

## **Focus Macomb: A Partnership for Economic Development**

Executive Committee Meeting  
June 19, 2007 -- Macomb County Administration Building  
9th Floor Conference Room

### **Summary**

#### **Members Present:**

Roy Rose (Anderson, Eckstein & Westrick)  
Don Torline (Baker College of Clinton Township)  
Frank Blowers (Lakeside Community Bank)  
Rick Kincaid (K & F Electronics)  
Karen Parenteau (Health Alliance Plan)  
Ron Reed (Community Central Bank)  
Anthony Viviano (Sterling Heights Dodge)  
Greg Windingland on behalf of Anthony Lombardo (Lombardo Companies)

#### **Members Missed:**

Barbara Rossmann (St. Joseph Healthcare)  
Paul Socia (Citizens State Bank)  
Joie West (St. Joseph Healthcare)

#### **Guests:**

William A. Crouchman (Chairman, Macomb County Board of Commissioners)  
Keith Rengert on behalf of Kathy D. Vosburg (Macomb County Board of Commissioners)  
Elizabeth Slinde (Macomb County Board of Commissioners)

**Staff:** Steve Cassin, Don Morandini, John Crumm, Lauren Royston, Mike Rozny, Jeff Schroeder, Camille Silda, Maria Zardis, Cheryl Bushbaker, Kate Doyle, Sharon Laskowski.

**Opening:** The meeting opened at 12:35 p.m. with welcoming comments by Executive Committee Co-chairs Don Torline and Roy Rose. Board Chairman, William Crouchman followed with an update of the recommendations from Focus Macomb 2006, which have been implemented.

*Highlights:* Automation Alley and U.S. Department of Commerce Export Assistance Center will be moving into their new satellite offices in the Macomb County Administration Building shortly. Members of the PED staff are working with the Procurement Technical Assistance Center establishing procedures for referrals and Macomb Community College (MCC) has opened the Center for Alternative Fuels. In addition, MSU will be creating a new medical school facility at MCC's central campus. The Macomb Business website has been developed and is up and running at [www.macombbusiness.com](http://www.macombbusiness.com).

#### **Status Reports from the Subcommittee Co-chairs:**

**Business Development** -- Co-chairs Rick Kincaid and Ron Reed presented the *Proposed 2007 Workplan* and the twelve new subcommittees formed to address key areas of need and interest to the business community in Macomb County. The subcommittees have identified their *objectives*, formulated topics to address, and will create *action plans* of suggested methods to implement their goals.

**Education & Workforce Development** -- Co-chair Frank Blowers identified the four areas of concentration for this year. In addition, the subcommittee plans to invite speakers with a special interest in education and economic development as well as network with other Focus Macomb subcommittees on overlapping issues.

- Develop and support programs that encourage a countywide *Culture of Education*.

- Dedicate resources for research and forecasting workforce and educational requirements for both existing and emerging businesses.
- Develop a unified media and marketing strategy to highlight our existing businesses and assist new enterprises in the county.

**Health** -- Co-chair Susan Murphy spoke of the strong motivation and diversity of expertise of the membership of the newest subcommittee of Focus Macomb. The subcommittee has developed its mission statement -- the *Guiding Statement and Charge of Focus Macomb Health* -- with a keen eye on the interdependent relationship between health care and economic development. The opening line of the mission statement clearly recognizes the challenges facing businesses, from small enterprises to large corporations, with the statement: "A vital component of how attractive Macomb County may be to potential investors who bring jobs and economic development is our ability to provide affordable access to health care." The subcommittee has adopted eight key areas to explore during 2007 by hosting speakers, researching and assessing existing resources, and interaction with other Focus Macomb subcommittees working on related issues.

**Quality of Life** -- Co-chair Karen Parenteau spoke of the enthusiasm of both the returning and many new members of the 2007 committee, and the challenges of selecting from the many exciting ideas formulated in 2006. Recognizing that a community's quality of life can influence the selection process for an expanding or relocating company, the subcommittee is exploring the best designs for developing a "one-stop" website for activities, including an events calendar and links to specific areas of interest. The web page would be structured in such a way as to draw both business and general public use.

**Transportation** – Co-chair Anthony Viviano presented a brief summary of the committee's 2006 recommendations and the challenges facing the 2007 committee in developing a "How to..." strategy in the current economic climate. Higher construction costs; lower incoming revenue; the growing population in the northern portion of the county; maintaining existing roads; and community and mass transit are some of the areas to be evaluated this year. With so many important issues, the question is how to best allocate the available funds.

#### **Comments by Don Torline and Roy Rose:**

Don Torline spoke to the co-chairs about the development of their 2006 recommendations. He encouraged the co-chairs to evaluate and select key recommendations by prioritizing needs relevant to the community and economic development. He praised the co-chairs for creating sub-groups focusing on key recommendations and for developing working formulas for the best way to "attack" their recommendations for 2007. He also pointed out ways committees could meet with each other and share information on overlapping recommendations.

Roy Rose commended the co-chairs on how well the committees are formulating their goals for 2007. Adding to the Transportation Committee's report, he talked about pending legislation to increase revenues for the maintenance and construction of State roads, including: Legislators are currently considering a graduating gas tax adding \$0.03 per year over 3 years; a possible additional license plate fee; and a means by which individual counties and/or regions can implement "self-help" measures to address projects in their areas. He also reminded the co-chairs that funds from the State's gas tax have remained approximately the same since 1997.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> (time to be determined) in the 9th Floor Conference Room of the Macomb County Administration Building.

**Future Meetings:** Committee status reports and recommendations will be due for the Planning Dept. in late October/early November. Details to follow.