

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

Bringing the October 9, 2024 Girard Chamber of Commerce meeting to order with Pledge and prayer, President Jeanette Earley opened at Courtyard Estates with Cody Smith and The Zone as sponsor. Attendees included Deb Burnett, Michelle Hoover, Arlen Magelitz, Steve O'Dell, Cody Smith, Peggy and Bill Giles, Vickie Walker, Casey Claypool, Pam Hawkins and Janice Smith.

Following previous minutes' approval and treasurer's report showing an approximate \$4,500 gain from the Festival Days effort, both were filed for audit. Final discussion reviewing Pumpkin Fest (October 12) planning followed; event to be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Chamber sponsored food booth serving to begin at 11 a.m., Bingo in Community Building and open hours for The Museum from 12 noon to 2 p.m., gift basket drawing, homemade free children's rides offered in cooperation with Kiwanians, Petting Zoo, live music, kids games and face painting, pumpkin sales offered by Brandon Keiffer with proceeds benefitting Sports Boosters, vendors and pumpkin painting. Queen Committee members will additionally sponsor a Krispy Kreme fundraiser at the city's four way stop.

Police Department will again host Trunk or Treat October 31 on the square; First Christian Church will host Light Up the Night October 31 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.; Michelle Hoover spoke for Courtyard, reviewing plans for their "Hallopalooza" October 17, from 5 to 7 p.m., high school students and Kiwanians to assist with youth activities, photo booth and refreshments; City of Girard Trick or Treating is set for October 30-31 from 5 to 8 p.m.

For Virden Chamber, Steve O'Dell reported the group readying for Country Christmas, the first week in December, reminding all the North Mac Foundation annual dinner is set for October 26, for which he has tickets; Jeanette Earley briefly spoke on the fire house expansion project; Hoover again spoke for Courtyard, outlining positive changes underway with two new resident educational programs soon to be available concerning raised garden beds and a life skills program assisting the visually impaired; Carlinville Area Hospital Community Outreach Specialist Vicki Walker announced their Fright Farm Halloween Drive Thru October 24, 5:30 to 8 p.m., at Macoupin County Fairgrounds, Carlinville, and giving an update on the Walk-In Clinic construction in Virden to perhaps be completed by spring/summer of 2025.

A multi-town Neighborhood Watch meeting is set for October 14 at the Girard Community Building, inviting residents, business owners to discuss what can be done as communities to prevent ongoing crime, homelessness, property damage, speakers to include law enforcement officials and Crystal Creasy. Plans to address City Council are being made for additional cameras on the city square, where damage has been discovered, and to address the ATV traffic.

Doc's Just Off Route 66 owner Casey Claypool announced holiday caroling outside Doc's set for November 14; an upcoming "date with a book" to include refreshments and Sly Fox books available for purchase; and announced on a trial basis the restaurant will attempt delivery service various nights of the week, perhaps beginning in November. Claypool spoke of ongoing construction behind her building, making way for outdoor seating.

Joe and Tay Marko have purchased and made plans for the former Country Companies office on the city square west side; Terry Kingery construction taking place on the west side square is also taking shape, with concrete artwork underway and an open air seasonal produce market planned.

Dates announced for the upcoming year 2025 include: Festival Days July 25, 26, 27 and Pumpkin Festival October 11.

Meeting adjourned at 8 a.m. with next meeting scheduled for November 13 at Courtyard Estates, R&R Bindery as sponsor.