

Chamber Business After Hours

PURPOSE:

To provide Chamber members an opportunity to meet informally once a month at local business establishments to visit and share ideas and opinions, socialize, make business contacts, meet new people, and learn more about their host's business.

SPONSORSHIP:

Business After Hours, is co-sponsored by the Chamber's Member Events Council and a local member each month. Hosts must be current members of the Chamber. Members interested in hosting a chamber after hours should contact Laura Green at the Chamber for details.

Since Business After Hours is a membership event in which members get the opportunity to learn about a wide variety of the membership, our board has adopted the policy that a business shall not host an after hours event more than bi-annually (every other year). This allows more businesses to take advantage of the opportunity to invite the membership of the Chamber to their location. Exceptions to this bi-annual policy will only be allowed in the case of relocation, major remodeling or other unique situations. The decision is left up to the discretion of the President upon a polling of the Membership Development committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

CHAMBER

1. Secure each month's sponsor and coordinate all arrangements.
2. Publicize the event the month prior to event through the Chamber's newsletter-*The Chamber V.O.I.C.E.*, which is also online on the chamber website, on the Chamber website events page, sent to members in the weekly email From Your Chamber (sent 2 weeks prior to event) and News Releases to local media. Will also be announced at the Business After Hours prior to your event.
3. Membership labels (for invitations) will be provided free of charge upon request.
4. Provide name tags and other Chamber materials necessary for the function.
5. Provide volunteer registration assistance.
6. Advise sponsor in any other way to assure the event is a success.

SPONSOR

1. Pay \$250 to Chamber for media materials & coordination costs (\$50 goes into a cash pot each month). The sponsorship fee is due 60 days before the scheduled event.

****Deposit Required:**

A \$50 non-refundable deposit is required at time of confirming the reservation. This deposit will be applied to the cost of the sponsorship.

2. Pay cost of printing and postage of invitations, if a membership mailing is desired.
3. Provide beverages (alcoholic and/or non-alcoholic) and hors d'oeuvres for approx. 50 guests for a one hour period. We suggest using a Chamber member business/caterer. We will be happy to refer a member.
4. Arrange for all door prizes (at least 2-3 suggested) or other attendance incentives. We suggest door prizes be solicited from a Chamber member.
5. Coordinate any program/tour to be conducted during the time frame allowed.
6. Will provide a one - two paragraph about the business for the chamber newsletter, etc. This must be returned to the chamber the week following the event for the newsletter deadline.

ANTICIPATED RESULTS:

It is hoped that Business After Hours events will result in Chamber members becoming better acquainted; that through acquaintances and contacts made at these functions the members may prosper in their personal endeavors and recognize the need to work together for the prosperity of Huntsville and Walker County.

ADMISSION:

Each member attending is encouraged to bring business cards. A business card is used for drawing door prizes, and of course the member should have plenty additional cards to pass around to other guests.

Business After Hours is for Chamber members in good standing. Members are encouraged to bring special guests as potential members, however they will not be eligible for the CASH Pot and Member Spotlight drawings.

At the discretion of each host, an RSVP may or may not be required.

FORMAT:

1. The networking begins at 5:15 p.m.
2. At 6:00 p.m. the Director of Member Events for the Chamber of Commerce will get the groups attention for announcements. Primarily announcements are intended to be made by the sponsor and by the chamber.
 - A. The sponsor is then introduced and given the opportunity to address the crowd. This is the perfect time for welcome speeches, an orientation of your business, and the introduction of your staff and/or associates. This is an excellent opportunity to inform, promote, sell your business. Programs must not last more than 10 minutes.
 - B. The drawing for door prizes will then take place. Winners are drawn from the MEMBER business cards collected at the door. We give away ONLY the door prizes offered by the host.

It is recommended that if hosts offer special programs such as slide presentations, plant tours, product demonstrations, etc. that they follow at the end of the social hour. It is absolutely essential that all Business After Hours functions follow a routine format so that members know what to expect each month and are given the opportunity to network the major portion of the time.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

The Chamber staff will be glad to help each host in planning your after hours event. If you wish referrals/advice in ordering and setting up a bar, catering services, invitations, etc. please call the Chamber office.

If your place of business is not large enough to host a Business After Hours, you may wish to hold it at the Chamber or in a local hotel or restaurant. The sponsor is responsible for any additional rental/use fees charged for one of these locations.