

Van Wert Economic Development Advisory Group
Director Report
(September – November 2008)

Business Retention and Expansion...

- BRE meetings with service companies have not yet been scheduled. Pushed back due to meetings with local companies on immediate needs, including five meetings to introduce new Regional Workforce Director, Kristi Clouse, to manufacturers to address workforce.
- Coordinated with Chamber to hold roundtable with manufacturers regarding workforce needs. Also assisted with National Business Week activities with the Chamber.
- Working closely with two area manufacturers and with state on retention efforts. Both are automotive related and taking preventative measures including voluntary layoffs.
- Participated in a third labor/management meeting with the Kongsberg union and Job and Family Services representatives on October 7 to continue discussions regarding status, next steps and assistance for locked out workers.

Business Recruitment and Site Development...

- Collaborated on the coordination of an Entrepreneurship Fair with several partners and members of the Advisory Group including the Chamber, Main Street and the Innovation Center. Fair attended by over 50 participants. This will be an annual event.
- Three retail projects currently considering Van Wert as a location. Attended a public hearing in support of the Walgreens project. Two others are national restaurant chains who have needed site and building information in addition to demographics.
- Assisting the Horizon Wind Energy project, Erin Bowser is the Project Manager by connecting Erin with resources and opportunities in the community, developing projected economic impacts and assisting with public questions.
- Working with the ODOD on attraction strategies for the super site, including identifying and contacting Wind OEM's as potential end users for the site. Prepared and distributing information about the super site at meetings and conferences.
- Participated on team to assist Poggemeyer in the development of the JRS grant application and in making presentation to the state on the project. Team included Jon Rhoades, Jay Fleming, Louie Ehmer and Chuck Koch. We were awarded \$5 million.

Planning and Administration...

- Annual Dinner well attended by over 170 people. Mark Barbash replaced Lt. Gov. Fisher as speaker. The NPAC and Jon Rhoades were recognized.
- Annual retreat held at Emanuel Lutheran Church attended by 17 members of the Advisory Group. Julie Miller helped to facilitate. Retreat report is available.
- Participated on planning committee to develop itinerary for Japanese Delegation from Sumoto City in October. The delegation toured several landmarks in addition to Braun Industries, Wellman Seeds, Vantage Career Center, Profit Farm and Gina Dairy.
- Presented at the Annual County Commissioners Days on the coordinated economic development approach using an ED Advisory Group in Van Wert County. Wyandot County is modeling their new ED program after Van Wert approach.
- Coordinating meetings to launch the New Year New You program in 2009, due to its' success in 2006. The program has been replicated by at three other counties in the state.