BOARD MINUTES

*Continued*

Hess continued by discussing concerns related to the housing shortage and the rise in homelessness and food insecurity. She invited anyone interested in the new food warehouse that is operated by the Indiana County Community Action Program (ICCAP) to take a tour of the facility. Hess also mentioned the highly beneficial partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank over the past year. In other efforts to assist those in need who are income qualified, Commissioner Hess informed the board about the Indiana County

Redevelopment Authority's administration of the Whole Home repairs program, which provides funding to counties for construction-related workforce development programs.

In the public safety realm, Hess expressed thanks to the legislature for reauthorizing legislation that was under threat of sunset, thus renewing the 911 program which included an increase to the 911 fee that is collected through cell phone bill. Commissioner Hess invited anyone interested to attend the public meetings for the local emergency planning committee and the disaster planning committee.

Commissioner Hess informed the group that the county remains very involved in workforce and economic development and tourism, noting that the Workforce Investment Board, on which many Chamber members serve, actually has a meeting open to the public Friday morning. She mentioned the county airport improvements and the work being done to produce a new county comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Hess concluded her report by commenting on the upcoming election. She reminded the room that the best place for election information is the County election office. Wilson Ragen is the new elections coordinator and he can be reached at 724-471-7080.

Hess offered her talk "Top 10 Reasons to Trust Locally Run Elections" to anyone interested in how counties across the Commonwealth deliver safe, secure and accurate elections every season.

# BOARD MINUTES

## *Continued*

### **State Government**

State Representative Jim Struzzi began the state report by discussing the state budget, which was completed in December.

“Even though it was later than anticipated, I am pleased that we finalized it and proud of some of the items that were included in it that will help with education, community safety, families, and more,” Representative Struzzi stated.

One of these items in the area of education is a bill that Representative Struzzi sponsored, House Bill 27, which intends to help schools hire substitute teachers and will increase funding for mental health support for students.

Representative Struzzi continued his report by discussing a presentation he recently attended related to the challenges that are being faced in southwestern Pennsylvania as well as what we can do to improve our economy. According to Representative Struzzi, during the Pittsburgh Works Together – Economic Opportunity for PA presentation, the need for a bipartisan change to Pennsylvania’s policies was discussed in order to bring businesses back to this region. This includes the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and permitting requirements that Representative Struzzi reports are creating an environment where businesses cannot grow.

Representative Struzzi concluded his report by noted that he will be returning to Harrisburg on February 6 for the Governor's budget address and will be there for budget hearings in February and March. The House will not return for a voting session until March 18.

### **University/Education**

Dr. Michael Driscoll, President of Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), shared to the Board that he recently completed filming a piece for the WPXI-TV show, “Our Region’s Business,” which aired last Sunday on the station. Dr. Driscoll discussed a number of items including the new IUP College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Dr. Driscoll reminded the Board that spring semester classes began on Monday, January 22, and he was encouraged to see students already arriving on campus and beginning the move-in process.

The University report continued with Dr. Driscoll inviting the Board to a community reception for the Founding Dean of the new College of Medicine, Dr. Miko Rose, at the Kovalchick Convention and Athletic Complex (KCAC) on January 31.



# BOARD MINUTES

*Continued*

Dr. Driscoll concluded his report by mentioning that Governor Shapiro's budget address will be on February 6, and that he expects an announcement of a plan for improving higher education in Pennsylvania, an idea that the Governor mentioned in his first budget address in 2023. The Board of Governor's for the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) will be meeting on February 7 and 8 following the budget address.

## **Tourism**

Laura Herrington, Executive Director of the Indiana County Tourist Bureau (ICTB), reported to the Board that ICTB members should have received their 2024 ICTB Annual Event Wall Calendar in their mailboxes. The "Landscapes of Indiana County" themed calendar includes photography by local community members: Jon Blanchard Photography, Anthony Frazier/Fanzo Captures, Lisa Meadows, Fred Kipp/Kipp Photography, Cheri Widzowski Photography as well as photography from member organizations, including: Indiana County Parks & Trails, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Lone Oak Farm, Stutzman Farms and Mytrysak's Family Tree Farm. Special thanks to Gazette Printers for once again providing a quality product with outstanding service. Herrington stated that ICTB appreciates receiving photographs taken within Indiana County to use for promotional purposes.

