

A CHAMBER OF COMMERCE – A LINK



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As the New Year begins another chapter for The Greater Huntington Park Area Chamber of Commerce, we look at the future goals, vision, leadership and prosperity for the businesses at large in the community.

In gathering a group of individuals interested in the progress of the city, the conversation doesn't take much to discuss the future of businesses. While there is a consensus amongst several businesses that have offered their opinions, it is felt that more needs to be done, and the role the Chamber

of Commerce has to be expressed as the forefront.

The question relies on how many small businesses will be willing to support our Chamber of Commerce by becoming a Member? How many small businesses will be willing to fund the organization to represent their interests with government?

For several years, the businesses in the downtown area were assessed an additional fee on top of their business license that made them automatically members of the Business Improvement District (B.I.D.). Small businesses expressed that their business received not much benefit in belonging to the B.I.D. In receiving many inquiries as to that concern, it was not long after that the new members in the body of representation of the B.I.D. went a step to meeting and analyzing their mission, plus researching their structure fees. Their findings were that the assessments were higher than those they had respectfully surveyed in other communities. And their mission to advertising, promoting and presenting major events to attract people to the downtown area, were already being accomplished by the Chamber of Commerce. The focus was clear that a lower

assessment for the businesses needed to be created, and that a partnership with the Chamber of Commerce needed to be accomplished.

Many have inquired as to why the partnership and the continuation of the B.I.D. did not follow through? The reason is that in times of a tough economy, many businesses stated to the local government that they could not afford the assessment. After the B.I.D. Board met with City representatives, it was mutually agreed by both entities that a zero assessment would be offered to the businesses for one year to assist them in the tough economic times. At a second reading of the City Council meeting hearing of June, 2013 the City staff reported to Council that there was a change; that an assessment would after all be recommended for the businesses. In light of the local government receiving constant complaints from the small businesses for over a year, and the change of a zero assessment to a fee after all, the City Council mutually agreed for the City to dissolve their involvement with the Business Improvement District.

It was estimated that an average small business in the downtown area paid approximately \$300 or more a year for the B.I.D. assessment. The Chamber of Commerce's rates are at \$90.00 a year for an associate member or \$220.00 for a member with Voting rights, and opportunity to be nominated to serve on the Board of Directors.

The benefit for a small business becoming a Member of the Chamber of Commerce is to ensure their representation and interests are protected with the local government. In addition, the Chamber serves as a business problem solver, offers information, assistance or guidance, and resources to trainings.

As the organization with major media connections, we create partnerships to offer advertisement opportunities at discounted rates. Plus special video segments of our business members and their services are displayed in our constantly visited website, facebook and other social media networks.

The Chamber of Commerce is the link to expanding the branding of the community, promoting our businesses to the world for prosperity, and at the same protecting their interests with the local government. In every community,

a Chamber of Commerce with its Board of Directors, Members and Staff are the Voice of Business.

We encourage you to Join The Most Active Organization... Join Your HP Area Chamber of Commerce!