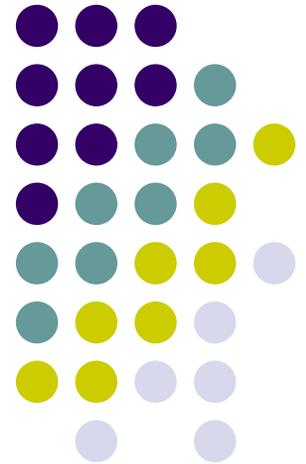


# FY 2008 PROGRAM OF WORK

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(Final Draft - December, 2007)

# What is the Newport County Chamber of Commerce?



The Newport County Chamber of Commerce is a member-driven and professionally staffed nonprofit association of business people committed to improving the economic climate and the quality of life in Newport County and Rhode Island. The Chamber was organized in 1927 in Newport by a group of business leaders who saw the need for an organization to represent business interests and to coordinate community events in Newport and later across Newport County.

The Chamber incorporated as a 501(c)(6) business association. It serves businesses and organizations as members in the communities of Newport, Middletown, Portsmouth, Jamestown, Little Compton and Tiverton. Membership is not limited to the geographic area of the Newport County and is recommended for any business or organization that desires a business presence in the Newport County region. Membership is open to any business, nonprofit organization or through the Friends of the Chamber program.

# 2007/2008 Chamber Board Officers



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## **Executive Director**

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# MISSION STATEMENT



**MISSION STATEMENT** – The Newport County Chamber of Commerce is organized to advance the business, civic and economic vitality of Newport County and Rhode Island.

The Chamber's primary mission is to promote a healthy economic climate of goods, jobs, capital creation and honest, responsive government.

# What Is FY 2008 PROGRAM OF WORK



- **FY2008 Program of Work** is a direct outcome of the yearly planning efforts of the Chamber staff and Board of Directors.
- **FY2008 Program of Work** will also reflect program and service recommendations from the June 11, 2007 Board Strategic Planning Retreat and report entitled, Chamber Board Roadmap 2007 and also the responses from the July 2007 Chamber Member Survey.
- **FY2008 Program of Work** also reflects the comments, critiques, and recommendations that the Chamber has received from the general membership during the course of the proceeding year.
- **FY2008 Program of Work** goals, objectives and action items will be reviewed and measured for performance by the Board of Directors.

# 2007 Chamber Board Road Map



In June 2007, the Chamber Board met at the Preservation Society for Newport County Headquarters to participate in a Board planning session to review Board practices, procedures and goals for 2008 and beyond.

The goal of the session was to create an agenda for the 2008 Board to help lead chamber operations and better define their role as chamber and business leaders in Newport County.

# 2007 Chamber Board Road Map



## What is the Newport County Board Chamber Agenda For 2008?

### Chamber Board Meetings

1. Board meetings should encourage less staff presentations and more Board interchange
2. More Board meetings held outside chamber building
3. Invite more new Chamber members to Board meetings
4. Board & industry members provide business/industry briefings

### Chamber Operations

1. The Board should consider attending as Chamber representative member business association meetings.
2. Chamber should reduce charitable programs (unless member driven) and focus more on business member services.
3. Board members (through committees) should play larger role in promoting successful Chamber events, i.e. Annual Dinner, Expo, Golf Tournament, etc.
4. Chamber Board should meet/collaborative with NCCVB and PSNC Boards to improve communications and operational efficiencies.
5. Review forming industry-specific committees.
6. Revisit Chamber Building Committee

### Board Membership

1. Board Members should make every effort to attend all Board meetings
2. Board membership should reflect the industry, geographic and small business profiles of general membership.
3. Review Chamber By-Laws to include more local government Board participation
4. Consider having Board Members chair key chamber initiatives to drive action, i.e. LNG, transportation, utilities, health insurance, etc.
5. Board members should actively service on at least one Chamber committee

# 2007 Business/Market Survey Response Summary



- Many members join the chamber out of a sense of civic and community pride
- Business leads and networking opportunity are highly valued membership benefits
- Product and service discounts are seen as important chamber benefits
- The Annual Business Expo is rated as the most important member event
- Chamber's leadership in economic development activities was highly valued
- Monthly Flyers were the most read chamber member correspondence

# FY 2008

# PROGRAM OF WORK



The Program of Work is divided into five strategic elements:

- General Operations & Financial Stability
- Membership Growth & Retention
- Chamber Marketing & Communications
- Economic Development & Community Planning
- Legislative Advocacy

Each strategic element will be divided into program and service objectives that will be overseen for implementation by **Lead Staff Members**. Most objectives will be assigned specific timeframes for implementation and future benchmarking.

