

► ECONOMIC Update | Brad Meier, President/CEO



► Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund Fix Signed Into Law

Legislative leaders and Governor Walz finally came to an agreement to fix the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund deficit, stopping a \$2.7 billion tax increase on Minnesota employers. Both the House and the Senate passed this bill on bipartisan votes and Governor Walz signed it into law. This helps every single business in the state of Minnesota with employees and is a major victory following months of delays and political negotiations by lawmakers.



Delegates from Owatonna, Faribault & Waseca Chambers of Commerce attended the 2022 BusinessDay at the Capitol encouraging the legislature to fix the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.

This deal included the Chamber's request that UI payroll tax rates be reverted to pre-pandemic levels. Because this law was enacted after the March 15 deadline, the Chamber worked to ensure refunds or credits for quarter one overpayments as well as a grace period for businesses to remit these payments were included in the final package.

Also included in the agreement was bonuses for frontline workers. The final deal included a definition that covers nearly 667,000 workers and the appropriation was increased to \$500 million in order to provide a nearly \$750 dollar bonus to each worker.

► Candidate Forums Planning for October

The Chamber will work with forum partners Owatonna Rotary Club and Owatonna People's Press to coordinate 5 candidate forums this election cycle-each Monday in October. Congressional, State, County, City and School Board races will be covered.



► Students Commit to Workforce

It's a SteeleCoWorks tradition, recognizing the work of students who are committing to join the workforce after high school graduation. Signing day is a recognition of the student's work to prepare to start their career. This year the event will again bring business leaders together with their future employee, school leaders and the community. Come join the celebration!

What: Signing Day

When: June 1st, 2022

Where: Torey's Restaurant (upstairs)

Time: 4:30pm

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- ▶ **Todd Trout, Chair**
US Bank
- ▶ **Kelly Boomgarden, Past Chair & Tourism Rep**
Country Inn & Suites-Owatonna
- ▶ **Mike Herman, Vice Chair**
Driessen Water, Inc.
- ▶ **Syd Briggs, Treasurer**
Steele Waseca-Cooperative Electric
- ▶ **Deb Gillard, At-Large**
RE/MAX Venture
- ▶ **Oscar Mazariego, At-Large**
American Family Insurance – Oscar
Mazariego Agency & Lava Burgers & Wings
- ▶ **Doug Betti**
Viracon
- ▶ **Shannon Cliff**
Mayo Clinic Health System-Owatonna
- ▶ **Bonnie Cole**
Cole Electric & Torey's Restaurant & Bar
- ▶ **Brian Deml**
Deml Heating & Air Conditioning, LLC
- ▶ **Randy Doyal**
Al-Corn Clean Fuel
- ▶ **Taylor Herman, Young Professional Chair**
Profinium
- ▶ **Jolene Kunkel**
Federated Insurance
- ▶ **Doug Meier**
Christian Bros. Cabinets
- ▶ **Scott Mohs**
Mohs Contracting, Inc.
- ▶ **Tom Peterson**
Climate By Design International
- ▶ **Rich Pettet**
Rich's Window Cleaning/Destiny Christian Church
- ▶ **Wayne Starman, Ex-Officio**
Cash Wise Foods



▶ A New Face of Tourism...Welcome to Glenda Smith



I am so excited to join the OACCT staff as the Director of Conventions and Tourism! I have lived in Owatonna for a little over 22 years, with 21 of those years as an Account Manager with Tri M Graphics. At Tri M, I have been dedicated to helping our local businesses, non-profit organizations, clubs and individuals meet their goals in a variety of ways. Developing marketing materials and plans to help promote my clients' products, services and events have been my passion. I look forward to continuing building on those relationships in my new position, and am excited to promote Owatonna collectively to our visitors.

My husband, Paul (who works at Federated Insurance), and I cannot imagine being a part of any other community and appreciate everything Owatonna offers. We have both enjoyed serving in different volunteer roles, and love being advocates for those organizations. Much of our time, over the past several years, has been spent cheering on and supporting our two kids, Abby (19), and Owen (16), as they participate in their favorite school and club activities. Getting to know other families in our community through their activities has been a great experience as well!

Owatonna is a great place to live, work, and play and I could not be more thrilled to join a team of people who are dedicated in continuing to build a community of excellence for future generations.

▶ Tourism Welcomes Guests to June Events



Smokin in Steele- June 3&4 Smokin' in Steele, a state championship barbeque contest sanctioned by the Kansas City BBQ Society, will be at the Steele County Fairgrounds. For 14 years, the event has hosted the BBQ competition & blues music festival, among other scheduled events and activities. The event is sponsored by the Owatonna Knights of Columbus. Past years have brought over 5,000 visitors and thousands of dollars are raised for deserving groups, and the main beneficiary this year is the Special Olympics. If you are interested in helping out at the event, you can sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0e49afa92aa64-smokin>

Eagles- June 15-18 we welcome 300 visitors for the Minnesota Eagles Convention. The Eagles Club and Elks Club will be hosting their group, when you see them out and about, be sure to welcome them!



