

County business roundtable starts

By TIM CARVELL
STAFF WRITER

When area business leaders convene for the first meeting of the Oakland County Business Roundtable Wednesday, nothing less than the future of business in the county will be on the agenda.

The roundtable, organized by County Executive L. Brooks Patterson, will center on issues of economic development and attracting outside investment to the county. Business leaders who plan to participate said they were confident that the meeting would produce concrete results for the community.

Al Dittrich, owner of Dittrich Olds in Waterford Township, said he is looking forward to solving some of the problems facing the county's businesses.

"We're going to cover a million things that interest me, especially creating jobs in Oakland County

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Linda Jolicoeur, owner
Target Equipment Leasing

and helping people get through red tape," Dittrich said. "It should be a great thing for the county."

Not all of the panelists will come from big businesses, however. Since small businesses make up a sizable portion of Oakland County's economy, they will be represented at the meeting by, among others, Linda Jolicoeur.

Jolicoeur, owner of Target Equipment Leasing Inc., in Southfield,

is the incoming president of the Association of Women Businesswomen.

"I hope that the roundtable will address economic and legal issues that affect small businesses," Jolicoeur said. "I know there are a lot of Fortune 500 companies in Oakland County, but there are also a lot of small businesses that need attention."

A strong economic climate

means growth for everybody, which is one reason why Fred Seeley is looking forward to the discussion. Seeley, of Ludwig and Karas Real Estate, said the roundtable's chief benefit is the dialogue it will create between business and government.

"I think it will give us a voice in county government and give us a chance to find out what's going on in the county," Seeley said. "It's a two-way street."

Since the economy also depends on assistance from public agencies, Brent Bair, managing director of the county's road commission, will also attend. Bair said he would bring no proposals of his own to the meeting, but would work with the business leaders to form solutions.

"We're going to start with a clean slate, and look at all modes of transportation," Bair said. "I'm really excited to be participating."

Banks may come to you, if state House approves

Dad won't have to cash his paycheck at the bar if two Senate bills are passed by the state House of Representatives.

"These bills would allow banks and savings & loans to create mobile units to take to nursing homes or to a shop on payday," said Sen. Fred Dillingham, R-Fowlerville.

Dillingham guided SB 641 and 642 through his Corporations Committee and to 36-0 Senate passage Thursday.

"They would allow banks to go into a Brinks-type business and move money. They could also serve the home-bound by helping them close a mortgage or sell a house. They allow banks to provide more consumer service," said

Dillingham.

Impetus for the bill came from a small Adrian bank which couldn't afford to build branches, he said.

Dillingham noted many banks near factories cash checks on payday and rely on patrons' spending a good chunk of it before heading home.

Mobile banking units would be a convenience to small businesses as well as workers, Dillingham said.

"When I was in the hardware business, I carried extra cash on weekends — more cash than I felt comfortable with — to cash checks for customers," he said. The bills had no opposition.

Road work comments sought by June 23

Public comments are being sought on a massive list of road improvements scheduled to occur in 1994, 1995 and 1996.

The period set aside to receive public comments began Tuesday, June 1, and continues to June 23.

Written comments should be sent to John Amberger, executive director of the South East Michigan Council of Governments, 660 Plaza Drive, Suite 1900, Detroit, 48226.

Spoken comments will be heard

at SEMCOG's Transportation Advisory Council meeting at 9:30 a.m. June 23, at the same address.

The list of projects SEMCOG has decided to complete in Oakland, Macomb, Livingston, Monroe, St. Clair, Washtenaw and

Wayne counties is available for public scrutiny at several locations.

The closest one for Oakland County residents is at the county planning office on Telegraph in Pontiac. Call 858-0720.

Exchange students coming

Host families in Oakland County are being sought for exchange students from Europe, Asia, South America and Australia for the 1993-94 school year in a program sponsored by the American Intercultural Student Exchange.

The students, aged 15-18 years, will arrive in the USA in August 1993 and return home in June 1994. They all speak English, and have medical insurance and spending money.

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