

Minutes
Somerset County Business Partnership
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
February 19, 2009
8:00AM
“Trade Wins”
Somerset County Vo-Tech
14 Vogt Dr.
Bridgewater

Attending:

Sheila Breeding	Jim Laskey	Frank Steinberg
Tim Comerford	Donna LoStocco	Dave Wolfskehl
John Donnadio	Peter Palmer	
Melissa Feltmann	Steve Reynolds	
Troy Fischer	Gail Rosen	
Rick Fontana	Paul Stahlin	

Guests:

Richard Canter

Staff:

Hannah Blumenthal	John Maddocks
Kimberly Charne	Tom Sharpe
Takeena Deas	Diana Sieberg
Bob Lantelme	Carol Soriano
	Pete Wright

Ms. LoStocco called the meeting to order at 8:07 A.M.

Ms. LoStocco presented Mr. Laskey with a gift to commemorate his year as Chairman.

Minutes of January 15, 2009 meeting were moved by Ms. Rosen, and approved unanimously.



- Ms. Rosen** **Finance**
One month is not reflective of the financial status of the organization though all indications are that the BP is on the right track. It will be a challenging year and there is a need to focus on membership.
- Mr. Wright** **Public Leadership**
Staff is planning on hosting area nonprofits to focus on sharing services.

A study is in progress addressing regionalization of health care.

Staff is planning a Business Resiliency and Sustainability Conference for later this year.
- Mr. Laskey** Stressed the importance of quantifying the savings from shared services county-wide.
- Mr. Reitman** Noted that a report to PeopleCare Center indicated that there are 1500 registered nonprofits within a 10 mile radius. This includes government entities.
- Ms. Deas** **Advocacy & Influence**
A Policy Forum and Gubernatorial Forum will be explored as will the potential to combine the two.

Staff is seeking a topic for a government summit.

Sen. Bob Smith will attend the April Legislative Affairs meeting. The format may be a panel discussion.

Staff is meeting with PSE&G to advance the Green initiative.
- Mr. Maddocks** **Economic Development**
Staff is planning an Energy Audit Training Program for commercial buildings. Locations for the event are being researched. The information will be compiled into the Economic Development Handbook that is being prepared and published in 2009.

The Greater Raritan WIB and RVCC are working with BP staff to develop and promote a program to serve the employment needs of Veterans. It was noted that military skills are not necessarily transferable to the private sector and retraining is often necessary to gain employment.

Staff has reached out to Congressman Frelinghuysen's office to obtain recommendation for a speaker on the economic stimulus package.



Education and energy are important issues in addition to infrastructure.

Ms. Charne Tourism

The Arts & Leisure Guide is scheduled for distribution the end of March.

Fifth Friday Friars on May 29 with Steve Forbes will be at Trump National. All guests must be preregistered.

Staff is working with hotels and restaurants to share resources and purchasing.

Ms. Sieberg Member Value

Distributed a list of new members and drops. Asked Executive Committee members to review and call drops if they are familiar with them.

Staff has introduced a program of quarterly payments for membership dues.

A prescription drug card is available to members at no charge.

Golf Outing is September 14 at Neshanic Valley Golf Course.

Mr. Lantelme Small Business Resource Task Force initiatives are gaining much attention with features on WMBC-TV and News12 NJ. Thirty Gap Loan applications were distributed in the past week and a half. There is room for more banks to become part of the program. Staff will be implementing the program with local on-site sessions in various municipalities.

He also noted that the hotline is up and running and staff is responding to calls.

Mr. Maddocks Questioned whether there is an established measure of success for the program.

Mr. Stahlin Success will be measured by the number of people and businesses helped and the number of banks and professionals supporting the programs.

Mr. Sharpe Staff needs the engagement of professionals and banks to make the municipal visits a success.

Mr. Canter Suggested that all Executive Committee members should participate regardless of their area of expertise.

Mr. Sharpe Volunteers are needed to man the hotline.



Ms. Rosen Stressed that there should be an assurance that at the municipal meetings there are more people in need of help than there are helpers.

Mr. Steinberg **RideWise**
Carpool numbers remain consistent and funding prospects are positive.

Mr. Sharpe **President's Report**
The Washington Train Ride and the BP Reception were extremely successful with tremendous exposure for all sponsors. Thanked Fletcher Thompson for their participation as signature sponsor.

Thanked Mark Shaw of sanofi-aventis for his significant contributions to the BP. Noted that Mr. Wright and Mr.Lantelme went to Washington thanks to sanofi contribution of tickets.

Staff is actively advocating to include Somerville in the Urban Transit Hub legislation.

The Route 22 initiative is continuing with efforts to get the short term improvements moving forward as soon as possible while assuring that funding for the long term project keeps coming.

The Staff Retreat held in early February was very successful with the definition of 2009 goals and deliverables.

Stressed the need for stakeholders in the BP to step up in 2009 so that all the positive initiatives may continue uninterrupted.

Ms. Charne The retreat enhanced the commitment to work as a team. Staff requested the opportunity to meet with the short list candidates for new President/CEO.

Ms. LoStocco Will address Ms. Charne's request with the Search Committee but would like the feedback of staff. Over 90 resumes have been received with the cutoff date of February 20, 2009.

Responding to Mr. Comerford's suggestion of opening up the search process to more of the Exec. Comm., it was noted that it was already a large committee and represented a complete cross-section of stakeholders.

Mr. Reynolds Noted that the process is well organized and there will be a flow of information to all who are interested.



- Mr. Laskey** Regarding Route 22, the BP is continuing to work with the County and the Regional Center to advocate for a continuing funding stream. A presentation to the Freeholders to update them on the status is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24.
- Mr. Palmer** Spoke to Transportation Commissioner Dilts who indicated that there is a need for 36 months for design followed by time for land acquisition. There is a high level of interest in moving the project forward.
- Mr. Sharpe** A meeting has been scheduled with area legislators to try to enlist their help in moving NJDOT on the project

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 A.M.