



Chamber of Commerce

Be an original.

2017 - 2019 Strategic Plan

Third Quarter Report (Jan. – Sept. 2017)

Mission:

The Mission of Rowan Chamber of Commerce, Inc., is to enhance the quality of life and nurture a thriving economy through proactive and consensus-building leadership.

We are a business advocacy organization!

2017 Top Priorities:

1. **Rowan Brand** – Promote a positive Rowan Brand with the new “Be an Original” Campaign and leverage our assets for increased community pride.
2. **Quality of Life** – Work with law enforcement on crime prevention programs and youth engagement roles for the business community.
3. **Business Advocacy** - Support pro-business policies that help recruit and retain jobs, investment and talent to our community.
4. **Sane Center** – Be a catalyst for synergies and collaboration in the community.

Business Advocacy

Objective: Be the voice of business at every level of government.

Local & State Government

- Work with our community partners on the launch of the new **Rowan Brand Story** “Be an Original” and encourage public and private sector leaders to implement positive community pride campaigns. 
 - Chamber has new logo to match family look of Rowan Brand
 - Annual Gala, Trade Show & Campaign themes embraced new Rowan Brand
 - PR One group & GroRoCo Mkt assisting with crisis communications and positive messages
- **Monitor and advocate** at all levels of government on issues that affect the cost of doing business, the ease of doing business and the quality of life in Rowan County. 
 - Chamber has taken several pro-business position statements during Legislative Session
 - Supported private sector engagement in City of Salisbury Fibrant analysis
 - Supported “Brunch Bill” passage for City of Salisbury

- Utilize **Government Affairs Committee** volunteers to attend municipal, county and regional government meetings.
 - Volunteers assigned to each municipal government
 - Offered Candidate Forum moderators to all Municipals
- Work with the **Growing Rowan** group to implement the interdependency agreements between municipals and county government.
 - * Accomplished – All Municipals signed agreement at Community Forum on June 23
- Develop a process for identifying **Priority Projects** for the community and be the lead organization in promoting the projects.
 - State and Federal priority projects approved by Board
 - Sec. Trogdon mtg. in Raleigh on June 29
- Strongly advocate for **transportation** projects including, but not limited to:
 - I-85 exit at Old Beatty's Ford Road
 - Rowan County Airport runway extension
 - Advocacy at all meetings with State and Federal officials
- Conduct a **State Legislative Breakfast** annually so that Chamber members can share their views with our state representatives:
 - Power in Partnership breakfast held on February 16, 2017
- Coordinate a trip to Raleigh during the **Legislative Session** to advocate for the business community:
 - North Carolina Chamber Gov. Affairs Conf. on March 8, 2017 – did not attend due to costs
 - NFIB on April 12 – small delegation from Rowan Chamber attended
 - Sec. Trogdon mtg. in Raleigh on June 29
- Plan and implement **Candidate Forums** in conjunction with Catawba College and media partners to educate local voters.
 - City Salisbury Candidate Forum scheduled for Oct. 23 at Catawba
 - Town of Granite Quarry Candidate Forum scheduled for Oct. 17 at Legion Hall
- Produce **Community Forum** events in collaboration with our community partners.
 - June 23 upcoming Growing Rowan forum
 - Promoted various other community forums
- Research **crime prevention programs** from other communities and discuss the appropriate role for the business community with our local law enforcement officials.
 - Crime Stoppers coordination – Q 3
 - Participated in grant proposal for crime prevention and youth engagement
 - Participated in Opioid Summit and added this issue to the top of our Advocacy Priority Project list

Federal & International

- Update the **Federal Priority Project** and Business Advocacy list.
 - 2017-18 Federal Priority Project list in development

- Coordinate a trip to **Washington, D.C.**, in conjunction with the NC Business and Economic Summit.
 - Due to Hurricane Irma, the NC Biz & Ec. Dev. Summit was cancelled
 - Letters sent to Congressional delegation with Priority Projects
- Survey Chamber members to determine if there is an interest in future International Trips.
 - Peru trip scheduled for Oct. 12 - 20
 - 2018 – Iceland trip
- Coordinate an **Inter-City** visit to learn best practices and benchmark against another successful community.
 - No action to date



Education & Workforce Development

Objective: Partner with K-12, public and private higher education, community organizations and local businesses to develop, attract and retain a highly educated and skilled workforce.

