



VAN WERT COUNTY • OHIO  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP  
*Where The Strength Of Our People Provides Opportunity For The Future*

## Van Wert County Economic Development Advisory Group Agenda

March 14, 2008  
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.  
Wee Care Day Care Center

- I. Welcome— Jim Grant, President
- II. Director Report - Nancy Bowen
- III. Standing Committee Updates
  - A. Executive Committee – No Report
  - B. BR&E Committee – Company Visits Scheduled
  - C. Business Recruitment Committee – No Report
  - D. Revolving Loan Committee - Darlene Myers
  - E. Regional Partnerships/Hwy. 30 Corridor – Meeting Rescheduled March 19<sup>th</sup> in Upper Sandusky
  - F. Agriculture Information Committee – Ryan Adam
- IV. Partnership Organization Reports
  - A. Community Improvement Corporation – Jon Rhoades
  - B. Innovation Center – Gary Corcoran/Dee Whitcraft
  - C. Van Wert Area Chamber of Commerce – Kate Gribble
  - D. Main Street Van Wert - Jane Jones
  - E. Convention Visitors Bureau – Larry Lee
  - F. Port Authority – Bill Evans
  - G. Airport Authority – Jim Nelson
- V. Stakeholder Reports—Advisory Group Members
- VI. Information and Upcoming Events
  - A. Leadership Seminar for Elected Officials, Volunteers and Business Leaders @ Vantage Career Center on March 20<sup>th</sup> from 5-7:30.
  - B. OSU Extension Tri-State Community Development Study Group (Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia), April 1-3.
  - C. Van Wert Area Chamber of Commerce Home and Business Show @ Fairgrounds, April 4&5.
  - D. OEDA Basic Economic Development Course, April 16-18, Holiday Inn Worthington.
  - E. Economic Development Advisory Group Meeting @ Main Street Ice Cream Parlor, April 25, 8-9 a.m.

# *Van Wert Economic Development Advisory Group*

## ***Director Report***

*(February – March 2008)*

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

- Visits scheduled next few weeks with Eaton, Cooper, Kennedy, Grief, Eisenhauer, ND&T, and others. More to be scheduled.
- KAM Manufacturing losing contract with Vera Bradley by end of 2008, but seeking new markets to retain skilled workforce and continue to grow the company in Van Wert. Coordinated meeting yesterday at KAM to include reps from JFS, WSU, Chamber, County and City. Much effort will be made to assist the company through this transition.
- Cooper Foods embarking on \$8 million expansion to add space to current facility in Van Wert. Will add about 15 jobs initially. Another major expansion is also planned in 2009. Cooper has regularly exceeded goal to produce 1 million lbs. per week since last summer. Customer base has expanded from Kroger to Meijer, Wal-Mart, Target, etc.

### ***Business Recruitment and Site Development...***

- Full proposal submitted by invitation for a new state lead, Project Sunshine, due February 29. Project is a solar panel manufacturer who would invest \$200 million and create about 850 highly skilled jobs with average wages estimated to be between 60-70K. Looking at 3 states, want to narrow to 2-3 sites/buildings.
- Invited to submit proposal for “Project Shepherd” through Colliers, an international site selection consultancy firm looking for a 100,000 sq. ft. building for a major private steel industry corporation client.
- Continue to work with Van Wert Energy to assist with startup of potential ethanol plant. They have hired a full time coordinator and are located in office space in the downtown area. They also have a board of directors established.
- Met with Equity and with CB Richard Ellis in Columbus to assist in looking at potential tenants for the Towne Center, including potential restaurants and hotel.

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

- Serving on the OEDA Program Committee to plan training and workshops for ED professionals throughout the state. Currently assisting in planning, coordinating and teaching the Basic Economic Development Course, being held in Worthington.
- Attended TEAM Ohio meeting held at Ryffe Center in Columbus in February. TEAM Ohio is currently finalizing plans on 2008 tradeshow and company visits for members.
- Planned and conducted Financing Forum held at Willow Bend on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Event was moved from previous week. About 20 people were in attendance, including reps from all but one local bank.
- Coordinating with Poggemeyer on JRS grant application, including putting together conference call this past month with several utilities to go over priorities and timelines.
- Working with Mayor’s office to complete compliance requirements for purchase agreements with companies in Vision Industrial Park.
- Wrote articles for the OSU Extension Community Development newsletter and the Chamber ViewPoint.