



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

**Van Wert County OSU Extension  
Economic Development Advisory Group  
Agenda**

**June 20, 2008  
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.  
Wassenberg Art Center**

- I. Welcome— Jim Grant, President
- II. Director Report - Nancy Bowen
- III. Committee Updates
  - A. Revolving Loan Committee - Darlene Myers
  - B. BR&E Committee – Retail visits to be scheduled
  - C. Regional Partnerships/Hwy. 30 Corridor –July meeting cancelled
  - D. Agriculture Information Committee – Ryan Adam and Bill Evans
- IV. Committees Not Reporting: Executive, Business Recruitment, Regional Partnerships
- V. Partnership Reports
  - A. Community Improvement Corporation – Jon Rhoades
  - B. Innovation Center – Gary Corcoran and 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
- VI. Stakeholder Reports—Advisory Group Members
- VII. Information and Upcoming Events
  - A. Community Development Society Conference in Canada June 23-26.  
Conducting session and meeting with two companies.
  - B. Automotive Communities Program meeting and tour of OSU's Center for Automotive Research on OSU Campus in Columbus June 26.
  - C. OSU Extension Advisory Appreciation Picnic at Smiley Park July 16.
  - D. Next ED Advisory Meeting @ Delphos Wastewater Treatment, August 15.
  - E. ED Advisory Group Annual Dinner September 16<sup>th</sup> @ Willow Bend

# *Van Wert Economic Development Advisory Group*

## ***Director Report***

*(May – June 2008)*

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

- Met with existing business within region looking to expand. Currently have 12 employees and would double operation within a couple years. Provide for industrial automation, design and build services for manufacturers throughout the region.
- Coordinated and held labor/management meeting May 22 as recommended by the State ODOD in response to the Kongsberg lockout. Result was plan for Rapid Response program including three separate sessions to distribute pertinent information to workers. The programs were held at Vantage Career Center on June 10 with sessions and speakers planned by Jobs and Family Services, Chamber and Economic Development.
- Continue to work with and meet with biodiesel and ethanol projects in Van Wert to assist them in going forward with plans.
- Retail visits to begin shortly and conclude by the end of summer. A letter survey is going out in the coming few days.

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

- Several meetings with shopping center owners and leasing representatives on opportunities for Shannon Station, Summit, Van Wert Plaza and Towne Center. One owner planning to open own store to stimulate activity.
- Meeting with a startup business considering the Innovation Center or other location near his hometown of Delphos for manufacture of plastic furniture.
- Participating with Jason DeWitt and EMTEC (Edison Materials Technology Center in Dayton) representatives on an Algae Development Coalition to develop opportunities for new businesses in Ohio.
- Continue to communicate regularly with several potential prospects interested in the Van Wert area, including a food processor who received a proposal from us in May.

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

- Thanks to a Van Wert County Foundation grant, hired a summer intern, Nate Gillespie, to write articles about business successes or happenings in the Van Wert area. Nate will develop two stories per week which will be sent to media outlets throughout the region.
- Another intern, Jason DeWitt, volunteered his time this summer to assist with developing alternative energy opportunities in the Van Wert area, including algae bioprocessing. An informational meeting is already planned on July 24 at Vantage.
- Attended the Governor's meeting on Advanced Energies at the Dept. of Agriculture on retooling the economy and providing incentives through the economic stimulus package for development of advanced energy technologies such as solar, wind and biomass.
- Serving on search committee for OSU Extension to hire a Community Development Administrative position on the state level.
- Participated in conference call with Chicago Federal Reserve on economic development activities and trends in Van Wert.
- Working with Extension Advisory to renew plans for the New Year New You program, due to its' success in 2006.
- The CIC's application to the ODOD for a \$5 million JRS grant was accepted. Applicant presentations will take place in mid-September with awards being made in November.