

## **Facilitation**

### **For creating Committee Recommendations**

- 1. Your facilitator has volunteered to help assure that your time is well spent and productive.**
- 2. The facilitator will remain neutral to the agenda and be non-judgmental about discussion**
- 3. Facilitation will help assure that everyone has an opportunity to participate and contribute. To help this process the group is encouraged to honor the “rule of three”, whereby the last speaker waits until two more people have spoken before speaking again.**
- 4. Differences of opinion are to be expected and help create a better product. We are looking for everyone’s ideas-there are no wrong answers. The facilitator’s job is to help participants find common ground.**
- 5. All of us are well served if we leave our ego at the door and bring our passion for breaking the cycle of poverty.**
- 6. The entire group is responsible for enforcing these rules.**

## **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WORKSHEET GUIDELINES**

- 1. Each worksheet should contain only one recommendation.**
- 2. The statements on the form may be completed in any order and it is not necessary to complete every bullet.**
- 3. A committee recommendation worksheet can be updated throughout the next three meetings as final committee recommendations are developed.**
- 4. If necessary, work on recommendations is encouraged to continue between large group monthly meetings.**
- 5. Please provide a contact person for each uncompleted committee recommendation so that PPA staff can help provide support and follow-up between meetings.**

**Once a committee believes that it has developed a strong committee recommendation and has provided sufficient detail, it should be turned in to the Committee Chair or e-mailed to [schristopher@fanning.uga.edu](mailto:schristopher@fanning.uga.edu)**

**If you have any questions you can contact Jim Geiser or Delene Porter at 706-542-1108.**

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WORKSHEET

Fill in as many blanks as possible. Fields with an \* are required in case we need to contact you for clarification. Thanks for your interest and input!

Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone\*: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail\*: \_\_\_\_\_

### I. List the Learning(s) that this recommendation is addressing

- **WRITE THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION\*\* (limit focus to one subject or action item, more than one recommendation may be needed to address a particular learning ):**
- **Identify any research, or other kinds of information that was used to craft this recommendation. (add additional sheets as necessary)**
- **Identify additional research or information that could help clarify this committee recommendation. List potential sources if possible.**
- **Indicate people or groups that we need to talk to help clarify this committee recommendation. List any recommended locations.**
- **What kind of action or resources would be necessary to implement the recommendation?**

- **Indicate what forces and influences are likely to occur that will support or oppose implementation.**  
**Forces that support (please list):**

**Forces that oppose (please list):**

**\*\*As information is received and/or clarified, these potential recommendations may change or be discarded.**

## *Economy Committee*

### **Learnings as published in Poverty in Athens: What We Have Learned posted on [www.prosperousathens.org](http://www.prosperousathens.org)**

- 1. Athens' economy is not diverse enough, and this limits jobs and drives down wage rates.**
  - The economy is too dependent on UGA and the two regional medical centers.
  - There are inadequate strategies in place to encourage retention and expansion of existing businesses.
  - There are inadequate strategies to attract industries that will enhance the social, environmental and economic quality of life in Athens.
  - Regional economic development efforts are inconsistent.
- 2. Many jobs pay wages that do not meet the local cost of living.**
  - Livable wage estimates are determined by local factors such as the cost of housing, child care, transportation, health care, etc. In Athens, local estimates of a livable wage range from \$10.50/hr with benefits to \$14/hr without benefits.
- 3. There is a lack of coordination and funding for strategies that prepare students and adults for the workforce.**
  - Students and adults do not have enough access to training in business skills, financial literacy and entrepreneurialism.
  - Lack of hope prevents students and adults from acting on career dreams.

## **RECURRING THEMES AND CHALLENGES**

**Learnings as published in Poverty in Athens: What We Have Learned  
posted on [www.prosperousathens.org](http://www.prosperousathens.org)**

