

**SMALL BUSINESS FORUM COMMITTEE  
OF THE PROGRAMS SECTION**

**REPORT PREPARED FOR THE DECEMBER 1, 2007 COUNCIL MEETING**

**1. 2007-2008 Budget Request and Anticipated Use of Funds.**

\$7,500. This will be used as it was in 2006-2007 to fund educational and marketing events and marketing of same in Southeastern as well as Western Michigan.

**2. Use of Budgeted Funds During 2006-2007.**

Used about half to defray costs of the events held on both the west side of the state and in southeastern Michigan. Detail was previously emailed as requested.

**3. Next Scheduled Meeting of the Committee.**

Next scheduled meeting of the Committee: January 2008

**4. Council Approval.**

None other than Budget

**5. Membership.**

We have a wide ranging group of hundreds of people who attend various events, with about 20-75 people attending each event, depending on the event and location. We continue to expect that to increase, especially on the West side where initiatives are underway to beef up the networking angle and bring in more non-lawyers who will in turn attract more lawyers. We have added one new leader to the Southeastern Michigan SBF- Douglas L. Toering, Esq. whose focus is on business litigation.

**6. Accomplishments Toward Committee Objectives.**

Our primary objectives are:

- Increase involvement of smaller firms in the Section and to add a few new Forum leaders. We have added one new attorney as a leader since the last event and report.
- Create a bridge between business attorneys and the small business community. This continues to be difficult but Michael Khoury's offer to assist us to work with Automation Alley may prove very beneficial.

- Provide resources and networking opportunities between attorneys, CPAs, lenders, investment bankers, financial professionals and related advisors. We have had a good mix of all of these at the events.
- Provide time-efficient, educational and fun events.
- Create a perception of lawyers as valuable members of a business team.
- Improve the perception of Michigan as a good environment in which to do business.
- Help attorneys gain new tools and contacts to provide quality service to business owners.
- Develop outreach opportunities to the business community.

Our objectives for this year are:

- To increase participation level to about 100 attorneys from across Michigan who primarily represent closely-held and family businesses with less than \$50 million in annual gross sales.
- Host at least four useful events each full year, some here and some on the west side of the State.
- Involve small business owners in at least two of our events - this remains a challenge.
- To get the SBF to a point where it is largely self-sustaining from a budget perspective. We are moving toward this goal.

We held many events this year. Two were a Step-by-Step Guide to Selling a Business. Many of the details of these events were included in prior reports. The events held since the last report include one in Grand Rapids on increasing value of manufacturing companies and one in Birmingham on Distressed Companies. The latter in particular was very well received and get excellent press coverage in both the Legal News as well as another paper, the Oakland \_\_\_\_\_.

7. **Meetings and Programs.**

A. First event:

- Timing: Early January 2008.
- Location: Interesting venue that ties in marketing/communications - Suggest one of the following - Clear Blue Communications, McCann Erickson, E-Prize.
- Topic: Attracting and winning new business.
- Details: A workshop/discussion on developing the right belief system, building trust, attracting the right people, creating a specific action plan, tips on closing a new client.

B. Proposed events (3 to be selected)

- (1) Finance - Where's the Money? Alternative Financing Options for Businesses What to do when banks, family and friends are not an option.
  - Prepare a "resources" sheet for participants.
  - List of questions moderated by lawyer with open mikes for attendees.
  - Speakers: 3 finance specialists or 2 specialists plus one owner who has been through the process.
    - - Investment Banker
    - - Mezzanine Financing
    - - Private Equity
    - - Asset Based
    - - Factoring- Hennessy (Mike Z.)

**Concern: Automation Alley holding similar event series.**

- (2) Economic Development Resources – What's out there and to whom is it available?
  - Automation Alley
  - Ann Arbor Sparks
  - Oakland County ADC
- (3) Exit and Scale-back Planning - (workshop format w/CPA, CFP or insurance agent and lawyer)  
Very tactical how-to geared toward advisors
- (4) Litigator's View of Transactional Documents -- Top Ten Drafting Errors  
They use to their advantage
- (5) Basics of Doing Business Internationally

(6) Practical Tips on Running the Family Business as a Business:

- use of employment agreements;
- who controls the company?
- resolving deadlocks;
- rules of entry, compensation, other family issues.

(7) Economic Development Issues - Tax Breaks

8. **Publications.**

None

9. **Legislative/Judicial/Administrative Developments.**

None

10. **Miscellaneous.**