



BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

September 4, 2014
411 Main St. Catskill, NY
9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Attendance – Ted Banta, Columbia Greene Board of Realtors; Jo-Ann Roscoe, Durham Chamber of Commerce; Lisa Jaeger, Windham Chamber of Commerce; Kay Stamer, Greene County Council on the Arts; Jeff Friedman, Greene County Chamber of Commerce. Chambers not represented – Catskill, Heart of Catskill Association; Cairo Chamber of Commerce; Coxsackie Regional Chamber of Commerce. (Second Meeting was arranged for those Chambers not attending).

Staff – Warren Hart, Teri Weiss, Karl Heck, Frank Alguire, Heather Bagshaw, Patty Austin,

Others in Attendance - Kathleen McQuaid, KathodeRay Media Inc.

An additional meeting was held on September 17, 2014 for those Chamber members that were unable to make the original meeting. Attending were Mike McCrary of the Hunter Chamber, and M.A. Tarpinian, from the Cairo Chamber. We also taped the meeting for Janet Brooks that wasn't able to make it.

Warren Hart opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for attending. He asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Warren reviewed the agenda and the materials that had been distributed prior to the meeting which consisted of, our agenda and the partnership with the Chambers description.

Warren gave a brief history with the County's on-going efforts to assist small businesses, including the Main Street Revitalization Program, the Microenterprise Program, and the Buy Local Program, all three of which have had great success and are the primary tools that the County has to assist small businesses and entrepreneurs. He spoke about the similarities of those programs and the new program that we're launching, which is called Buy In Greene/Invest In Greene. "Greene County's Office of Economic Development has always had a strong focus and a priority on small businesses". This new program is a reinvigoration of our current Think Big, Buy In Greene campaign, with the introduction of a new component, "Invest in Greene", advertising and marketing campaign specifically targeting new businesses to locate in our downtowns.

He then went on to explain about the formation of the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) and its intended dual roles with the new Buy In Greene/Invest In Greene program. The BAC has been formed to provide input and advice on the county-wide campaign as well as a delivery mechanism at the local level with the membership organizations that represent the businesses within the County. We recognize the

need to work closely with the Greene County Chamber of Commerce and all the local chambers to make this program a success. Warren explained how our downtowns are our business and tourism anchors and how important they are to our local economy and tourism. He also spoke about the success of the Tourism Advisory Committee, and the support that the Greene County Legislature has committed to that committee. The BAC is intended to function in a similar capacity. The Legislature has capitalized this campaign and hopes to have the same success as the TAC.

Jeff Friedman of the Greene County Legislature applauded the effort and loves the idea. Jo-Ann Roscoe from the Durham Chamber said it was a wonderful idea and very important to this area.

Ted Banta, from the Columbia Greene Board of Realtors, mentioned that we should reach out to a “sub-market”, not only bricks and mortar storefronts but the aspiring artist, and a sub-category of people who are moving upstate but can’t afford Columbia County. He also recommended a basic instructional template to distribute to new businesses and clients. It would also be good to engage other local organizations within the community to help bring awareness to the program.

Jo-Ann Roscoe, agreed with Ted, and suggested creating a tutorial package for businesses, or a “one sheet” with basic information on the program.

Kathleen McQuaid from KathodeRay Media is the media and marketing consultant for the program and has been the creative influence since the inception of the Buy In Greene program. Ms. McQuaid will continue working with the county on this new campaign. The importance of educating the businesses and creating a template sheet to help the businesses increase awareness needs to be emphasized and collateral materials will be created after the launch of the site.

Ms. McQuaid then presented the PowerPoint presentation that she prepared describing both the Buy In Greene Campaign, which primarily targets the consumer and the Invest In Greene Campaign that will target business attraction, and highlighted the creative and website work to date.

Ms. McQuaid discussed the timing of the soft launch of the new website in October, giving Google time to conduct the necessary search crawling functions prior to the purchase of paid advertising. Ms. McQuaid reviewed the scope of services and budget for the two campaigns, including: the launch of a new Adaptive/Responsive Website; Search Engine Optimization; Advertising (Digital Ads, PPC, Social Ads, such as LinkedIn and Facebook); and Public Relations.

Warren spoke about the new website and explained what a responsive website is and the functionality of it as it sizes to the device people are using to view it on. He also talked about the experiences and comparisons to the Great Northern Catskills tourism website. He told about some of the additional collateral material that we will be distributing are part of the campaign, the required support that the County will need from the Chambers, including sharing of their databases, collateral distribution, and providing the County with current logos and link on websites.



The Chambers have the direct business-to-business connections that will help us create awareness of the new program. Additionally, from the Chambers we will need to know what type of advertising you are doing, your approximate marketing budget and where you are directing your advertising dollars. The marketing that we will be doing for the new program will support the Chambers' marketing efforts. The local Chambers will be asked to support this new program and assist with execution.

Finally, it was discussed how the lead generation from both organic and search advertising would work between County staff and the local Chambers. He also spoke about our current efforts on inventorying our downtown vacant buildings and lots that Karl and Teri have compiled and continue to work on. "Inquiries coming into our office will be directed to Teri. She'll collect the details of the call, search our inventory database and disseminate the information to the appropriate chamber member for their follow-up". This will be a joint effort to land new business and create small business growth.

Lisa Jaeger, from the Windham Chamber of Commerce, felt this is a brilliant grassroots program working from the bottom up, and was happy that the Chambers we asked to participate in it with the County. Her next Chamber meeting is on September 16th and she will be addressing the program with the Windham Chamber members at that time.

Following the soft launch of the website, the next meeting of the BAC would be set, most likely in November with some of the agenda items to include: discussion on whether to keep the Discount Card or to modify or replace with a new offering; review of the collateral materials; review of the media plan.

The meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.