

## WHAT'S NEXT?

The joint boards of directors will be providing information to members through a variety of avenues including the monthly newsletter, social media, email and member forums.

A membership vote will occur in mid-July, and each membership will receive one vote. The voting member can appoint a proxy to cast the ballot. More detailed information on how and when to vote will be provided to each member prior to the vote. It will also be available on the chambers' respective websites.

If you have questions, you are encouraged to engage in the discussion and please reach out to your board members for answers.

## CONTACT

YOUR CHAMBER'S EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WITH QUESTIONS. FOR A COMPLETE LIST SEE THE WEBSITE.



Mattoon &  
Charleston Area  
**CHAMBERS  
OF COMMERCE**

*Merger*

A PROPOSAL TO GROW THE LOCAL BUSINESS ECONOMY AND BETTER SUPPORT THE MEMBERS.



## WHY MERGE?

The Mattoon Chamber of Commerce and Charleston Area Chamber of Commerce are two independent and successful organizations that have led the business interests of their respective Coles County communities for decades.

But times are changing and it is increasingly more difficult to be everything to everybody. The executive team from each board has been discussing a merger scenario since last fall and has completed its due diligence. In the end, it was clear that a larger, more robust member-driven organization could accomplish more for its members and ask less of them in return, while creating greater opportunities for economic growth.

The full board of directors for each chamber of commerce met jointly to further discuss the proposal. In a recent vote, the boards approved the resolution that paves the way to present the facts to the full membership and puts the question of a merger to a vote.



## WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

There are numerous benefits for member of a combined chamber of commerce.

- Marketing a county-wide chamber will have greater impact to potential new business prospects that will appreciate a broader reach.
- A larger organization has greater influence with member business-related legislative opportunities.
- Networking events will have more attendance and a larger audience.
- The chamber staff will more efficiently advocate for, promote, visit and market members in the region.
- A combined organization will eliminate duplicate events and routine duties.
- A combined organization will reduce the ask from members for volunteering and sponsorship of events and programs.

## TELL ME THE DETAILS

As one entity, we are a stronger, more resilient organization that can leverage the power of its membership to accomplish greatness.

### *Financials*

Both organizations bring substantial assets to a merger. The treasurers of each group completed a deep dive into the financial statements and developed various scenarios for the outcome of a merger. The forecasted budgets remain strong.

This merger assumes one central and neutral location between the two cities, consolidation of one membership dues structure, and staffing will be directly related to the needs of our members.

### *Location*

The financial analysis shows an actualization of operational efficiencies with a combined location. However, there is an inherent value in retaining an office location in each community. The BOD of the new organization will make a decision that best fits the needs of the membership when the time is right.

### *Board composition*

The full board will be combined, and through attrition, it will be reduced to between 13 and 20 members. The initial executive board will be comprised of both executive boards. The permanent board will be based on the quality of the candidates, their commitment in advancing the community and their support of businesses in our cities.

The by-laws for the combined organization will be adopted in January 2022.

### *Name*

The newly proposed name of the merged organization is Coles County Chamber of Commerce. It defines the geographic location and describes who it serves.