K-12 Education

- Work with Kannapolis City Schools (KCS) and Rowan-Salisbury Schools (RSS) on their strategic plans to **improve education and graduation rates** in our region.
 - RSS – numerous strategic initiatives
 - Kannapolis – no action to date
- Help attract **high quality K-12 teachers** to our community:
 - Advocate for increased teacher pay at the State & County levels
 - Accomplished: Award the Teacher of the Year with a \$1,000 stipend for school supplies
 - Accomplished: Coordinate the New Teacher breakfast with display tables for Chamber firms to welcome the newest teachers to our community
 - Create a business incentive package with significant discounts for new teachers
- Market the **technology rich learning opportunities** in our community with one to one laptop/tablets and Fibrant’s 10 Gig service.
 - April 6 – 7 – participated in RSS conference with over 250 educators in Salisbury
- Assist RSS with the **focus on improving literacy** and establishing 100 “hot spot” Wi-Fi tutoring centers in Rowan County.
 - Over 60 hot spots to date
- Connect business people with **student mentoring** opportunities via Communities in Schools, Crosby Scholars and other programs to help prepare our future workforce.
 - Continue to promote all mentoring opportunities via Workforce Dev. Alliance
- Provide administrative support for the newly reorganized **Rowan Partners for Education** (RPE) 501c3 Foundation:
 - Skill Trade Competition on April 1, 2017



- ~~o League of Innovative Schools on April 27, 2017 (April 6 – 7)~~
- o Mother/Daughter Tea on May 13
- ~~o Clubs and Cue Golf Fundraiser on Aug. 19~~
- o Mini-grants to teachers /schools for innovative programs
- o Over \$3,000 raised for Sept. 21 PIP to honor Dr. Lynn Moody

Workforce Development

- Coordinate the **Workforce Development Alliance** to bridge the gap between employers and education/training providers:
 - o Ground Hog Day “**Job Shadow**” program launch on Feb. 2, 2017
Accomplished: 34 students and 18 businesses participated; excellent feedback!
 - o Community **Job Fairs** in April and October 2017
Accomplished: April 19 Job Fair @ West End Plaza
Q 4 – Nov. 8 Fall Job Fair @ First Baptist Church
 - o **RSS Community School Visits** Sept. – April every Wed. morning
*Promoted every week to Board & Workforce Cmt.
- Promote Rowan County’s **FOUR higher education** facilities: Catawba College, Hood Theological Seminary, Livingstone College and Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (RCCC).
 - o Working with all the Higher Ed. Institutions on new Entrepreneurial Development initiative
 - o Promote Higher Ed. news items in enews and on social media
- Advocate for **increased teacher pay at the community college** level and work with RCCC on attracting and retaining quality faculty and staff in our community.
 - o Successfully lobbied for higher pay during State Legislative Session
- In coordination with the **Manufacturers’ Innovation Network**, produce four (4) plant tours annually and promote the National Association of Manufacturers’ (NAM) Day plant tours (first Friday in October).
 - o Manufacturing Day – Oct. 6 – Three local manufacturers are hosting plant tours/events
- Promote the **NC Manufacturing Institute** in coordination with RCCC and RowanWORKS by helping to recruit students interested in manufacturing careers and employers to support the program.
 - *Promoted every Discovery session and recent 100th graduate
- Produce **Agri-business** activities to highlight their economic impact in our community:
 - o **Farmers’ Appreciation Breakfast** on March 16, 2017 – accomplished!
 - o **Farm Tour** on October 17, 2017 – on track
 - o **Ag-Arts Festival** – begin planning for 2018 event



