



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**

January 16, 2009

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Van Wert City Council Chambers

- I. Welcome— Bill Evans, President
- II. Director Report - Nancy Bowen
- III. Committee Updates
 - A. Revolving Loan Committee - Darlene Myers
 - B. BR&E Committee – Year End meeting held Jan. 15.
 - C. Recruitment Committee – Year End meeting held Dec. 17th
 - D. Regional Partnerships Committee – Year End meeting held Jan. 8
 - E. Agriculture Information Committee – Meeting TBA
 - F. Host Committee – Meeting at conclusion of today’s meeting
 - G. Executive Committee – Meeting at conclusion of today’s meeting
- IV. Partnership Reports
 - A. Community Improvement Corporation – Jon Rhoades, President
 - B. Innovation Center – Gary Corcoran, Dee Whitcraft, Managers
 - C. Van Wert Area Chamber of Commerce – Kate Gribble, President
 - D. Main Street Van Wert - Jane Jones, Program Manager
 - E. Convention Visitors Bureau – Larry Lee, Executive Director
 - F. Port Authority – Bill Evans, Board Member
 - G. Airport Authority – Jim Nelson, Board Member
- V. Stakeholder Reports—Advisory Group Members
- VI. Information and Upcoming Events
 - A. BRE Year End Meeting Jan. 15 @ 10 a.m. in City Council Bd. Room – first two BRE visits with Lifestar and GHF next week
 - B. New Year New You Kickoff January 17th Vantage Career Center
 - C. TEAM Ohio Jan. 20 @ AMP Ohio in Columbus
 - D. Workforce Investment Board Jan. 22 in Auglaize Co.
 - E. Chamber Annual Dinner & Awards Ceremony, Jan. 27 @ Willow Bend
 - F. Regional Partnerships will meet with Indiana Purdue to explore regional entrepreneurship initiative on Feb. 13.
 - G. ED Advisory Group mtg cancelled in Dec. due to weather. Next mtg will be held on February 27th due to conference conflict

Van Wert Economic Development Advisory Group

Director Report

(November 2008 – January 2009)

Business Retention and Expansion...

- Held manufacturer roundtable with Chamber to introduce the Great Lakes Assistance matching grant program for companies negatively affected by global trade.
- Conducted several retention information meetings with area companies in November, December and January, including five meetings to introduce new Regional Workforce Director, Kristi Clouse, to address immediate workforce issues.
- 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 third labor/mgt. meeting with the Kongsberg union and JFS reps in October. Kongsberg has since announced closure of plant affecting another 177 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.
- At least three retail projects considering Van Wert as a location. Attended public hearings in support of the Walgreens project. Others are restaurant projects.
- Assisting the Horizon Wind Energy project by connecting with state and local resources and opportunities in the community, and developing projected economic impacts.
- Working with the ODOD and site selection consultants on attraction strategies for the super site, including working with International Directors to market site to Wind OEM's.
- Working with two potential new manufacturing projects, both involving cutting edge technologies and both of which were referred by local citizens/companies.
- Coordinate consultant (Poggemeyer) and local leadership/utilities on the super site development project. Awarded the maximum grant of \$5 million in November. Port Authority partnering to apply for \$2.9 M EDA grant for rail improvements to the site.

Planning and Administration...

- Annual Dinner last September 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 has been sent out.
- Participated on committee to develop itinerary for Japanese Delegation from Sumoto City. The delegation toured Braun, Wellman, Vantage, Profit Farm and Gina Dairy.
- Presented at the Annual County Commissioners Days on our coordinated efforts using an ED Advisory Group. Wyandot is modeling their new program after Van Wert approach.
- Coordinating launch of the New Year New You program in 2009, due to its' overwhelming success in 2006. The Kickoff is Saturday, January 17th at Vantage.
- In response to Retreat, established new Communications Committee. First meeting held on Jan. 6 to establish objectives and next steps.
- Darlene is revamping sites and buildings information on the Procure web site. In addition, regional web site is being updated for eight county region and both sites will be linked to new Ohio marketing web site, OhioMeansBusiness.com.