

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Whitley County Chamber officially launches Wednesday evening in Columbia City.

[Whitley County – March 4, 2010] On Wednesday March 3, a group of 20 individuals from around Whitley County met for their first official countywide chamber meeting.

The process of merging smaller area chambers has been a work in progress for several years, but really started to move forward in October, 2009, when a small group of business people met to decide how it all can come together.

Sharon Sallot of Sallot Ventures, a business-consulting firm from LaGrange, Indiana, led the “transition team” consisting of employees and business owners from South Whitley, Columbia City & Churubusco. Benefits of the county-wide chamber range from consolidated support for all businesses in the county, to greater networking capabilities and more volunteers to help support each and every community.

The following board officers were elected Wednesday evening:

Chairman: Mike DeFreeuw, Northeastern REMC
Vice Chair: Chris Tomlinson, Gonink: Web Design & Print
Secretary: Darci Kessie, South Whitley Library
Treasurer: June Keiser, J&J Insurance

The remaining board members are:

Bob Koontz, Koontz Realty
Melinda Woll, Edward Jones Investments
Kim Balsler, The Brownstone on State
Carrie Hoffman, Huntington University EXCEL
Randy Holler, Crossroads Bank
Jim Horne, Parker Insurance Agency
Steve Hostetler, CC Deli
September McConnell, Whitley County Community Foundation
Dave Smith, Star Financial Bank
Jorell Tucker, Whitley County Solid Waste
Jennifer Zartman-Romano, Columbia City – Talk of the Town

Although the board is in place and ready to move forward with the organization, there is still a large amount of work to be done and the organization encourages each and every business owner to take part in any way they can to help it succeed and grow.