- 1. The notion that there exists a welfare system that “pays people not to work” is a myth. Welfare reform has required that low income families with dependent children must be transitioning to employment in order to receive benefits.**
  - The total number of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families cases in Clarke County has decreased by 40% over the past two years.
- 2. High levels of poverty are a burden to those who live in poverty and work to undermine the economy of the entire community.**
- 3. Our institutions and systems have failed to develop collaborative strategies that adequately address the challenges of poverty.**
  - There is a culture of poverty in Athens that passes from generation to generation.
  - There is little innovation in developing new programs, opportunities and collaborations to break the cycle of poverty.
- 4. A good education is one of the major factors in helping to overcome poverty.**
  - An incomplete education—lack of high school diploma, GED, literacy in English, workforce skills, etc.—is a serious challenge to decreasing poverty in Athens.
  - Persons who drop out of school have few job options in Athens-Clarke County.
- 5. Athens has an unskilled workforce that is a barrier to economic development.**
- 6. There is a lack of effective coordination and collaboration among faith-based organizations, non-profits, schools, universities and government agencies.**
  - There are serious problems getting information to the public about existing assistance programs.
  - There is a lack of specialized support for immigrant populations.
  - There are gaps in services.
- 7. Effective strategies to address racism and class issues are lacking.**
  - In Athens-Clarke County the consequences of poverty fall mostly on African Americans and, increasingly, on our growing Latino population.
  - There is a hesitancy, by all races, to have honest dialogue about the impact of race and class as they relate to poverty.
- 8. There are disincentives built into various systems that make it difficult to break the poverty cycle.**

## **Economy Committee**

**Unedited Learnings as posted on [www.prosperousathens.org](http://www.prosperousathens.org)**

### **Entrepreneurship Sub-committee**

1. Sustainable community development, defined as much by social and environmental outcomes as by economic returns, needs to guide a “Buy Local,” self-reliant, and community-controlled economic development plan for Athens.
2. Training kids and adults in business skills and hope needs to be a priority.
3. The definition of “Economic Development” needs to be expanded to emphasize small businesses, nonprofits, and other types of economic engines over large industry.
4. Information on existing small business development resources needs to be made more known and the institutional barriers to starting a small business need to be removed (i.e. create more access to capital, look at zoning and small-business-friendly designation, etc.).
5. More information needs to be gathered on what makes a business successful in Athens.

### **Livable Wage Sub-committee**

1. UGA sets local standard for wages and drives them down. This has been anecdotal so far, but our analysis of UGA’s wages (still in progress) supports this as fact. “Temporary” workers are a crucial part of the UGA wage picture. Job classifications are key. Benefits for these workers needed. Auxiliary services need to be examined too.
2. Living wage estimates are determined by local factors like housing, child care, transportation, health care etc. Local estimates range from \$10.50/hr plus benefits to \$14/hr without benefits.
3. ACC’s large private employers are important too.
4. Point of Fact: state law prohibits local living wage legislation. Thus, what we’re talking about is private and public employers’ policies (not a push for any kind of local legislation).
5. Benefits- to the community as a whole- of paying living wages relate to the work of every PPA Sub-committee.
6. Wages in existing jobs are important alongside considerations of new jobs coming in as a result of economic development, i.e. Bringing in a company like Novartis is important, but wages paid in various jobs today by existing employers, especially large employers (like UGA, hospitals, ACC, poultry plants, etc.) are important to consider too. Synergy of efforts on all these levels is important.

### **Culture of Poverty Sub-committee**

1. There is a real culture of poverty in Athens which exists because the burdens of poverty are systemic and pervasive.
2. People in poverty frequently demonstrate a pervasive “radically present oriented outlook” which does not promote education or the skills necessary to achieve education. (What % of Athens children age 16-18 are neither in school nor employed?)
3. For those in the culture of poverty, education is key. For children and adults who want to effect change, a lack of access to resources to learn and, as importantly,

- individuals who model and positively reinforce the behaviors necessary for success in society. These behaviors include reliability; diligence; work; sacrifice; self-improvement; service to friends, family, and community; and sense of purpose.
4. For others, poverty results from lack of money. These individuals have suffered from lack of access and opportunity and need a “hand up, not a hand out.”
  5. Effective and successful organizations in Athens need more recognition, greater community and governmental support and funding priority. Efforts should be organized and coordinated.

**Traditional Economic Development Sub-committee**

1. ACC’s economy is not sufficiently diverse- we are too dependent on UGA.
2. The community neither controls developable property nor speculative buildings that might encourage new businesses locating here.
3. Athens Technical College has strong student demand and adequate faculty but lacks buildings for specialized training for the biotechnology industry..
4. Regional economic development efforts are sporadic and reactive rather than proactive, as are economic development efforts in ACC proper..
5. Life sciences are an appropriate target market for ACC economic development efforts.
6. Water resources limit certain economic development opportunities.
7. The negative perception of ACC’s public education system does not help economic development efforts.

\*There are concerns that the Economy Sub-committee’s work that does not focus on traditional Economic Development (i.e. living wage, entrepreneurship, etc.) will not be taken seriously by the broader PPA. Concerns are noted here to ensure that they will not be lost.