- Secure grants for the implementation of the **EntreRowan** program to encourage entrepreneurial development and support for existing small businesses.
 - Numerous planning meetings held; now working with e2Advisors on Entrepreneurial Development plan
 - County Commission approved new Rowan IDEA Center Phase I funding of \$145,000 on Aug. 7; Chamber is coordinating Phase I organization management
- Produce a quarterly **Economic Indicators** report.
 - First Quarter Report published and distributed
- Produce relevant **seminars and workshops** which benefit the business community.
 - Conducted a Constant Contact Seminar on May 25
- Work with the **Healthy Rowan** initiative to increase workplace wellness programs and advance a healthier community. Present the **Novant Health Corporate Cup** at the Dragon Boat Festival in July 2017.
 - Healthy Rowan theme of April 20 PIP
 - Attend monthly Healthy Rowan meetings
 - Corp. Cup Employee Wellness award presented at Dragon Boat Festival

Leadership Rowan








Continue to produce the highly successful annual **Leadership Rowan** program as an education and awareness opportunity for community stewardship, service on volunteer boards and commissions, and preparation for running for elected office.

- Utilize the **Leadership Rowan Steering Committee** for program oversight.
- Recruit at least 25 “top notch” applicants for the 25th Class of **Leadership Rowan** by June 2017.
 - Accomplished! 29 applicants in 2017-18 Class
- Conduct an **Opening Retreat** with SIMSOC exercise, nine (9) class sessions focusing on different aspects of the community, and graduation ceremony with certificates.
 - Accomplished: Aug. 17 – 18 Retreat Held
- Promote the new Leadership Rowan **Alumni Association** and organize quarterly meetings in 2017.
 - Alumni sub-cmt. focused on 25th Anniversary Celebration.
- Celebrate Leadership Rowan’s **25th Anniversary** on August 22, 2017.
 - Accomplished: 25th Anniversary Celebration held on Aug. 22; over 100 attendees; generated \$1,500 for scholarship funds

Member Services

Objective: Provide a return on investment (ROI) with valuable member benefits and programs.

Networking Events

- Produce an **Annual Gala Meeting** to celebrate accomplishments, announce new action plans and recognize key volunteers and businesses on January 12, 2017.
*Accomplished: Nearly 300 attendees; \$15,000 net income 
- Produce nine (9) **Power in Partnership** breakfast meetings, featuring excellent speakers, exclusive sponsorship opportunities and high-level networking opportunities.
*Sept. 2016 – May 2017 series avg. 132 attendees
*Sept. 2017 – 130 attendees; need sponsors 
- Produce eleven (11) **Business After Hours** mixer networking events. 
 - Feb. – Rowan Museum & 100th Cheerwine – 80 attendees
 - March – BBB @ Ben Mynant – 100 attendees
 - April – Fesperman Insurance in Rockwell – 60 attendees
 - May – in conjunction with Trade Show with over 500 attendees
 - June – CHS Ribbon Cutting – 125 attendees
 - July – NC Transportation Museum – 120 attendees
 - Aug. – Trinity Oaks w/ Campaign kick-off – 150 attendees
 - Sept. – St. John – 82 attendees
 - Oct. – Comfort Suites
- Produce eight (6) **Women in Business** networking and professional development events. 
 - * March 30 – Fibrant sponsored Lunch & Learn with sold-out attendance (40)
 - * April 24 – Celebrate Women at Hospice House
 - * Sept. 27 – Belk & Novant Health
- Produce four (4) **Men in Business** networking and professional development events. 
 - No action to date
- Produce an annual **Trade Show** with valuable sponsorship opportunities, seminars and display booths for Chamber members to showcase their latest products and services on May 4, 2017. 
 - Accomplished! Over 60 booths with 500 attendees; exceeded budget expectations
- Produce an annual **Dragon Boat Festival** to increase awareness about High Rock Lake and provide valuable sponsorship and corporate team-building opportunities on July 29, 2017 
 - Accomplished: Over 3,500 attendees with 25 teams; net income = \$13,000

