

WAYNE TOMORROW!

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Wayne Tomorrow! A county-sponsored, community-based collaboration focused on the projects, resources and infrastructure needed to move Wayne County, its people, its culture and its economy into a vibrant future.

Top Stories . . .



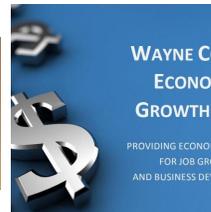
Task Forces, County Prepare for Outreach at Kick-Off Meeting



Task Forces Turn to Business, Community for input



Commissioners Discuss Wayne Tomorrow! with Chamber, Businesses



New Veterinary Clinic Taps Fund to Build Practice
[\(hyperlink to story\)](#)

Task Forces, County Prepare for Outreach at Kick-Off Meeting



Wayne Tomorrow! launched into the new year with a kick-off meeting with many of the community members who serve as co-chairs of the six Task Forces, which include Agriculture, Transportation, Housing, Community Hubs, Talent & Financial Resources Development, and Community Health & Wellness.

The meeting gave the co-chairs an opportunity to report on their early efforts to address their major topics, and provided county officials a chance to guide their work of the Task Forces moving forward.

The county is planning to conduct a series of outreach sessions in the spring in order to share information with the community about Wayne Tomorrow! addressing where it has come from and where it is headed, as well as to highlight the changed mindset and the successful collaborations cultivated by the initiative.

To that end, the Task Forces have been asked to formulate a “framing question” to focus on an overall vision and how each committee will define the success of their ventures.

The co-chairs have been invited to participate, when possible, in the three-session Spring Outreach 2020, which includes presentations at Wallenpaupack Area South Elementary School in Newfoundland, Preston Elementary School in Lakewood and Western Wayne High School in South Canaan in April.



Task Forces Turn to Businesses, Community Members for Info

With the formation of the six Task Forces, each set of co-chairs began to explore the nature of their specific issues and realized more information is needed to make informed decisions about how to improve the situation.

While all of the groups started collecting data and other information, two of the Task Forces went directly to the community with Focus Groups.



First, the Transportation Task Force gathered many of the county’s largest employers, including Wayne Memorial Hospital, Woodloch Resort, Walmart, McDonald’s and others, to talk about the challenges transportation plays in their efforts to recruit and retain quality employees. As a result, the Task Force has developed a survey for employers to assess the broader need for transportation services, which will be published shortly.

Second, the Community Hubs Task Force held a “listening session” at the Community Library in Hamlin, where more than a dozen or business owners, organizational leaders, The Hideout Community Manager, students and others met to discuss how the community and county could create a place where people of all ages can connect.

A group of businesses, educators and students in the Hawley area are working on a similar project, in collaboration with the Community Hubs Task Force. They, too, have created [a community survey](#), which residents are encourage to complete online.

www.WayneTomorrow.com

Commissioners Discuss Wayne Tomorrow! with Chamber, Business Community

Wayne County Commissioners Brian Smith, Joseph Adams and Jocelyn Cramer addressed the Chamber of the Northern Poconos annual meeting in January to talk about Wayne Tomorrow!

Commissioner Smith discussed how Wayne Tomorrow! began five years ago with the prior board of commissioners, including Smith, now State Rep. Jonathan Fritz and Wendell Kay. He talked about how he and Mike Uretsky, a professor from New York University, sat down for coffee and started the conversation that would become Wayne Tomorrow!



He said the natural gas industry divided the community to a certain extent, but Wayne Tomorrow! found common ground for both government agencies and nonprofit groups to work together. Smith challenged the notion that the initiative goes beyond the scope of the county commissioners. He said it's just like picking up a piece of paper off the floor, it may not be in your job description, but picking it up is in everyone's best interest.

Commissioner Jocelyn Cramer, who joined the board in January, highlighted the C-PACE (commercial property-assessed clean energy) program. C-PACE allows businesses to finance energy upgrades through a voluntary assessment on their county tax bill. The program, she said, allows companies to upgrade their facilities, loosen their cash flow and sell the residual debt to the next owner of the property. [Learn more at the Sustainable Energy Fund.](#)

Commissioner Adams discussed the Wayne Economic Development Fund, financed by the county for the past two years, and designed to help new and expanding businesses cover loan fees and other expenses. He said, "One hundred thousand dollars became \$6 million in investments: 21 businesses; 100 new jobs. That's what Wayne Tomorrow! is about."

Wayne County Economic Growth Fund Profile

Friends of Life Veterinary Clinic, Honesdale



HONESDALE – Dr. Amy Platko-Williams, DVM, came to Wayne County to practice her craft 20 years ago, serving area residents and their pets at an established clinic.

As she considered her next step, she said she felt confident she was ready to manage a practice on her own, and turned to the Wayne County Economic

Growth Fund for help.

Initially, Platko-Williams intended to build a new facility for the Friends of Life Veterinary Clinic, but soon realized that was too ambitious to start, and decided to rent a space first.

The county awarded her a grant for the loan fees associated with securing a storefront at the CARQUEST Plaza on Grandview Avenue in Honesdale and outfitting it to deliver comprehensive care and advanced treatment for small animals, except birds or reptiles.

Platko-Williams said the extra cash to cover those fees insures a better cash flow for her business so she can open with the confidence that she can stay afloat long enough to get the new practice on its feet.

Community Foundation Accepts Donation to New Wayne Tomorrow! Fund



Turano Insurance made a donation of \$1000.00 to the Wayne Tomorrow! Fund at the Wayne County Community Foundation. This fund was established in 2019 as a field of interest fund at the Foundation for donors to be able to support projects that are identified as a priority across the county by the Wayne Tomorrow! initiative. Call the foundation at 570-251-9993 to learn more.

"Basically," she said, "I am going to pay my six employees out of that savings."

She plans to use this 'seed money' as a stepping stone. Platko-Williams said the rental space will give her time to build the practice and a track record as a business owner in order to provide lenders with real information when it is time to expand.

[Applications are available through the Wayne Economic Development Corp.](#)