

“Good evening, and thank you to the Mayor, City Council and others for allowing me the opportunity to offer support of the City of Lyons and Lyons Chamber of Commerce Agreement. My name is Kaleb Horne, a member-at-large for the Chamber Board of Directors.

The Chamber of Commerce was established in 1941 to promote the community of Lyons, in all of forms. The City of Lyons and the Chamber had a history of working together through a \$4,500 annual contribution given by the City, to the Chamber, for the use of the Chamber to promote local activities and drive growth in our local economy. Regrettably in 2017, the City discontinued the \$4,500 annual payment to the Chamber, based on an admitted lack of leadership from the Chamber to promote the community of Lyons. From the periods of 2014 to early 2017 the Chamber was headed in a poor direction where membership levels dipped to a low of 66. Over the last 2 years we’ve been able to keep the Chamber alive by cutting expenses across the board and relying upon volunteer labor from our community to reorganize and move forward.

As part of our cost cutting measures, the Chamber board made the decision to not hire a Chamber Director in an effort to get all members of the Board more involved in the day to day functions of the Chamber. I believe this has been instrumental in the Chamber’s rebirth. All Chamber Board members diligently attend meetings and engage businesses they come in contact with on a daily basis. Our website and Facebook pages have provided us a cost effective way to stay in contact with all

Community Members, and more importantly reach those outside of our community who may visit one of Lyons' businesses, or one of the Chamber's events throughout the year, all of which drive additional tax revenue for the city. The Chamber Board has made the decision to continue operating without a Director and without a physical office space to deliver on our promise to our membership to be good stewards of all dues paid by members. I'm happy to report that our 2019 dues paying membership is 109, up 43, or 165%, from 2017 and is the result of the effort of each and every Chamber Board member. Our Chamber Board has been busy visiting all 109 current dues paying members. The Board's goal has been to provide value to each of our members through a reasonable dues structure that doesn't over commit our volunteer resources.

Our intended uses of these funds is clear. We plan to utilize them in growing each of the events previously mentioned and others that are important to our community. Through proper promotion and advertising of these events we will drive new outside traffic into Lyons that is not being reached now, resulting in increased revenues for all. Ideally, total tax revenues, including the bed tax will compound over time as these dollars are utilized to promote Lyons in a way that maximizes attendance at each event. The 2% bed tax will provide substantial resources to the Chamber for these purposes and will allow the Chamber to fully promote community minded events to further drive growth in our economy.

I think we can all agree it is people that make the difference in any community, not buildings or roads, but people. The Chamber, through our board's efforts and funding provided by our mutual constituency, has successfully re-invented itself to be more thoughtful with every dollar of dues paid and every dollar given to our events. We sincerely hope that every community member has gotten to enjoy the fruits of our labor and were one of the 400 people at the Fish Fry this spring, or perhaps one of the 800+ people at Boomfest in July. But don't worry if you've missed out on those community enrichment opportunities there are more coming later in the year including the back to school BBQ this Friday, or the Fair on the Square on September 28<sup>th</sup> and don't forget the Veteran's Day parade on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Mayor and esteemed members of the Lyons City Council, I support the City of Lyons and Lyons Chamber of Commerce Agreement, and will answer any questions you may have now. Thank you."