Herrington continued by stating that the first edition of the 2024 Seasonal Events brochure is in production and will soon be distributed to brochure racks located throughout the county. This brochure is updated on a quarterly basis. Herrington encouraged everyone to stop by the Tourist Bureau office in the Indiana Mall or call 724-463-7505 for more information, or to obtain a copy.

After a record month of event activity in December, Herrington reported that the KCAC is keeping busy hosting winter sporting events such as IUP Men's & Women's basketball as well as various other activities. The Champion Force Cheerleading Competition happening January 21 will welcome approximately 5,000+ attendees. The annual Twirl Fest on February 3 will welcome approximately 3,000+ attendees. The Heritage Conference Basketball Championships are scheduled for February 9 and the popular wrestling event, TOC Wrestling, is scheduled for February 11. Looking ahead, IUP faculty and students returning for the Spring semester will bring a welcomed economic boost to the community.

# BOARD MINUTES

## *Continued*

Herrington informed the Board that the Friends of the Parks organization has just released their 2024 Program Schedule. It is available online at [www.indianacountyparks.org](http://www.indianacountyparks.org).

The ICTB report concluded with Herrington stating that Groundhog Day, February 2, 2024, is fast approaching! Several campaigns, promotions and advertisements have been launched promoting Indiana County's nearby overnight accommodations and encouraging visitors of Gobbler's Knob to explore the hometown of Phil's famous neighbor - Jimmy Stewart! Herrington stated that VisitPA.com published an article "Top 8 Groundhog Day Attractions" in early January and gave the Jimmy Stewart Museum top billing as a "Nearby Attraction"!.

### **Jimmy Stewart Airport**

Jimmy Stewart Airport Manager Frederick Fuellner discussed with the Board the completion of the taxiway rehabilitation project and the completion of hangar renovations in the area that houses Lechene Aviation.

"This new business will bring more larger aircraft and helicopters to the airport for repairs," Fuellner reported.

In addition, Fuellner stated that he is expecting the Airport to be quite busy soon with a number of new projects. Fuellner reported that he anticipates the new corporate hangar project to get underway this summer. He also mentioned that there are three potential tenants that are also looking to build hangars at the Airport.

Fuellner concluded his report by announcing some new partnerships with River Valley School District, Rowland School of Business, and Point Park University. Fuellner stated that each of these partnerships will tie into flight training at the Airport.

### **Membership**

Upcoming Chamber member events include:

- Coffee Talk – January 30 @ Aroma Joe's on Oakland Avenue, 8 AM
- Business After Hours @ Indiana County Technology Center sponsored by Community Foundation for the Alleghenies – February 22

The Chamber Board of Directors will meet next on February 15, 2024 at the Indiana Country Club.

# HOME SLICE PIZZERIA RIBBON CUTTING

## *Congratulations!*

Saturday, January 6th, The Indiana County Chamber of Commerce commemorated the grand opening of Home Slice Pizzeria in Homer City with a celebratory ribbon cutting.

Although the winter morning was overcast and grey, the atmosphere within the new pizzeria was anything but. Family, friends, coworkers, and community representatives gathered within the revamped pizza shop to welcome this new milestone for the Tamburrino family.

The building itself used to house various restaurants. However, the space has taken on a new life now teeming with bright, fun colors, graphic wall art that allows customers to have the opportunity for a fun photo op, family pictures of the Tamburrino family on their travels, and other decorations that celebrate the Italian heritage of the Tamburrino family.

Guests also had the opportunity to try a pizza from Home Slice. Owner Joe Tamburrino had made a traditional white pizza for guests to try which featured homemade dough topped with delicious and classically gooey mozzarella cheese, featuring slices of juicy red tomatoes garnishing the top of the perfect pie which gave the dish a sweet yet fresh kick. The pizza was delicious, satisfying, yet light, and perfect for any occasion. Guests were enamored with the dish, as many went for a second slice.

