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## **MINUTES**

Thursday February 09, 2006  
8:00 am – 9:30 am  
TBG – Terrace Room

- Joe Perlaky called the meeting to order at 8:07 am
- Attendance: (23)
  - Neil Reid, Mike Carroll, Joe Perlaky, Jeff Creque, Bob Feldstein, Tony Keil, Andy Keil, Beth Fausey, Tom Wardell, Charles Krause, Walt Krueger, Sandy Knitz, Paula Ross, Scott Leisner, Judy Sharpton, Jonathon Frantz, John Snyder, Bill Dearing, Mary Donnell, John Borrow II, Mike Driehorst, Stacy Kess and John Witte.
- Report: Champion
  - No Report
- Branding: Visitation highlights by John Snyder
  - Some greenhouse addresses incorrect, changes are notated
  - Occasionally owners unavailable or not present
  - Common messages: High utility costs, not enough business, more information needed on cluster mission, misconception about cluster being a CO-OP, assuming \$ in joining cluster, open to guidance, alternatives/suggestions, increasing time demands to run business with less net profit, minimal sibling interest to continue family business.
- Energy Committee: 84 surveys were sent to the Maumee Valley Growers asking for information on individual energy usage and insurance costs. 18 were returned or 22%. Of those, 9 use propane or 11%.
- Energy Impact: The City of Sandusky and Erie County are evaluating the ROI of a new facility as replacement to their existing inefficient greenhouse. Grant opportunities, energy audit needs, ARS collaboration and other considerations are part of their due diligence planning.
- Energy Audit: Dave Beck and Rick Mazur of CIFT will speak before the Advisory Group on March 2 regarding typical costs related to greenhouse energy audits. They will also give us some sense of how many projects they can effectively handle throughout the year or at any given time. This would include assisting with the application submissions.
- John Witte, Ohio Certified PV Installer and President of Advance Distributed Generation discussed some of the opportunities available to those growers considering applying for Ohio's Office of Efficiency grants. See link below for more details.  
[http://www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/oeef/elfgrant.htm#Residential,\\_Commercial,\\_Industrial,\\_Institutional\\_Renewable\\_Energy\\_Incentives\\_Renewable\\_Energy\\_Notice\\_of\\_Funding\\_Available\\_\(NOEA\\_06-04\)](http://www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/oeef/elfgrant.htm#Residential,_Commercial,_Industrial,_Institutional_Renewable_Energy_Incentives_Renewable_Energy_Notice_of_Funding_Available_(NOEA_06-04))  
Generally, energy audits are not required by the state but are a necessary first step of the USDA grant
- The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 am.
- Minutes submitted by Joe Perlaky

*ALL MEETINGS ARE THE 2<sup>ND</sup> THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH, 8 AM TBG. OUR NEXT MEETING IS MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup>.*