Membership Development

- Recommend a new **Tiered Dues** structure in coordination with the Finance Cmt. to determine a cost/value proposition that members would support and one that has a positive financial outcome for the Chamber by June 2017.
 - *Researched other chambers; organized task force; meetings on Feb.22 & March 22
 - * Approved by the Board on June 19
 - * Implemented with Total Resource Campaign with a goal of 10% conversions for 2018
- Revise format for **Total Resource Campaign** with new dues structure and volunteer commitment timetable by June 2017.
 - Accomplished: 50 New Members and over \$100,000 total investments
- Implement new dues structure into the **professional sales program** to provide year-round customer service systems for recruitment, retention and sponsorship packages.
 - Accomplished: New Marketing materials produced
- Improve “**Fast Track First Year**” member retention system with the goal of 80% retention with first year members.
 - Received national recognition from ACCE for membership retention
- Offer **New Member Receptions** every quarter to welcome our newest members and new managers/volunteers.
 - *March 30 – co-sponsored by NH & CHS; 20 attendees
 - * June 22 – co-sponsored by NH & CHS; 15 attendees
 - * Sept. 28 – co-sponsored by NH & CHS: 35 attendees
- Promote the newly reorganized **Young Professionals** program to retain “under 40 year-olds” in our community and encourage involvement in the Chamber.
 - *April 29 – New Sarum one year anniversary
 - *July 29 – Dragon Boat Team
 - * Doc’s and Hop’s – coordination with NH Foundation program
- Staff the **Minority Business Council** to support and expand minority businesses in the community:
 - Hold ~~Quarterly~~ monthly meetings in 2017 – Feb. 14, March 21, June 20, Aug. 15, Sept. 19
 - Host an annual “Meet & Greet” – scheduled for Oct. 5
 - Produce a Minority Business Directory in conjunction with the Chamber’s Directory in January 2017 -- accomplished

Benefits & Services



- Expand the **Ambassadors’ Program** to include:
 - Teams of volunteers to attend ribbon cuttings in geographic areas.
 - **Operation “Thank You”** - Personalized Membership Directory deliveries to new members. – accomplished
- Produce an annual **Membership Directory** with Relocation Guide. – accomplished
- Promote the **Profile Display** brochure rack and member referrals. -- ongoing

- Develop **Affinity Marketing** partnerships with discounted products and services for member firms.
 - Added Workers Comp plan
 - Snow Benefits has new health insurance plan under review
- Develop and implement an effective Communications Plan for member benefits, events and services:
 - Capture **positive testimonials** from customers to be used in Chamber communication pieces
 - Devote additional time and resources to **social media** outlets to better target specific programs.
- Change the Chamber's logo and all print and digital marketing materials to match the new **Rowan Brand** and develop a "good news" format for sharing positive news stories.
 - In process
- Update the Chamber's **mission statement** and add a **value statement** that better reflects the current organization.
- Conduct **member surveys** via electronic tools to determine member satisfaction rates.

Administration & Finance

Objective: Provide the resources necessary to run the organization effectively.


- Utilize the Finance Committee to ensure strong fiscal and operational management with at least six months operating income held in reserve accounts.
 - Finance Cmt. meets on regular basis
- Conduct an annual audit or outside review of the Chamber's financial situation.
 - Accomplished – Financial Review presented to Board on May 15
- Research viable grant funding opportunities for programs that align with the Chamber's mission statement.
 - Participated in several County & Rowan-Salisbury School Grant proposals
- Increase the non-dues income revenue to 60% of total budget by 2017.
 - On track for successful 2017 year-end
- Work with our community partners in the Gateway Building to provide meeting space for our member firms.
 - New CVB proposal for meeting room fees presented to Board; implemented on Sept. 18

- Research the possibility of opening a South Rowan office space to better serve Chamber members in that area of our community. 
- Recruit and retain a highly qualified Chamber staff to provide excellent customer service for our members. 
- Host the Carolina Chamber of Commerce Executives (CACCE) Conference in April 2017 
 - Accomplished – over 140 attendees; largest CACCE conference ever!
- Win the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) “Chamber of the Year” award by December 2018 
 - Received award for retention; however, did not qualify for COY
- Become an accredited chamber through the U.S. Chamber by December 2019. 

Approved by the Board of Directors on December 19, 2016

For more information: Rowan County Chamber of Commerce, 204 E. Innes St., Salisbury, NC 28145-0559; PH: 704.633.4221; info@rowanchamber.com ; www.rowanchamber.com

Code

 Accomplished  In Process  Not yet complete