



VAN WERT COUNTY • OHIO  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP

*Where The Strength Of Our People Provides Opportunity For The Future*

## **Agenda**

**January 20, 2006**

**8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.**

**City Council Chambers**

- I. Welcome— Jon Rhoades, President
- II. Ground Water Simulator – (Demonstration) - Dave Mathew
- III. Director Report-- Nancy Bowen
- IV. Standing Committee Reports
  - A. Executive Committee – Jon Rhoades
  - B. BR&E Committee – Nancy Bowen
  - C. Business Recruitment Committee - Jon Rhoades
  - D. Revolving Loan Committee - Darlene Myers
  - E. Regional Partnerships Committee – Nancy Bowen
  - F. Agriculture Information Committee – Bill Evans
- V. Partnership Organization Reports
  - A. Community Improvement Corporation/Innovation Center - Jon Rhoades & Gary Corcoran
  - B. Van Wert Area Chamber of Commerce – Jodie Perry
  - C. Main Street Van Wert - Jane Jones
  - D. Convention Visitors Bureau - Louie Ehmer
  - E. Port Authority – Bill Evans
- VI. Stakeholder Reports—Advisory Group Members
- VII. Information and Upcoming Events
  - A. OSU Extension Economic Development Update, January 25, Columbus
  - B. Area 8 Workforce Development Meeting, January 26, Wapakoneta
  - C. Chamber Banquet, January 26, Willow Bend Country Club
  - D. Main Street Van Wert Annual Evaluation, January 31, Chamber Office
  - E. Eggs & Issues – Senator Gillmor, February 3, Willow Bend Country Club
  - F. OSU Extension ODOT Meeting on Hwy. 30, February 7, Defiance
  - G. Katrina & Rita Response Team member, week of February 12.
  - H. Team Ohio Meeting, February 14, Columbus
- VIII. Adjourn

# *Van Wert Economic Development Advisory Group*

## ***Director Report***

*(January 2006)*

### ***Business Retention and Expansion...x***

- A second meeting of retail businesses on the south side of Van Wert was held January 10. The purpose of the series of meetings is to gather input from retail business on current conditions and discuss/implement strategy, including a possible SID for the area.
- The BR&E Committee is meeting today to plan for the 2006 BR&E Initiative.
- Continue to work with two established businesses who plan to expand into new facilities by mid-year. Both seek to work through area banking institutions to leverage state financing for purchase of land, building and equipment.
- Two new loans were closed last week through the County/City RLF's to seed new or existing business and create new jobs.

### ***Entrepreneurship and Business Recruitment...***

- 27 cold calls have been made on two of four prospect lists received from site selection research company in Holland, MI. Of the 27, 2 have requested additional information. Almost half are agreeing to be contacted on a semi-regular basis to "check in".
- New trucking company headquartered in Menomonee, WI. is up-and-running in the GKN Facility on Grill Road. They have already hired 25 people, drivers and office staff. They also plan, within the next 1-2 years, an operation to construct pre-fab walls for manufacture red homes that would hire approximately 150.
- Golden Heritage Foods bought the Kennedy building on Bonnewitz, a 100,000 sq. ft. facility that, once retrofitted to meet FDA standards, will house a warehouse distribution operation for their expanding subsidiary, Stoller Honey.
- The Van Wert Innovation Center continues to expand and improve. Glenn Schroeder Drafting has already added two new employees. Marketing efforts are being stepped up.
- VP Buildings has been renamed the Van Wert Distribution Center by owner, Steve Beck. New tenants include the GKN Freight Services operation and a machine shop business.
- Petland will open in the Van Wert Towne Center on February 11, Maurices Clothing store shortly thereafter. A hotel is still in serious consideration by Equity and another investor. A hotel feasibility study was completed earlier this month. .
- A prospective new company from Indiana remains interested in expanding in Van Wert has put plans on hold until first part of next year due to financial pressures (cont).

### ***Tourism and Main Street Redevelopment...***

- Serving on planning committee to create new position to direct tourism efforts in Van Wert. The person would attract tours and groups to the area, bringing new dollars to the community, among other things. Benchmarks will be established and results measured.
- Held a Main Street Recruitment Committee meeting to establish directions, including development of a recruitment packet, leading to new businesses in the downtown area.

### ***Planning and Administration...***

- Coordinated meeting for Regional Partnerships Committee with Ft. Wayne/Allen County Alliance in December. Meeting focused on coordinated marketing of corridor Hwy. 30.
- Working on an joint Wisconsin/Illionois/Ohio Extension team to create a "best business practices" database for downtown business recruitment.
- Completed work with Chamber and seven other organizations, on the development of a brand for Van Wert County. One of key goals this year will be to implement the brand.
- Prepared and taught 3 hour Leadership program on economic development January 18.
- Made presentation at the OSU Extension Annual Conference on Business Retention & Expansion in Columbus December 13. Also, presented to Sertoma this past week.