

~NEWS IN BRIEF~

A Quarterly Report in brief by George Dunn, President/CEO, Middle Michigan Development Corporation

At the Annual Meeting of the MMDC Board of Directors, the following officers were elected:

- Chairman - Rick Barz, President & CEO, Isabella Bank and Trust
- Vice Chairman - Jim Allen, President, Chemical Bank - Clare
- Secretary - Steve Grim, President, Farwell Village Council
- Treasurer - Terry Stacy, President, Mt. Pleasant Industrial Development Corporation

Directors elected to three-year terms were: Brent Case, Executive Director, MidMichigan Innovation Center; Steve Stark, Partner, Clare Northern Group, LLC; and Wayne Hemminger, Vice President, Commercial Lending, Commercial Bank.

Al Kaufmann, Director of Child and Family Services, Listening Ear, Inc., was presented with a Life Membership to MMDC's Board of Directors in recognition of the invaluable support he has given MMDC, both as a private citizen and while serving as Mayor and City Commissioner with the City of Mt. Pleasant.

The following reports MMDC's most significant activities of this past quarter (January-March/2008) as well as projects currently in process:

The MMDC website (www.mmdc.org) now reproduces 129 sets of demographic and economic data, posted for Isabella County, Clare County and Central Michigan Region. The building availability data will be updated within the next 2 weeks. This resource is accessed regularly by a variety of interests, and those most interesting to MMDC are the corporate inquiries and the number who are repeat visitors. This approach continues to be the most widely accepted and used by relocation consultants and with the regular revisions the material is always accurate.

A major project for The Center for Applied Research and Technology has been proposed and has been met with MMDC support and endorsement. It is, at this very time, moving through a review process by Central Michigan University before presenting the issue to the board of Trustees, scheduled for April 23/24. If agreed to by CMU, significant tax base will also be created supporting the continued activities of the CART (research facility) as well as being spread among the several taxing authorities. It will

also offer numerous CMU student internships, enhancing their “real world” experiences.

Presented to the CMU Trustees’ meeting will also be some minor revisions to the *Protective Covenants*, all directed toward relaxing the requirements of the tenants. These suggested modifications were prepared by MMDC in cooperation with CMU, itself and in an attempt to make the project area more attractive to potential tenants.

MMDC continues to seek ways of expanding the industrial parcel inventory in both Clare and Isabella Counties. Several existing site owners have been approached to permit MMDC to act as their agent in exposing the sites’ availability. In addition, there are two projects in the planning stages for Clare County - a new industrial park in Harrison, and both the expansion of an existing park in Clare as well as discussions regarding a new park development. As with any offering, available industrial and technology sites are the inventory to be offered, thus MMDC is heavily engaged in these discussions.

MMDC:

- Is assisting in the writing of a grant which would fund a feasibility study for a business incubator to be located in Clare County and has been working with Harrison officials regarding its identity study;
- Continues its industrial retention program activities which has thus far resulted in providing direct assistance for business plan development, tax abatement applications, financing resources, expansion plans;
- Has assisted 3 companies connecting them with a west coast company who is looking for suppliers in Michigan for Next Energy;
- Coordinated and implemented **Mock Interview Day**, attracting approximately 300 students, 90 business leaders, and 8 corporate sponsors;
- Has conducted several ethics workshops.

At the suggestion of an interested private citizen, MMDC is exploring ways in which it might host a recruiting tool on its website, aimed at offering CMU graduates employment opportunities right here in central Michigan. This can address the needs of our own industrial, technology and larger service sector and health-related employers, as well as addressing one of MMDC’s targeted initiatives - that of retaining Central Michigan University graduates, a prized resource.