



Chamber Board sets goals for 2009

The Executive Board held a strategic planning retreat last month at the Pine River Nature Center in Goodells.

After reviewing the results of the 2008 Membership Survey and outcomes of the 2008 goals, the Executive Board established its weighted goals for 2009:

- **Membership Retention**
- **Financial Stability**
- **Advocacy**
- **Membership Involvement**
- **Collaboration**

The Chamber will propose to the Board this week a full restructuring of its committees. Chairman, Marty Doorn will recommend to the Board that several committees now be required to have the chairperson be a member of the Board of Directors to keep the Board better connected and accountable for committee activities.

Proposed Board Committees for 2009 are:

- Executive Board
- Fund Development (Fundraising)
- Financial Oversight
- Business Development
 - Business Entrepreneurial Assistance Team
- Public Affairs
- Education
- Nominating

Proposed Staff Committees overseen by members of the Chamber staff are:

- Blue Water Ambassadors
- Networking
- Young Professionals
- Women of Influence

The Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, November 20, 7:45 a.m. at Baker College to discuss the committee restructuring and goal development in more detail.

Chamber accepts proclamation from City Council

Chamber President, Vickie Ledsworth attended the Port Huron City Council meeting on October 27 and received a Proclamation from Mayor Moeller recognizing October as Chamber of Commerce month.

October was established as Chamber of Commerce month in Michigan last year by Governor Granholm and the Michigan Chamber of Commerce.

Upon accepting the Proclamation,

Ledsworth provided the Council with an overview of accomplishments over the past 36 months since she took the helm. Those accomplishments include:

Over the past three years, we have successfully leveraged our resources to accomplish the following:

- New Chamber office location in the hub of downtown Port Huron
- "Surf Station" – a wireless workstation for business visitors
- Chamber Leaders Circle of St. Clair County and developed
- Contributor to Regional "Discover Business in the Blue" Business Directory
- Annual State of the County informational lunch forum
- Leadership Blue Water - leadership & community development program
- PHN "Taking Care of Business" & E&A Credit Union
- Business Entrepreneurial Assistance Team (BEAT) – consultation for small business
- Website redesign that attracts half a million web visitors per year

"It was very gratifying to hear all the Chamber has been doing and hear it stated in a public place like a council meeting. It made me very proud to be a Chamber member."

Trina Avedisian
Owner / Graphic Designer
Community Marketing
Group, LLC

City Council hears members' support of free parking

The Blue Water Area Chamber of Commerce publicly reported the results of a survey last month on whether the membership supported free parking in downtown Port Huron to the Port Huron City Council on October 27th.

Forty percent of the membership responded and an overwhelming 91% were in favor of free parking.

The Chamber also voiced its concern that employees of retail and commercial businesses downtown would take up prime parking spots and a plan should be created to manage employee parking.

Meetings will be held this week to discuss the matter with City officials in more detail.

3rd Annual State of the County being planned

The Chamber Leaders Circle of St. Clair County is planning the 3rd Annual State of the County address tentatively scheduled for **Wednesday, January 13, 11 am—1 pm** at Alexanders in Marysville.

The informational lunch address will include remarks by County Commissioners Wally Evans and Pamela Wall and presentation from Administrator Shaun Groden.

The event typically hosts over 200 professionals from the area and is one of the largest coordinated Chamber activities.

More information will be available in the coming weeks.

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Mainstreet Port Huron restructures; Downtown Port Huron re-emerges to focus on events

The organization formerly known as "Mainstreet Port Huron" has been re-named, refocused, and reorganized as a new organization --- "Downtown Port Huron."

There is an initial governing board in place and **Betty Veen** from **Lamar Advertising** was elected Chairperson, with **Wendy Krabach** of **Woman's Life Insurance** elected as Vice Chair.

This new organization, Downtown Port Huron, will assume responsibility for implementing many of the key elements of the "Destination: Port Huron" vision plan that was developed earlier this summer, including:

- 1) The free **Shopper's Shuttle** and **Customer Service Reps**
- 2) Expand the festivities around Silver Sticks to start creating a new festival called "**Chilly Fest**"
- 3) Offer up to **\$15,000 in incentives** to member businesses for outdoor/patio seating, facade improvements, or exterior signage through DDA funds
- 4) Coordinate "**Boat Month**" in July and expand it in 2010 to include the Sarnia - Port Huron International Offshore Boat Races
- 5) Expand the **Art Fair** by collaborating with Studio 1219 and their annual Fire & Ice Festival
- 6) Create a new ongoing series with restaurants & pubs called "**Taste of Port Huron**"

For more information, contact Cindy Babisz, Manager, at the Downtown Port Huron Welcome Center at 810-985-8843.