Overall the ribbon cutting for Home Slice Pizzeria was a wonderful ceremony and we are excited to welcome them to the community. The Indiana County Chamber of Commerce sincerely congratulates Home Slice Pizzeria of Homer City, and we are excited to see what they do going forward.

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## IUP BASKETBALL

**FEB. 10 – WOMEN @ 1PM & MEN @ 3PM**

**FEB. 14 – WOMEN @ 5:30PM & MEN @ 7:30PM**

**FEB. 21 – WOMEN @ 5:30PM & MEN @ 7:30PM**

**MAR. 2 – WOMEN @ 1PM & MEN @ 3PM**

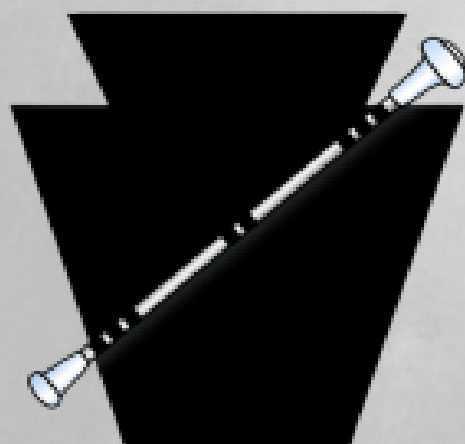


## PA STATE TAXIDERMY TRADE SHOW

**MARCH 23**

**SPORTSMAN'S SHOW: 10A-4P**

**TAXIDERMY SHOWROOM: 12-4P**



## PA STATE TWIRLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

**APRIL 20-21**



VISIT [WWW.IUPTIX.COM](http://WWW.IUPTIX.COM), THE FIRST COMMONWEALTH BANK BOX OFFICE,  
OR SCAN THE QR CODES TO LEARN MORE & PURCHASE TICKETS!



# Coffee Talk Live Event



**Riziki Cafe**

Percolating Hope Through Coffee

**Join the Indiana County Chamber of Commerce for our Coffee Talk Live Event hosted by Riziki Cafe. Enjoy the company of fellow community members while enjoying hot coffee, delicious breakfast treats, and discussing the latest events in the Chamber!**

**February 27th, 2024**

**8-9a.m.**





Hosted by



**BUSINESS  
AFTER HOURS**

**March 29th, 2024**

**5-7p.m.**

**1380 Wayne Ave, Suite A, Indiana, PA 15701**

You are invited to the Indiana County Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours Event hosted by Levity Brewing Co.

Join us for refreshments, fun, and mingling while staying up to date with community events!



Please scan the QR code to register

2024  
“Road to Opportunity”  
a  
Small Business  
Seminar

**March 14, 2024**

**8:30 - 9:00 AM Sign-In**

**9:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

*(morning refreshments and lunch provided)*

**PennDOT  
2800 Oakland Avenue  
Indiana, PA 15701**

Pennsylvania wants to  
include more Small  
Businesses, Small Diverse  
Businesses & Veteran  
Business Enterprises in our  
Procurements and Services.

Secure your spot today to  
join our team!

Register by March 7 at  
[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/  
PDOpportunityD10](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PDOpportunityD10)



We encourage you to Register as a Commonwealth Vendor on the  
**PENNSYLVANIA SUPPLIER PORTAL** at [pa.supplierportal.state.pa.us](https://pa.supplierportal.state.pa.us)  
prior to attending this event.

Questions? Call 724.367.3000 or email [gs-pdcdtsupport@pa.gov](mailto:gs-pdcdtsupport@pa.gov)

If you are interested in better understanding the Commonwealth's procurement process and how to identify, prepare and respond to bidding opportunities, this seminar is for you!

Participants will have an opportunity to learn more about the process and the steps to register a small business. You will receive hands-on assistance to register your small business to do business with PennDOT and the Pennsylvania Department of General Services.

