

**PIKE COUNTY MARCELLUS SHALE TASK FORCE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Subject: **Economic Development Committee Report to the
Pike County Marcellus Shale Task Force**

Date: **July 20, 2011**

Committee Chairman – Ron Schmalzle

The Committee met on June 7, 2011 at the Pocono Lake Region Chamber of Commerce office.

Building on the key points of discussion at the March Committee meeting, the Committee members felt it important to identify several action items which would be the focus of the Committee as it moves forward.

The Committee came to a consensus on the following identified action items:

- Develop a list of gas industry workforce needs as well as local business directory of services. Knowing what workforce opportunities there may be for our local small businesses will be important as many of these will be impacted positively. Additionally, having a list of local services and providing a venue for making the connections between the industry and the services available will be critical to optimizing opportunities.
- Create opportunities for educating local youth and/or residents in the career fields needed for the industry. Look for partners in the local high schools and academic institutions.
- Develop a PR piece that can be used by local businesses, the county and chambers of commerce to effectively communicate a positive image of Pike County to the mid-Atlantic region to protect tourism opportunities. We are finding that the outside message relating to Pike County and Marcellus is not good and the farther away from the county the worse the message is. The brochure needs to be a quality piece, knowledge based which highlights Pike County's image -- high quality natural resources -- and dispels some of the inaccuracies related to Marcellus which might be impacting tourism and business opportunities to the county.
- Seek potential funding sources to assist with preparedness for potential impacts on our tourism industry. Talk with legislators about this.
- Schedule a small bus tour for the Committee in Fall 2011 to visit and talk with tourism related industries in the Bradford-Lycoming-Susquehanna County region.

Our Committee felt that the main goal of the Task Force and the Committees should be to gain knowledge focusing on unbiased information and then to act as an on-going, public relations information resource. A STRONG education program for the public will be important. Additionally,

we need to keep lines of communication open with similar Task Forces in other areas in order to learn from their experiences – how they approach both problems and opportunities.

The Committee stated that they could not think of a “more important issue that will touch county residents and businesses in the near future than Marcellus Shale activities.” It will be important to keep the information accurate, unbiased and regularly before the public.

The next meeting of the Committee will be in September after the busy summer business season.