

**COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**Pillar Team Members Meeting**  
**Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.**

**In attendance:**

Mayor Mike McCann, Defiance County Health Commissioner Jamie Gerken, United Way Executive Director Carrie Wetstein, City Finance Director John Lehner, City Planner Niki Warncke, MVPO Housing Coordinator Liz Keel, Past City Mayor Rita Kissner, Next Gen Luis Rivera, Jr., DDVB Executive Director Kirstie Mack, Defiance City Schools Superintendent Bob Morton, , Councilman John Hancock, City Executive Assistant Debbie Stevens

**Absent:** Defiance County Workforce Development Manager Carla Hinkle, Defiance ProMedica President Doug Bush, Defiance County Economic Development Executive Director Jerry Hayes, and Defiance College President Richanne Mankey.

The Mayor began the meeting at 11:30 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance. He reviewed a recent meeting with CEO Brian Boyle from Issue Media Group regarding electronic reporting in and around Defiance. It was quite impressive and recommended a follow-up meeting with Mr. Boyle and this group and other community stakeholders on January 28, 2020 at 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. at Defiance College. A calendar invite will be sent to all soon.

**PILLAR PROGRESS REPORTS:**

**CULTURE AND EDUCATION PILLAR: RITA KISSNER (CULTURE)  
RICHANNE MANKEY AND BOB MORTON (EDUCATION)**

**BOB MORTON: Education**

The Defiance Community Auditorium:

- Updates are being worked on now. The air-conditioning is complete, and a painting quote was received and working on funding for curtains and flooring. Shared options for additional remodeling for the future.

Education updates:

- Trying to get away from the traditional way that people think of education by broadening educational opportunities in other ways. Connecting young and old people with the college and high school using various ways to get them engaged was mentioned.

**RITA KISSNER: Culture**

1918 building:

- The Purchase Agreement is signed. Transfer of the title will happen soon.
- The Patel Family may have interest in the building. Working with someone local would be ideal.
- Rita appreciated the work of Kirstie Mack and her team at the DDVB.

Small Business Development Committee:

- There is a meeting this Friday at 11:30 a.m. to prepare and offer a seminar or workshop on Small Business Development. The date is February 24, 2020 from 6-8 pm at the Stroede Center.
- Angie Franklin at NOCAC is developing an Internet Resource Guide to make available for the entire county.
- A Defiance College student is assisting with marketing and advertising for the small business development group.

**KIRSTIE MACK:**

Downtown Historic District

- The Downtown Historic District was approved by the State of Ohio. It is at the Federal level now for approval.

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS PILLAR: JAMIE GERKEN & DOUG BUSH**

**JAMIE GERKEN:**

- Walking trails, the Health in all Policy, and the farmers market are all going well.
- A meeting with Doug Bush is scheduled for this afternoon on more health and wellness information.
- The Mental Health area is something they will work on soon.
- The City of Defiance was awarded a Heart Healthy Community from American Heart association.
- The 100-Year Anniversary for the Defiance County Health Department will be this year and will be celebrated. More information to come later.

**CONNECTIVITY PILLAR: CARRIE WETSTEIN****CARRIE WETSTEIN:**Connectivity/Broadband:

- The County Commissioners hosted a public meeting to discuss regional Internet connections and was canceled due to weather and not yet rescheduled. Carrie shared a recent announcement out of Columbus Ohio seeking to boost rural high-speed internet by opening road right-of-ways to development along rural routes and highways to help the underserved Ohioans.

Build up academy at the Dream Center:

- The Automobile Repair Service Program didn't get enough individuals signed up, so they are going to try again in 2020.

Transportation Network:

- Josh Junge, Mobility Manager is working on setting a meeting with area County Commissioners and ODOT to discuss options for a regional transit system. Letters of intent grant applications are due in February 2020. A Rural Transit Funding presentation by ODOT will be held soon.
- Josh Junge announced his resignation recently and will remain until a replacement is hired.
- The next Defiance County Transportation meeting is on January 14, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.
- The Bridge Ride: Angie Franklin from NOCAC reported 44 riders participated with 3,412 one-way rides provided. The final cost numbers are coming in around \$60,000 range.

**NIKI WARNCKE:**

- The *Defiance County Active Transportation Plan* was completed the end of 2019. This plan will include the Safe Routes to School Updates for the City for sidewalks at Defiance Elementary and Middle Schools, St John Lutheran School, and Holy Cross School.
- At the last meeting, a horseback-riding group came to the meeting and has an interest in the trail. Expanding connectivity to other areas for this group is being reviewed.

**MIKE McCANN:** An Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) representative was here recently reviewing locations for launching canoes and kayaks in Defiance. Riverside Park and the back of Riverside Cemetery were two locations in review.

**PERCEPTION PILLAR: LUIS RIVERA, JR. AND KIRSTIE MACK****LUIS RIVERA, JR.:**

- The Perception Pillar Committee met in November with Yvonne Dale Graphics on the status of branding. Creating an image with a phrase was discussed. Co-branding with the different Defiance entities was also discussed. Creating images related to Defiance then and now were mentioned.

**HOUSING PILLAR: LIZ KEEL AND RITA KISSNER****LIZ KEEL:**

- The next Housing Committee Meeting is January 20, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.
- The goal this year is to redevelop the Planning and Zoning Code.

Town Hall Meetings for Tenants:

- Educate individuals on how to be a better tenant through the Good Tenant Program starting in March.

Town Hall Meeting for Landlords:

- Liz needs to prepare and get this started for this year.

Housing:

- There is a need to expand partnerships. Commercial lenders may be able to help get housing projects started and finished.
- Mike McCann is attending a Home Builders Group meeting tomorrow.
- Mike McCann has met with bankers recently and recommended developing an Incentive Packet for companies who want to build homes in Defiance.
- There is a recent program called PACE to help homeowners with heat assistance or improvements on their home. This would be added on to their taxes. Liz will review the details more and report back to the committee on her findings.
- Their office is reaching out to neighborhoods in need regarding the Community Housing Improvements Program (CHIP).
- There are several in-fill properties available to build homes on in the City.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PILLAR: JERRY HAYES, CARLA HINKLE, & JOHN LEHNER**

**MIKE McCANN:**

- Harmon Business Park is moving along. Infrastructure will be started soon.
- There is one business lead prospect interested in Defiance.

**Next SPC Pillar Team Leader meeting:** *Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 11:30 a.m. in Council Chambers.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Debbie Stevens, Executive Assistant*