It's the 12th year of the **Harry Wenger Marching Band Festival**, and will be held **June 18** starting at 11 am. Each year the parade highlights 12 marching bands and are judged in front of 1500 parade attendees on their pageantry, choreography, regimentation, and musicianship.

National Cutting Horse Association's Big Sky Circuit rides into Owatonna **June 24-26**. This event is free and open to the public. The event highlights the cutting horse in which a horse and rider work together to demonstrate the horse's athleticism and ability to handle cattle. The event is currently seeking food & product vendors. If you'd like to be a part of this event, please contact toddu1021@gmail.com, or 507-358-8213

► Growth Breakfast Features Legislative Wrap-Up

Join us on June 16th at 7:30 a.m. for the final Chamber Growth Breakfast in this series at Torey's Restaurant and Bar downtown Owatonna. Hot breakfast will be served for a cost of \$20.

A panel discussion that aims to help Minnesotans recover from two of the toughest years in the state's history will include Senator John Jasinski, Representative John Petersburg and Laura Bordelon, Sr. Vice President Advocacy, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. End of session dealing with issues impacting the business community, workplace management, and taxes. Other hot issue items are education investment, transportation spending and environmental and natural resources.

Please register online or contact Julia Seykora at jseykora@owatonna.org. Mark your calendars for a new series to start in September!



*John Jasinski
Senator*



*John Petersburg
Representative*



*Laura Bordelon
Sr. Vice President
Advocacy, Minnesota
Chamber of Commerce*

► Managing Young Professionals

Hear from Laura Brady, Spherion Staffing & Recruiting and individuals from South Central Minnesota SHRM along with Abby Nichols, Federated Insurance as they discuss tips for new Young Professional managers, how to motivate employees, managing remote works and how to deal with issues and uncomfortable situations. Join us on May 19th from 12 -1 at the Owatonna Public Library. Lunch is provided.



Laura Brady



Abby Nichols

June 9th "Learn to Play Pickleball" will be held at 5:30 – 7:00 at Morehouse Park and on June 14th play a game and Happy Hour afterwards at Mineral Springs Brewery.



► Housing Shortages Plague Region, Country

Cost, Inflation and builder shortages are impacting home construction in Owatonna, southeast Minnesota and across the country. At a recent Land Development Summit attended by members of the Owatonna Partners for Economic Development, national housing builders talked about the trends in housing. National builders are looking for ways to innovate and reduce cost of homes. More square footage on less acres and more home rentals are the trends they're seeing.

► Congratulations to Three New Chamber Ambassadors



Kelly Anderson
Life Fitness



Steve Grams
*Community Bank of
Owatonna*



Andrew Cowell
Profinium, Inc

► Spherion

We're Spherion Owatonna — a staffing and recruiting pioneer that's been driving careers and helping businesses grow in since 1996. Our recruiters are committed to helping you advance your career or business through direct placement and variable staffing solutions. Based in Owatonna, our locally owned and operated office helps job seekers and employers connect in Minnesota and in Iowa.

Ann Miller is the local Franchise Owner along with her husband and business partner, Gene Miller. Ann began her career in sales and marketing with Spherion in Minneapolis and quickly promoted into management. After seven years with the company in the cities, Ann had the chance to move into ownership and made the leap to Owatonna along with her family, where they started their first franchised office. Ann earned Spherion's "Rookie of the Year" award for that first year in operation.

In the years since, Ann has qualified for thirteen Spherion Performance Forum trips/awards for achieving and exceeding results while opening additional offices in Mankato, Duluth, and a few client on-site service locations. She has always been active with the Chamber of Commerce, is a member of Rotary International, and is a founding member of the Harry Wenger Marching Band Festival. Ann has served as Chair of the Chamber Board, volunteered for ten years on the local SHRM Board, five years on the United Way Board, one year as United Way Campaign Co-Chair, and is currently President-Elect of the Noon Rotary Club in Owatonna.

Ann's group of Spherion offices was recently presented with the President's and Top Sales Growth Awards during the company's annual national meeting. Despite continuing to face pandemic-related workforce challenges, Ann was recognized for her monumental growth in 2021. "It has certainly been a challenging few years, but our team has risen to the occasion and helped push the business, our clients and our candidates forward," said Miller. "I am incredibly grateful to have been presented these awards and look forward to continued growth in the months and years ahead. A huge congrats goes out to our Owatonna team including Laura Brady, Michelle Martin, Delana Sevier, Anna Rahn, Jessica Ortiz, Kelsey Quint, and Sandra Sanchez."



Spherion's workforce solutions focus on direct placement and variable staffing, including temporary staffing, temp-to-hire, on premise staff management, and outsourced talent acquisition. While we specialize in administrative, professional, and light industrial placements, our local teams have the connections and insights needed to find the area's most capable talent with many other skillsets and for a variety of industries.

Spherion is committed to the local community, and that means bringing the power and scope of a national network of offices and the stability of our parent company, the global leader in HR services. Whether you're a job seeker or an employer, we help you tackle what's next. To see how Spherion can get to work on your behalf, visit www.spherion.com or your local Spherion office.

