

**Scranton Business Alliance Meeting**  
**April 12, 2007**

**Present:** Bob Ballot, Scranton Tomorrow; *Board Member*; Bill Brennan, *Bold Gold Media/105 The River*; Marie Crispino, *Albright Memorial Library*; Jo Ann Fremiotti, *Scranton Cultural Center*; Katie James, *Scranton Chamber*; Nick Kovalski, *Hilton*; Art Levandoski, *Mall at Steamtown*; Bernie Maopolski, *Visual Impact*; Lynne Mellen, *Silver on Spruce*; Patrick Moran, *WYOU*; Maggie O'Brien, *City of Scranton OECD*; Lori Reed, *City of Scranton OECD*; Jim Walsh, *Mall at Steamtown*; Lee Walter, *First Liberty Bank & Trust*; Amy Zellers, *Mall at Steamtown*.

**Scranton Tomorrow:** Jennifer Battista, *Director of Communications & Special Projects*; Leslie Collins, *Executive Director*.

Leslie Collins welcomed the group and asked each member of the group to introduce him/herself.

Jennifer Battista thanked those businesses that completed and submitted the recent Scranton Business Alliance survey. She reviewed the results of the survey, and pointed out highlights (*more information about the study results can be obtained by contacting Scranton Tomorrow*):

- the response rate for the survey was 14%
- 48% of the people who completed the survey were owners of their business
- 52% of the businesses that responded have been in business for more than 20 years
- survey respondents included representatives from various businesses, including jewelry/accessories, gifts, services, restaurants, historical sites/museums, auto sales/service, the media, financial institutions, real estate, and municipal bodies
- while 48% of respondents noted that their business has improved in the past two years, 44% report that they are not satisfied with their current business volume
- more than half of respondents reported that they do not currently partner with other Scranton businesses, however 78% reported that they would like to partner
- the majority of respondents noted that they participate in the SBA for networking opportunities, information sharing, and as a vehicle to promote the City
- 41% of respondents noted that they valued the "It's Electric" Downtown Map as an initiative of the SBA
- 70% of businesses reported that they would support a membership fee and structure for the SBA

The key finding from the report is that the majority of businesses that responded would like to see the Scranton Business Alliance provide three key components:

1. networking
2. education
3. marketing

Based on the results of the survey, as well as an analysis of the SBA by the Scranton Tomorrow Board and Staff, a 2007 Plan of Work has been developed for the SBA (*an outline of the Scranton Business Alliance 2007 Plan of Work is attached*).

Some key points of the Plan of Work include:

- A steering committee that will provide key input regarding the strategy, priorities, and future direction of the SBA. The steering committee will be comprised of a representative from various types of business in Scranton (*see Plan of Work for details*). **ACTION ITEM: Anyone interested in serving on the steering committee is asked to contact Scranton Tomorrow as soon as possible. The steering committee will meet within two weeks.**
- Funding is crucial to the SBA going forward. Researching grant, sponsorship and other funding opportunities for the SBA will be a top priority of the steering committee and Scranton Tomorrow in the coming months to support key initiatives. **ACTION ITEM: Scranton Tomorrow and the SBA steering committee will plan a fundraising event/mixer for May 2007 to support the SBA website and newsletter initiatives.**

- Scranton Tomorrow will facilitate quarterly SBA meetings to include networking and educational components.
- The SBA steering committee will work with established Scranton events (i.e. La Festa, Race for the Cure, etc.) and plan new holiday events to promote Scranton as a destination to ‘eat, shop, play, stay’. It is important for the SBA to partner with large events in the City.
- Scranton Tomorrow will redesign and update the “All About Scranton” website according to the SBA brand. Once updated, the website will be promoted as THE resource for Scranton business information. Even though the site has not yet been redesigned according to the SBA brand, the events calendar and the business directory are active and being updated. **ACTION ITEM: The website currently contains a business directory. We encourage you to update your business information and include a link to your business’ website in this directory. If you do not know your username and password for this website, please contact Scranton Tomorrow for your login information.**
- Scranton Tomorrow will design an e-newsletter highlighting Scranton activities, businesses and people, and distribute it to various mailing lists. The newsletter, along with a SBA welcome committee/packet, will serve as a vehicle to welcome new businesses to the City. **ACTION ITEM: Please refer to the Plan of Work for a publication and deadline schedule. Businesses are encouraged to submit any and all information and ideas you would like to see in the newsletter.**

Maggie O’Brien reported that the City of Scranton Office of Economic & Community Development, in partnership with the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce and Scranton Tomorrow, are updating the “It’s Electric” Downtown Scranton Map. The updated map will be more user-friendly, and will be targeted to visitors to Scranton. It is scheduled to be complete and ready for distribution by mid-June. If you are interested in sponsoring the map, or working more closely on the project, please contact Scranton Tomorrow or Maggie O’Brien directly.

Scranton Tomorrow and the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce have partnered to offer a scholarship to the upcoming Disney Institute Team Creativity program on April 19. The scholarship was intended for a member of the SBA, and the group present at the meeting nominated Jennifer Battista to attend the program on their behalf and bring the information back to the larger group. (*She thanks you, and promises to report everything she learns!*)

### **\*\*\* UPCOMING EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES\*\*\***

- 4/12/07 – Silver on Spruce moving to N. Washington Avenue, next to Brixx
- 4/26/07 – Mall at Steamtown viewing party for “The Office”
- 5/19/07 – Office cast members at the Mall at Steamtown
- 5/2007 – City Pride Downtown Cleanup
- 5/2007 – SBA Fundraiser
- 5-8/2007 Check out
- 7/2007 – SBA Quarterly Meeting
- 10/2007 – SBA Quarterly Meeting

**For more information,  
check out the Events Calendar at [www.allaboutscranton.com](http://www.allaboutscranton.com)!**