

City of Richmond Committee Overview

MISSION STATEMENT

Business First – Richmond and this committee’s activities are dedicated to supporting the success and growth of businesses in the City of Richmond. In coordination with development professionals in the City of Richmond, volunteers conduct face-to-face interviews with businesses to help better the understanding of individual company’s critical success factors and create a better business climate both in the City and the Greater Richmond region.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Completion of all visits assigned by the City of Richmond Department of Economic & Community Development within thirty days of issuance.
2. Thank the assigned businesses for their commitment to and investment in the local economy.
3. Through a face-to-face conversational style interview, gather company information and attitudes and opinions about doing business in the City of Richmond and the Greater Richmond Region.
4. Assist the business community by creating a single point of contact for services and information in the Department of Economic and Community Development
5. Support the City’s goal of completing 100 visits by June 30, 2012 and providing feedback to the Department’s staff on key issues.
6. Each committee member will achieve their individual goals on a monthly basis while enjoying the networking opportunities on their company visits and the fellowship of the committee members.

Committee Meeting Calendar

Committee meetings are held monthly (third Thursday) at 8:00 am at Main Street Station, 1500 E. Main Street, Richmond, VA in the Third Floor Large Conference Room. Participants are asked to select at least one, but no more than five companies to call on over the next month.

September 15, 2011
October 20, 2011
November 17, 2011
December 15, 2011
January 19, 2012

February 16, 2012
March 15, 2012
April 19, 2012
May 17, 2012
June 21, 2012

Member Guidelines

- As a member of the Business First committee, you have volunteered to meet with companies on behalf of the City of Richmond to conduct an interview regarding their opinion on the various services provided by the City and the region. In doing so, you will be representing the City and helping project a positive image. The promotion of your company is secondary to your primary mission.
- Each committee member will be responsible for contacting and establishing meetings with their assigned companies. A letter of introduction, complete with a pre-addressed stamped envelope, will be included with each package. It should be sent by you prior to your visit advising the company contact that you will be calling them in the near future to set up a visit.
- Mail the letters as soon after each monthly meeting as possible. Wait five days, and then call the company referencing the letter.
- When you contact the company, confirm the information (address, time, title, phone, e-mail, etc.) and tell them you would like to schedule time (approximately 30-40-minutes) for an interview. Let them know that this is an opportunity to provide direct feedback to the City and to discuss any business issues they would like addressed.
- A personal visit is the most effective way to generate feedback. If after three telephone calls you are unable to reach your contact, try to interview another leader within the business or stop by the location to schedule a visit (or possibly meet with the contact at that time). Every effort should be made to conduct a face-to-face visit. If the company continues to be unresponsive, contact the Economic & Community Development office and make arrangements for another assignment.
- If you are comfortable, enter the visit information directly into the Executive Pulse database, or bring the completed survey with you to the next volunteer meeting. If you are unable to attend the next meeting and choose not to enter your own data, make advance arrangements to return your survey to the Economic & Community Development office.
- If an issue or concern is uncovered during your visit, do not wait until the next meeting to share the information. Please contact Sheila Shepperson immediately to advise of the situation and request assistance.
- If you find that the company you are assigned is out of business, please note that on your file and bring it with you to the next meeting.
- The Richmond Business First committee has ten monthly meetings scheduled. If you miss more than three meetings without an excused absence, you may be asked to resign from the committee.

Contact Information

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City of Richmond Department of Economic & Community Development

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