

The only constant in life is change. -Heraclitus, Greek philosopher

Back in the fall of 2012, I walked into the chamber door wide-eyed, nervous but excited. Let's be honest, I had no idea what was ahead of me, or how this 'gig' would turn out.

I can tell you, these years later, it's been the ride and honor of a career to be here at the chamber, learning, leading, pivoting, and shifting.

Yes, I've learned more than I could pack into a book, from ALL of YOU. What it means to own, manage, and run a business takes true grit, tenacity, resiliency, and blood, sweat and tears. Local, Advocacy, Listening...all matter. The good, the bad and the ugly. You are simply amazing. And it has been an amazing experience to walk with you, listening to your triumphs, and hearing of the frustrations. Honored doesn't really cover it. Privileged. Grateful.

Yep, this is leading somewhere. I have given my notice to retire at the end of the year. The year will go by quickly, and the board is already working on a transition plan to find and train my successor before my exit. They are committed to keeping service, support and engagement with you top priority.

As I told the board, I have a few more things up my sleeve to finish, and we're gearing up a couple more important business support programs. Be assured, my feet are not kicked up on the desk yet, there is much to be done.

We'll celebrate throughout the year, together; February 23 brings the Annual Event with a BIG, FOOTLOOSE, BREAKFAST CLUB like theme- **80's Movies**; Dairy Days usher in summer on June 7th, Golf Tournament tees off on July 22, and the 50th Anniversary of the Arts & Crafts Festival will be a great weekend, and don't forget Small Business Saturday and Taste of the Holidays.

In the end, this isn't about me and my decision to retire. It's about celebrating YOU, each and every day. It's about our wonderful board of directors who want to support your business the entire year, and providing staff with the resources to help you. It's about a business community that has worked together since 1892 when the first business organization started in Hutchinson. I certainly hope I've played a role in your business success, helped you over the humps, or simply made your day with a hug. I like warm, genuine hugs.

With that, let's not be sad, let's be glad and grateful we've been part of each other's journey.