

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

3 Main Points:

- [1] Train kids & adults in business skills and hope
- [2] Start a movement for “buy local”
- [3] Remove institutional barriers & access to capital; look at zoning, small-business-friendly designation.

To support entrepreneurship:

- Access to capital
 - Programs in schools
 - Access to resources for start-ups (EADC, ...) Have an information fair at a big event like Twilight
- [1]
- Education in financial literacy, both personal & business
 - Partnerships between schools, government, and private business
 - Conduct “Hope” training >> “I can/ you can”

Challenges to Small Business

- Too many rules and regulations on small business. Need help navigating the certification process.
 - Two audiences: adults & high school graduates who could have their own business
 - Could use an economics class in high school.
 - With teens, could use Junior Achievement & partner with a corporation
 - For adults, they have trouble finding resources for their business >> they need support
- Have a business run by the high school – like a bank
 - What does Athens have that we can sell to other places.
 - What are the current needs of businesses? What are they buying from other places/suppliers?
 - Can we make it here? Like CD’s or record manufacturers, or what does Certainteed use/need?

[2] Buy Local Campaign & Small Businesses (not Walmart)

- Bumper stickers > Chamber has website directory for local businesses

[3] Removing Institutional Barriers > small businesses with less than 19 employees

- Need capital
- Entrepreneur-friendly
- Get rid of red tape

- 1 – It’s hard to talk about problems without talking about solutions. What does PPA want the subcommittees to do?
- 2 – Talk to folks who’ve been turned away at bank or hear the story of businesses that close.

- 3 – Attract businesses that want to stay locally owned.
- 4 – Zoning > make areas business-focused
- 5 – Rent is high for retail space
- 6 – Support small industries – art galleries/ honey pots

LIVABLE WAGE

Proposed Report

1. Intro – Living wage definition: how it is calculated
2. Relationship between health care and living wage
3. Local distribution of employment and living wage
 - a. UGA
 - b. ACC
 - c. Private Firms- temporary part-time/ full-time: race/gender
4. Evidence of living wage from research > positive/negative on communities, local economy, health effects, family effects.
5. Information of local living wage efforts > Economic Justice Coalition; UGA Living Wage

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- What is the decision tree used by industry to hire/locate locally or not?
- Presentation by Drew Page – Athens Clarke County Economic Development Foundation
- Break into small groups and visit with focus group of people ???????????????
- Entrepreneurship is lacking – catalogue is being done
- What type of industry, skill levels needed?
- They don't know what businesses want. We need to synergize between business needs and government needs.
- Major disadvantage to businesses coming to Athens > high transportation costs
- We have the same traditional labor shortages.
- Types of workers wanted: high school graduates; pass drug tests, clean police reports.
- Three primary industrial areas – Cole Business Park, Certenteed, Orkin (total 600 acres) > taxation issues, zoning, utilities
- Potential areas for development: health services, plastics, construction materials, automotive, tourism
- Challenge > No controlled industrial park. May not be immediately solvable
- Projects can't "fit" in ACC, but nearby areas may work & employ Athens labor.
- No crime, healthcare, access to highways, education. Oconee "best" school system in state; movement of residents to Oconee. Need to distinguish between permanent (quality of life) versus business costs.
- Creating jobs on 2 levels > (1) biotech jobs (2) baseline entrance into corporate level
- 70% of jobs created from industry expansion, not new businesses.
- Environmental standards (Clean Air Policy)
- Other elements in society not encouraging the isolation of industry
- Opposed to encouraging senior citizens because of the socioeconomic impact. E.g., Voting power of the majority of seniors causing a legislative grid lock. E.g., school bond issues.
- We want to grow "right" type of industry – i.e., we may not want to encourage the 70% to grow

- ** Issue of NE Georgia growth – availability and allocation of water
- Need to look at the next reservoir (Bear Creek?). Consider the location of the next watershed in Athens.
- Will have future discussion on performance/utilization of current social program. For example, underutilization of food stamps > 55/65% participation. They have outreach to increase participation.
- There are challenges to fixing issues of crimes. The decision tree used by businesses in deciding to come to Athens.
- Brand Athens with a “theme” that promotes business in Athens.

CULTURE OF POVERTY

- 1 – High dropout rate: less accessibility to high paying jobs
- 2 – We need to show people we care by listening to their story before offering to help; otherwise folks will become defensive and resist the help.
- 3 – Read “The World is Flat.” The U.S. is falling behind the world and China
- 4 – We have a unique situation in Athens with biotech
- 5 – Why are the kids dropping out?
- 6 – How are the schools getting the children to learn? Move to Education Committee
- 7 – Parents expectations for my education were clear, even though I hated school. This is not always true with everyone.
- 8 – Children know today’s technology but they may not have the tools at home, so instead they go to the public library to access these tools.
- 9 – Society is labeling kids without realizing that they are smart
- 10 – Is there a culture in the schools that only teaches students to pass a test?
- 11 – When we were growing up it was shameful to get pregnant; however, that may not be the case in today’s society.
- 12 – How do we get to these kids early so they understand that choices mad “now” have an impact later.
- 13 – Focus on the whole family. If the home is not involved, change will not occur.
- 14 – People don’t understand that this county is out of proportion to other places (e.g., social interaction among low & high SES)
- 15 – People in the community were surprised by the statistics of our community and region.
- 16 – Some bright kids have to stay home to take care of their younger siblings.
- 17 – Mentors helped my kids find a way out of “poverty.”
- 18 – We don’t make education exciting for kids. We cannot be teaching to a test.
- 19 – Medicaid keeps people in poverty because you have to stay at a certain level in order to qualify.
- 20 – Cannot truly understand poverty unless you have experienced it.
- 21 – Some of us were channeled towards technical school instead of a university.
- 22 – Harvard Study: Good outcomes for children depends almost exclusively on the values and attitudes of parents.
- 23 – Some people will not go outside their own culture to get help.
- 24 – How do we define success? Is it through middle class values or is it through multiple lenses that are more representative of our community.
- 25 – Why are so many young black males in jail?
- 26 – Do we need to expect others to embrace and accept and adhere to a middle class “value” system?
- 27 – Performance Learning Center graduation allowed every student to share and speak at the ceremony > teachers were the key
- 28 – State a goal for Athens that deals wit the dropout rate, pregnancy rate, etc.