## **ELEMENT ONE: General Operations & Financial Stability**



***Strategic Objective*** – *Maintain the highest standards of financial management while initiating new and innovative programs to sustain Chamber physical plant and member resources.*

- Develop & implement 3-Year Capital Improvement Budget for parking, foyer, offices and member conference rooms by 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. (Lead Staff – Stokes)
- Review & revise chamber staffing to enhance membership retention, communications and office efficiency and operations by end of FY2007. (Lead Staff – Stokes)
- Review all service contracts to ensure full cost benefits of services rendered to the Chamber by 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. (Lead Staff – Sullivan)
- Improve & expand Corporate Sponsorship Program (Lead Staff – Sullivan)
- Review the creation of a Membership Retention Committee. (Lead Staff – Sullivan)
- Continue to expand alternative revenue programs & sponsorships. (Lead Staff – Stokes/Sullivan)
- Organize & Implement a New Member Blitz by 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2008. (Lead Staff – N. Babcock/Sullivan)
- Review the creation of an incentive program for members to refer new members by 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. (Lead Staff – Babcock/Sullivan)

## ELEMENT TWO: Membership Growth & Retention



**Strategic Objective-** *Provide opportunities to promote member businesses in Newport County and to do business with chamber members. Provide greater information access to members and provide information to meet member's needs. Promote products services and achievements of our members.*

- Revised & expand the Member-To-Member Discount Program by 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter  
(Lead Staff – Membership Manager)
- Reorganize & prioritize staffing to reflect a strategic focus on membership retention by end FY2007. (Lead Staff – Stokes/ Membership Manager)
- Produce 2nd Annual Excellence in Business Awards to recognize outstanding member achievements (Lead Staff – Sullivan)
- Increase member seminars and workshops (Lead Staff – Membership Manager/Hawkins)
- Ensure that Business After Hours are hosted in each Newport County community  
(Lead Staff - Membership Manager/Hawkins)
- Revises & expand Gift Certificate Program to include all eligible members by 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (Lead Staff - Membership Manager/Hawkins)
- Revise Web Site to improve member services, visitor access to information and banner sales (Leas Staff – Stokes)
- Develop comprehensive new member sales program that assists in achieving new member revenue as detailed in FY2008 budget by 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. (Lead Staff – Babcock)
- Grow general membership base by 2% in FY2008 (All Staff)

## **ELEMENT THREE: Chamber Marketing & Communications**



**Strategic Objective** – *To develop a comprehensive & effective marketing and communications plan to promote business benefits of chamber membership and reinforce in the state-wide market that the Newport County Chamber is a vital business growth leader.*

- Revise 2007 Marketing Services Contract to provide event and project based marketing and promotional services for chamber programs and events that are the most relevant to member satisfaction and participation. (Lead Staff – Stokes/ Membership Manager)
- Develop a 2008 Marketing Plan that prioritizes member retention & non-dues revenue by 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. (Lead Staff – Stokes/Membership Manager)
- Enhance chamber sponsorships as marketing opportunities for members. (Lead Staff – Sullivan/Membership Manager)
- Research Providence and state-wide business marketing events for increased chamber exposure, i.e. Providence Chamber Expo, SBA events, economic forums, etc. (Lead Staff – Stokes/Membership Manager)
- Expand member affinity programs with other media resources, i.e. Jamestown Press, Providence Business News, Cox, etc. by 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. (Lead Staff - Membership Manager/Hawkins)
- Develop marketing and sustained advertising and media initiatives to better inform Chamber members and the general public about the role, goals, programs and results achieved by the Chamber as well as promote working together to achieve a positive spirit of community. Implement plan by 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. (Lead Staff – Stokes/ Membership Manager)



## **ELEMENT FOUR – Economic Development & Community Planning**

**Strategic Objective** - *Continue to promote those economic, business and community planning activities that create qualitative and diversified economic growth for all of Newport County. (Lead Staff – Stokes)*

- Continue to promote quarterly member lecture series on the “State of the Newport County Economy” inviting professional speakers providing useful insight in key business and economic development issues.
- Continue to promote & grow event participation in the Annual Excellence in Business Awards
- Participate with the Town of Middletown in implementing the Aquidneck Corporate Park capital improvement plans and town-wide business promotion programs.
- Continue to promote Newport North End Plan with particular emphasis on assisting the City of Newport in developing a acquisition and development plan for former Navy Hospital.
- Assist City of Newport in developing creative public parking and traffic management programs.
- Work with City of Newport and Newport Redevelopment Agency on implementation of Central Newport Plan implementation.
- Continue to coordinate the Melville Marine Center expansion plan with Town of Portsmouth, State of Rhode Island and US Navy
- Assist the State of Rhode Island and Aquidneck Island Planning Commission in reviewing regional options for utility improvements on Aquidneck Island.
- Assist the Town of Tiverton in reestablishing economic development



## ELEMENT FIVE – Legislative Advocacy

**Strategic Objective** - *To represent the business interests of Chamber members before local, state, and federal authorities in order to actively pursue legislative initiatives that promote a fair and competitive business environment within Newport County and Rhode Island. (Lead Staff – Stokes)*

- Have Chamber Government Lobbyist host an issues briefing for Executive Committee, Board and Legislative Committee members by 1st Quarter 2008.
- Continue to closely monitor and work with RI Congressional Delegation regarding Department of Defense and US Navy investments in Newport County.
- Continue to advocate for local, state, and federal funding support for those programs and investments that best promote sound economic development and business competitiveness.
- Direct Chamber Legislative Committee to review mechanisms to increase business competitiveness in critical areas including:
  - State Fire Code Revisions
  - State Health Care Revisions
  - Weekly Rental Policies – Newport
  - Public Parking Policies – Newport
  - Utility Capacity – Aquidneck Island