VISTA 2025 Goal 3:

Expand Business Attraction and Retention Efforts With A Focus on Targeted Industry Clusters

VISTA 2025 Goal 3 Team Meeting

December 2, 2015

<u>Meeting Notes</u>

Team Members Attending: Mark Rupsis (Co-Chair), Mike Bray (Co-Chair), Chris Alonzo, Bill Bogle, Ed Brownley, Tom Fillippo, Karen Flynn, Marilyn Hershey, Derek Kimmel, Patty Knecht, Roger Legg, Ed Leo, Dan Miller, Dan Ostien, Julie Sommese

Also Attending: Marybeth DiVincenzo, Elaine Jasper, Mary Frances McGarrity, Katie Poppiti, Sherwood Robbins, David Sciocchetti, Gary Smith

Mike Bray

- Opened the meeting at 9:00 AM
- Indicated that he was very happy to serve as Co-Chair with Mark Rupsis
- Noted the diversity and strength of the team
- Discussed the focus of Goal 3 on industry clusters
- Emphasized importance of attraction and retention efforts
- Pointed out that we are off to a great start on implementation
- Reminded all that we need resources to be able to sustain our efforts

- Team initiatives for year 2
    1. Make sure judicious
    2. It makes sense
    3. Sustain those issues we deem important

Mike Bray:

- Called for any questions or comments on August 2, 2015 meeting notes
- No comments or questions were received

David Sciocchetti

- Provided examples of implementation progress on other VISTA 2025 goals
- For Goal 2 - Noted that a successful Workforce Summit had been held that focused on the critical workforce issues facing Chester County
- For Goal 1 – Described an Urban Centers Forum attended by representatives of all Chester County urban communities
- For Goal 4 – Reported that the first entrepreneurial ecosystem map in the Philadelphia region was created to assist entrepreneurs in identifying available resources

Mike Bray:

- Noted that he had gone back and reviewed the Implementation Matrix for VISTA 2025 with several questions in mind
    o Can we do it now?
    o Can we do it soon?
    o Who is responsible?

David Sciocchetti

- Noted that the matrix did identify a timeline and possible implementing partners

Mark Rupsis:

- Asked how progress will be measured

- Commented that we need to "set the bar" in order to measure

David Sciocchetti:

- Noted the different nature of individual strategies impacted measurement
- Noted that each strategy had a specified timeline
- Added that specific accomplishments and statistical information will be types of progress measurement

Mike Bray:

- Asked if there were any questions

Karen Flynn:

- Asked if we need another "layer" to coordinate all goal teams?

David Sciocchetti

- Advised that the Executive Alliance had that role at the policy level
- Noted that it expected to meet twice a year
- Pointed out that overall process allows for adjustments to the strategy

Ed Brownley:

- Inquired regarding the County's commitment to VISTA 2025

Mark Rupsis:

- Responded that the County's commitment was 100%
- Noted that it was one of the County's main initiatives along with Landscapes 2
- Reported that the County had submitted an application for a Governor's Award for VISTA 2025

David Sciocchetti

- Commented that VISTA 2025 is an "evergreen" document that will be adjusted over time

- Noted the need to review Year 1 strategies to evaluate status and next steps including moving/continuing in Year 2

David Sciocchetti:

- Directed attention to Goal 3 **Strategy 3.1.1** (database of primary employers)
- Noted that work had begun
- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2

Mary Frances McGarrity

- Noted that initial list of major county employers had been developed and is being used for multiple purposes

Mike Bray

- Commented on importance of this type of information
- Noted ranking is by employment, not by revenue
- Added that it is important to know what businesses are the main employers and what types of businesses are not a county strength

David Sciocchetti:

- Directed attention to Goal 3 **Strategy 3.1.2**
- Called for "Take the Pulse" business survey
- Noted that a draft of the survey had been prepared
- Indicated recommendation was to conduct the survey annually
- First survey scheduled for January, 2016

Dan Ostien:

- Questioned whether a consultant would be used
- Asked if we have a benchmark of something already done
- Asked how we intend to use the information

Mike Grigalonis:

- Stated that no consultant was planned and that we used other surveys as a basis for ours
- Indicated that it was intended to be a simple pro-active survey with a limited number of questions
- Noted that the purpose was to get a sense of what businesses in the County think and use that information to guide future economic development efforts

Mary Frances McGarrity
- Noted that we are partnering with the County chambers to distribute the survey
- Commented that we wanted to understand and be responsive to the needs of the business community

David Sciocchetti:
- Directed attention to Goal 3 **Strategy 3.1.6**
- Called for more formal and regular business roundtables
- Limited activity due to limited resources
- Indicated recommendation was to move to year 2 and combine with Strategy 3.4.1

Ed Brownley
- Asked if VISTA 2025 identified specific Chester County industry clusters

Marybeth DiVincenzo:
- Noted that CCEDC's operates five Industry Partnerships that target specific industry clusters – manufacturing, health care, information technology, energy and agriculture
    - Commented that we need to justify industry cluster partnerships every year to secure funding to provide services to assist the clusters

Ed Brownley
- Commented that we should further "clarify" top industries
- Added that there are some we might not want

- Suggested that we prepare a list of industry clusters that we want to attract

Mark Rupsis

- Noted that we need to emphasize "diversification" because this is something that is looked at by the bond rating agencies when they measure the fiscal status of the County