About Spherion: With more than 75 years of staffing and recruiting experience, Spherion stands out as a leader in the industry, leveraging the power of local to support its vast network of independent franchisees. True to its tagline, Let's Get to Work, Spherion provides workforce solutions to more than 4,000 businesses nationwide across its more than 200 offices. With recent awards including recognition on Entrepreneur magazine's Franchise 500 list and being named a top recruiting firm by Forbes, Spherion has a proven ability to cater to the ever-changing demands of America's workforce. Backed by the global leader in human resources, Spherion is prepared to provide workforce solutions through its General Staffing franchise model and newly launched Professional IT model to even more job seekers and organizations.

► Welcome New MainStreet Director, Lisa Cochran

I am so excited to be your new MainStreet Director in Owatonna! I have had a strong connection to downtown Owatonna for many years and am looking forward to strengthening that connection in the years to come. To start with, I will be focusing on learning the MainStreet program and building a strong foundation for Owatonna's MainStreet. We do have some events coming up that are going to be a blast – make sure you add them to your calendar. First, we are partnering with the ALC for our annual Downtown Cleanup morning. This is May 19th with a rain date of May 20th. Next up is Downtown Thursday on June 2nd. This will be the first of 3 Downtown Thursday events and the committee is eager to share what we have planned. Of course, we will keep you updated regarding the construction progress on our beautiful new streetscape as well. Visit Downtown Owatonna on Facebook or Owatonna.org for the latest information. I have no doubt that with the revitalization happening in our city and the positive collaboration happening between businesses and community, Owatonna will see many opportunities to prosper in the future.



► Downtown Thursday's Planned for Summer

Let's Meet Downtown on June 2nd for the first Downtown Thursday starting at 5 - 8:30 pm featuring music by Red Dirt Road on the main stage. Enjoy food, music, shopping and art.



► Corky's Softball Tournament Impact 6 Figures to Economy

Corky's Early Bird Men's Softball Classic, a USA Softball slow-pitch softball tournament, was held in Owatonna May 6-8. Teams come from all over the United States trying their luck against some of the best teams in the nation. This year's tournament brought in around 170 teams, and 3000 attendees to the ballgames in Owatonna. Tournaments like Corky's have a great economic impact on our community. It is expected that this tournament brings in over \$600,000 to our local hotels, restaurants, and local retail and service businesses. \$30,000 was raised to put back into our local charities and youth organizations. This year's recipients charity include: Owatonna Park and Recreation Youth Scholarship Fund, Faribault Park and Recreation Youth Scholarship Fund, Relight the Park Fund, Owatonna Girls Fastpitch Softball, and Owatonna Bullpen Club.

► **Ameriprise Financial Services LLC - Dean P. Velzke, ChFC**

Dean Velske
120 Cedar AVE North, Owatonna
507-451-2455
dean.p.velzke@ampf.com



► **Martin Family, LLC**

Al Martin
2523 S County Rd. 45, Owatonna
507-390-3194
al@owatonnaestate.com

► **Commerce Bank of Geneva**

Josh Burgess
101 Central AVE S, Geneva
507-256-7235
jburgess@cbmn.bank



► **Spherion Staffing - Duluth**

Ann Miller
11 E Superior ST, STE 150, Duluth
218-722-6067
annmiller@spherion.com



► **KIMT-CBS3**

Kris Lake
1751 Highway 52 North, Rochester
507-951-4743
klake@kimt.com



► **Spherion Staffing - Mankato**

Ann Miller
223 Belgrade AVE, North Mankato
507-432-2430
annmiller@spherion.com



► **(CHAMBER EVENTS) Update**

BUSINESS
after **HOURS**

► **CHAMBER GROWTH BREAKFAST SERIES**
May 19

7:30 - 9:00 AM
Location: Torey's (Upstairs Event Space)
208 N. Cedar, Owatonna
Sponsors: Fastenal & HomeTown Credit Union
Topic: Workforce



► **CHAMBER GROWTH BREAKFAST SERIES**
June 16

7:30 - 9:00 AM
Location: Torey's (Upstairs Event Space)
208 N. Cedar, Owatonna
Sponsors: Fastenal & HomeTown Credit Union
Topic: Legislative Wrap Up



► **BUSINESS AFTER HOURS**
May 24

5:30 - 7:00 PM
Sponsor(s): Seykora Asphalt Maintenance & Paving
Location: 3400 West Bridge ST, Owatonna



► **BUSINESS AFTER HOURS**
June 28

5:30 - 7:00 PM
Sponsor: Kottke Jewelers
Location: 115 North Cedar AVE, Owatonna



Chamber Pack Deadline

Supply 550 copies of your promotional insert by for July/August mailing; \$150 by **June 23rd**.



Watch for Updates on Social Media & Owatonna.org



AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & TOURISM

320 Hoffman Dr | Owatonna, MN | owatonna.org
P: 507.451.7970 | E: oacct@owatonna.org | F: 507.451.7972
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 AM-5 PM

Business Brief is published by
the Owatonna Area Chamber of
Commerce & Tourism



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