**Download the [Vendor Registration Guide](#) ([procurement-registration-guide.pdf](#) ([pa.gov](#))) for step-by-step instructions.**

**Participants should bring:**

- IRS W9
- Page 1 of your business federal tax returns for each of the past three years which report Gross Sales and Receipts on line 1 or 1a and/or, if applicable, Form 7004 or 4868, Application for Automatic Extension of Time to File
- Copy of Third-Party Certification Documentation for Small Business(SB), Small Diverse Business (SDB), Veteran Business Enterprise (VBE) designation
- Laptop/power cord (if available)
- Your vendor number from the Pennsylvania Supplier Portal

**You will need to know:**

- Legal Business Name, Doing Business As (DBA) Name, Business Phone, Business Fax, Website, and Email Address with Primary Contact Names and Titles
- Tax Identification Number
- Company Structure and Ownership Details
- Company's Primary Business Activity and Industry Commodity Codes
- Financial Information to include Gross Revenues and Full-Time Equivalent Employee (FTE) Count



**We encourage you to Register as a Commonwealth Vendor on the PENNSYLVANIA SUPPLIER PORTAL at [pennsupplierportal.state.pa.us](#) prior to attending this event.**

**Questions? Call 724.387.3800 or email [m.pitroda@supportpa.gov](#)**

*Sponsored by PennDOT and the Pennsylvania Department of General Services' (DGS) Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion and Small Business Opportunities.*



DRINKS - MUSIC - BAND KARAOKE  
CELEBRITY BARTENDERS - BEER PONG

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD, 2024



# A FUN NIGHT AT LEVITY

IN THE  
TAPROOM

SPECIAL GUESTS

★ ★ ★  
**SOMEBODY TO LOVE** ★ ★ ★

**DOORS OPEN 6:00 PM**

**MUSIC FROM 7:00 - 9:00 PM**

**\$20 COVER - INCLUDES A FREE BEER!**

**\$10 COVER WITHOUT BEER**

**\*PAY AT DOOR\***



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United Way of  
Indiana County



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Offer At*



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& TRANSFORM MEDICAL SPA

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724-549-1246

Expires 4-1-24 \*mention when booking



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1265 Wayne Ave

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Unit 204

1,530 Square Feet

Contact:

Lori Wilson 724.465.0100

Or

Tom Zaucha 724.388.2616



# 2024 DOWNTOWN INDIANA CALENDAR

[www.DowntownIndianaPA.org](http://www.DowntownIndianaPA.org)

