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PROGRESS UPDATE

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PROGRESS UPDATE

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November/December 2008

Progress is ...

The Progress Council annual dinner's format changed to a more informal networking based event // Meetings continue with Representative Daley and the University of Pittsburgh for phase two of the Smart Government Initiative // MVPC annual business meeting includes election of officers, setting annual objectives and approval of the budget // PA Department of Community and Economic Development certifies Regional Enterprise Zone

PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

Format changed for the Progress Council's 2009 annual dinner to a more informal networking-based event – After 43 years, its time for a change. The 44th annual dinner will feature a more informal networking environment with live music and a jazz theme to add fun. We are excited about the change. Please look for an announcement on the date for the 44th annual event.

Meetings underway with Pitt to develop phase two of the Smart Government Initiative – Ongoing meetings with the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and State Representative Peter J. Daley focus on the Progress Council's Smart Government Initiative's future actions.

MVPC business meeting includes election of officers, setting of objectives and approval of the budget - The January 9 annual business meeting included action on the FY 2009 budget and objectives as well as the election of board members and officers. John Easoz of Solar Power Industries was elected president.

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Progress Council's 2009 annual dinner to be an informal networking-based event

After 43 years, its time for a change. The 44th annual dinner will feature an informal networking environment with live music and a jazz theme to add fun. "We are very excited about the new format," said Progress Council president John Easoz. "We expect that it will create a new excitement as a major Mid Mon Valley business networking opportunity."

You will soon be seeing an announcement for the date of the Progress Council's annual event, the keynote speaker and registration information.

Meetings underway with Pitt on Smart Government Initiative

Ongoing meetings with the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and State Representative Peter J. Daley focus on the Progress Council's Smart Government Initiative's future actions.

Representative Daley has been a leading supporter of the Smart Government Initiative that seeks to establish a more regionally-focused, cooperative means of delivery for local municipal services. The Progress Council has work with PA Futures, the consultant firm retained by the Progress Council, to secure interest on the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA). The engagement of GSPIA is of particular interest Joe Kirk, Alan Kugler and Representative Daley who are GSPIA graduates.

Phase one of the Smart Government Initiative's completion in 2008 outlines the challenges faced by local government. The DCED funded study carried out by Alan Kugler of PA Future included meetings with local government and research on local taxes and budgets.

Major findings of the Smart Government phase one of the Smart Government Initiative project included:

1. The economic decline of the Mid Mon Valley continues.
2. There is a crisis in the delivery of municipal government services that is interrelated to the declining economy.
3. There is significant concern that nearly all of the Mid Mon Valley municipalities lack the population and tax base to afford the delivery of basic municipal services to their communities.
4. More regionally based solutions are necessary to cut across political and jurisdictional boundaries in ways that can drive efficiencies and achieve effectiveness in the provision of public services. Such regionally based solutions can position the Mid Mon Valley for an economic turn around.
5. There is a need to better engage state legislators, civic and business leaders, local media, and the public to support and implement actions toward more regionally based solutions.
6. As the leading Mid Mon Valley regional business and civic organization, the Mon Valley Progress Council must provide leadership to advance solutions.

Mon Valley Progress Council meeting includes election of officers, 2009 objectives and budget

The January 9 annual business meeting included actions on the FY 2009 budget and objective as well as the election of board members and officers. John Easoz of Solar Power Industries was elected president.

Executive Committee

John Easoz	President
Bob Burke	Vice President
Louis Quarto	Secretary
Larry A. Golashewski	Treasurer
Mark Tabler	At Large
Lou Panza	At Large
William Lee	At Large
Randy McMahan	At Large

Board of Directors, Class of 2009 - Expires December 31, 2011

Joseph Caruso	Jaycee Foods, Inc.
Mark Tabler	U.S. Steel
William J. Worthington	Attorney at Law
Bob Irey	Adena Equipment
Karen Earley	Citizens Bank
Dave Dietz	World Kitchen
Brook Gardner	First Federal Savings Bank

The annual business meeting also included approval of the Progress Council's 2009 objectives and budget. The budget once again does not call for an increase in sponsorship rates.

Mon Valley Progress Council - Strategic Actions, 2009

Issue area one - Mon Valley/Fayette Expressway and Southern Beltway

- Continue staff coordination support for the Expressway Partnership Initiative
- Seek to maintain focus on the completion of the PA Route 51 to I-376 Expressway
- Continue to provide support and guidance on the PA Turnpike Commission Public/Private Partnership Plan
- Refine the federal 20% and local 80% plan as a framework for federal funding
 - Develop legislative language for the reauthorization of transportation funding
 - Seek broader support in Allegheny County including the Allegheny Conference
 - Seek support and engagement of the congressional delegation and US senators
 - Continue to work with Allegheny County Chief Executive Onorato
 - Conduct Harrisburg and/or Washington DC bus trip

Issue area two - Regional Initiatives

Smart Government

- Work with GSPIA at Pitt and consultant services for phase two of the project
- Undertake implementation of a more regionally-based system for delivery of local governmental services

Economic development

- Based on receipt of certification of the Mon Valley Regional Enterprise Strategic Plan undertake implementation of the local enterprise zone program
- Explore linkage of MVREZ to a potential Mid Mon Valley regional DCED Main Street and Elm Street programs

Technical education

- Market the Mon Valley Tech Access site as a business conference facility
- Support the broadening of the Westmoreland County Community College technical college program at Mon Valley Career and Technology Center, including the development of business performance and job readiness courses

Mid Mon Industrial Museum

- Seek to broaden local support for the project
- Assume local support initial fund raising efforts and seek to form a new not-for-profit

Issue area three - Business support

- Respond rapidly to local businesses to requests for technical and financing information
- Market the IDAP program and seek to secure one applicant for financing
- Manage the Donora industrial building and provide timely assistance to the firm occupying the building

Issue area four - Administrative efficiency and sustainability

- Engage the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors in a sponsorship campaign
- Continue to explore unique funding sources consistent with the mission and objectives