Gary Smith

- Commented that agriculture in Chester County employs 47% of the regional agricultural workforce as an example of a strong cluster

Ed Brownley

- Asked what are you trying to attract

Patty Knecht

- Commented that we should not be limited by the industry clusters designated by the state which could put us in a box
- Suggested that we can look at this through a different lens that focuses on what is best for Chester County

David Sciocchetti

- Noted that TIP Strategies used the location quotient to identify what companies had a higher representation in Chester County than in the region as a whole
- Suggested this provides a basis on which we can build

Marybeth DiVincenzo

- Noted the need for additional sources of data to assist with the process

David Sciocchetti:

- Directed attention to Goal 3 **Strategy 3.2.1 through 3.2.6**
- Called for joint messaging strategy and ancillary activities
- Noted that discussions with multiple parties are underway

- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2 for 3.2.1
- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2 for 3.2.2
- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2 for 3.2.3
- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2 for 3.2.4
- Indicated recommendation was to move to Year 2 for 3.2.5
- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2 for 3.2.2

Mark Rupsis
- Noted that there was an emerging county effort being led by Commissioner Farrell looking at Chester County as one of the best counties in the country based on a variety of ranking measures

David Sciocchetti
- Noted that John Roberts of TIP Strategies suggested that Chester County had the potential to become a national brand

Ed Brownley
- Asked why customers buy your products
- Answered because you advertise them
- Suggested that we think of Chester County as Chester County, Inc. and sell it as a product

Dan Ostien
- Commented that we need to be mindful of the state and region that we are in that affects how we can market

Marybeth DiVincenzo
- Suggested that we have one tool in place to market the County
- Noted VISTA.Today is a tool where Chester County business stories are told
- Pointed out that it is structured around commerce, culture and community

David Sciocchetti:

- Directed attention to Goal 3 Strategy **3.3.1 and 3.3.3**
- Called for formalized tracking system for companies interested in Chester County
- Noted that CCEDC's Salesforce and Excel tracking systems were under review for improvement
- Indicated recommendation was to move to Year 2 for 3.3.1
- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2 for 3.3.3

David Sciocchetti:

- Directed attention to Goal 3 Strategy **3.4.1 and 3.4.3**
- 3.4.1 for expanding industry cluster programs and services beyond workforce
- 3.4.3 called for evaluation the need for additional industry cluster
- partnerships
- Noted that transition in progress
- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2 for 3.4.1
- Indicated recommendation was to move to Year 2 for 3.4.3

David Sciocchetti:

- Directed attention to Goal 3 **Strategy 3.5.1**
- Called for promoting and expanding business services to farmers
- Noted that CCEDC's existing activities to continue
- Noted need for additional resources to expand efforts
- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2

Dan Miller

- Noted that agriculture was the largest industry in Chester County
- Pointed out that it was a key component of quality of place

Marilyn Hershey

- Stated that it was important for agriculture to gain respect as a critical component of the Chester County economy
- Noted that it is important to know that the County is standing behind its farmers

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Chris Alonzo

- Stated that agriculture overlaps several industry clusters including technology
- Pointed out that Europe is ahead of us in agricultural technology

David Sciocchetti

- Described visit/tour of New Bolton and the level of technology

Ed Brownley

- Noted that farm-to-table had become a mega trend

David Sciocchetti

- Commented that we had an advantage in farm-to-table by virtue of being in a metropolitan region

Dan Miller

- Described some of the changing dynamics of farming in Chester County – in particular the focus on small lots by the Amish community

David Sciocchetti:

- Directed attention to Goal 3 **Strategy 3.6.1**
- Called for "easy access gateway" for business assistance
- Noted limited activity on this strategy
- Indicated recommendation was to move to Year 2

David Sciocchetti:

- Directed attention to Goal 3 **Strategy 3.7.1**
- Called for leveraging existing CCEDC lending expertise
- Noted that some new financing options are available
- Indicated recommendation was to continue in Year 2

Sherwood Robbins

- Commented that we have a premier lending group at CCEDC with strong expertise in Federal and State loan programs
- Noted that the challenge is to tell this message and expand the toolbox of financial products

Bill Bogle
- Commented that the EB-% program was one opportunity
- Through the efforts of Commissioner Farrell, Chester County is developing strong China contacts and they are the largest EB-5 investors

Gary Smith
- Noted that Chester County is considered a national model for agriculture lending

David Sciocchetti:
- Directed attention to Goal 3 **Strategy 3.8.4**
- Called for marketing Chester County startups to Angel Investors
- Noted limited activity on this strategy due to lack of resources
- Indicated recommendation was to move to Year 2

Mike Bray
- Noted that prioritization is the short term project
- Stated that we need the help of the Goal Team 3 members to do that
- Asked if there were any final comments

Roger Legg
- Commented that New Bolton has broad connections in the region and beyond
- Asked about a plan to leverage these connections

Derek Kimmel
- Commented on "industry verticals"
- Asked what makes Chester County work for them – why do they want to be here

Mike Grigalonis

- Reported that we are working on one page summaries for specific industries

Ed Brownley

- Praised the quality of the Stakeholders Breakfast Meeting and its focus on VISTA 2025

Mike Bray

- Stated that comments and suggestion on Year 2 strategies should be sent to Mr. Sciocchetti by year end
- Noted that the members of the team are the experts and we need them to bring information to us

Mike Bray and Mark Rupsis

- Thanked all for attending and participating
- Closed the meeting at 10:35 AM