## FEBRUARY

SAT  
24

**CHILI COOKOFF**  
NOBLE STEIN BREWING CO



## MARCH

SAT  
8

**ST PATTY'S OPEN**  
THE CONEY

SAT  
16

**ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE**  
11 AM | HOSTED BY THE CONEY

SAT  
23

**EASTER BUNNY TRAIL**  
10 AM - 12 PM | DOWNTOWN INDIANA



## APRIL

THU  
18

**THIRD THURSDAY**  
IRMC PARK



SAT  
20

**ARTS WALK**  
INDIANA ARTS COUNCIL | DOWNTOWN INDIANA



## MAY

SAT  
4

**SPRING LADIES DAY OUT**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA



THU  
16

**THIRD THURSDAY**  
IRMC PARK



SAT  
18

**JIMMY STEWART BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION**  
THE JIMMY STEWART MUSEUM

SAT  
25

**WESTYLVANIA JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL**  
IRMC PARK



## JUNE

THU  
20

**THIRD THURSDAY**  
IRMC PARK



## JULY

THU  
11

**TASTE & TOUR**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA



THU  
18

**THIRD THURSDAY**  
IRMC PARK



## AUGUST

SUN  
11

**ITALIAN FESTIVAL**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA



THU  
15

**THIRD THURSDAY**  
IRMC PARK



## SEPTEMBER

FRI  
6

**NORTHERN APPALACHIAN FOLK FEST**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA

SAT  
7

**NORTHERN APPALACHIAN FOLK FEST**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA

THU  
19

**THIRD THURSDAY**  
IRMC PARK



SAT  
21

**OKTOBERFEST**  
NORTH 8TH STREET LOT



SAT  
28

**BOCCE FOR BREAST CANCER**  
JOSIE'S PIZZERIA AND ENOTECA



## OCTOBER

SAT  
5

**IUP HOMECOMING PARADE**  
10 AM | HOSTED BY INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENN

SAT  
26

**HALLOWEEN TRICK OR TREAT**  
10 AM - 12 PM | DOWNTOWN INDIANA



## NOVEMBER

FRI  
1

**WINE & SPIRITS WALK**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA



SUN  
10

**FALL LADIES DAY OUT**  
12 - 4 PM | DOWNTOWN INDIANA



MON  
11

**VETERAN'S DAY PARADE**  
10:45 AM | HOSTED BY AMERICAN LEGION POST 141

FRI  
22

**HOLIDAY PARADE & LITE UP NIGHT**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA



SAT  
23

**IAWL HOLIDAY FESTIVAL**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA



SAT  
30

**SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY  
& IAWL HOLIDAY FESTIVAL**



EARN 2024 DOWNTOWN DOLLARS ON SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

## DECEMBER

SAT  
7

**IAWL HOLIDAY FESTIVAL**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA



SAT  
14

**IAWL HOLIDAY FESTIVAL**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA



SAT  
21

**IAWL HOLIDAY FESTIVAL**  
DOWNTOWN INDIANA



DOWNTOWN INDIANA

# Chili COOKOFF

NOBLE STEIN BREWING COMPANY

FEB  
24

12 - 3 PM

**Competition Details:**

- 3 categories for entrants: professionals, amateurs, and ILIP students.
- Each entrant will be responsible for preparing at least 8 qts (size of a large slowcooker) and at least one 6x13" pan (or equivalent) of cornbread.
- Prizes will be awarded for category winners and a Best in Show. Set up at 11 am. Prize announcements at 2:30 pm.



1170 WAYNE AVE

TICKETS

ONLINE OR AT THE DOOR

\$20

\*KIDS UNDER 12 FREE



EVENT SPONSORED BY:





DOWNTOWN INDIANA

# Chili COOKOFF

NOBLE STEIN BREWING COMPANY

## SUBMIT ENTRY FORM TO:

Sam Kenly  
[sam.kenly@downtownindiana.org](mailto:sam.kenly@downtownindiana.org)

## CHEF ENTRY FORM

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Email : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone : \_\_\_\_\_

Category:

☐ Professional Chef

☐ IUP Chef

☐ Home Chef

Chili Recipe Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Entering Combread?

☐ Yes

☐ No

## COMPETITION DETAILS:

- Competition will held on Saturday, February 24 from 12 pm - 3pm at Noble Stein Brewing Company (1170 Wayne Ave, Indiana, PA)
- 3 categories for entrants: Professional chefs, IUP chefs, Home chefs.
- Each entrant will be responsible for preparing at least 8 qts (size of a large slowcooker) and at least one 9x13" pan (or equivalent) of combread.
- Please bring a laddle for serving and a list of ingredients.
- Prizes will be awarded for category winners and a Best in Show.
- Set up begins at 11 am.
- Prize announcements at 2:30 pm.

EVENT SPONSORED BY

\_\_\_\_\_



# RENEWING MEMBERS

Berkshire Hathaway – Home Services The Preferred  
Realty – Indiana  
Don Huey Automotive & Truck Repair  
Johnstown Symphony Orchestra  
Indiana Cigar  
Gibson Thomas  
Ralph Wingrove,  
Kathy Hawk  
Upstreet Financial Advisors  
Burrell Township Library  
Crimson Hawk Housing  
Indiana County Humane Society  
Catalyst Connection  
Center Township Board of Supervisors  
Disobedient Spirits  
Indiana Networking  
Indiana Audiology  
Evergreen Ins Co  
Howard, Hanna, Lockard  
Chestnut Ridge Communications  
A-1 Vending  
Clymer Borough  
Relator Association of Indiana & Westmoreland  
County  
Jiimmy Stewart Airport  
Antria Inc  
Nelson & Associates Ins  
Concordia, IRLC  
Indiana Career T.R.A.C.K  
553 Autobody  
Rizzo & Sons  
**NEW MEMBERS:**  
Indiana-Franklin Masonic Lodge

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## Bronze Sponsors

