

October 8, 2007

Message From the Chair Emeritus—Richard Johanson

Most of us are intrigued by comparables. While watching the Bulldogs play football last Saturday, I was struck by the correlation between a team's won/loss record on the gridiron with community and regional successes and failures. Player recruiting, inherent talent and a "fire in the belly" determination to succeed are the fundamental ingredients without which the most grandiose game plans are only dreams. The success of this Business Council in its aspirations for a new tomorrow will be attained as a result of teamwork. No single coach, no single player (or mascot) can bring home a winner without the dedication of all of those comprising the team. As you read this Bulletin, check out the organizations and individuals that are making a difference in this region. They are our teammates.

Business Support for the Human Investment Initiative

In the October 5 edition of the *The Business Journal*, you will find a powerful editorial in support of the Human Investment Initiative (HII). Economic development and human development are one and the same. The editorial asks "Why this massive effort?" and then answers, "A recent Brookings Institution report found that Fresno has one of the highest concentrations of poverty for its size in the country. Until community leaders put forth a well organized plan to help stem the tide of poverty in the Valley, our economy will never reach its full potential. If the residents of the Valley are under-educated, in fear for their safety and not able to make ends meet, all of the well-funded economic development efforts in the world will have little meaning." The Fresno Business Council was the first board to endorse the plan and the HII is one of its top priorities. The HII plan is on our website at www.fresnobc.org.

Next Steps on County Strategic Planning

This Tuesday at 9:00 a.m., the Board of Supervisors will consider next steps on their strategic planning process. Facing an ongoing fiscal crisis, the Board, CAO's office, the Business Council and Tom Jones embarked on a series of workshops to determine values, priorities and a path forward. For additional assistance, the FBC sponsored **Peter Hutchinson** to come in to provide a new framework for budgeting for results and working with other organizations. Hutchinson's book, *The Price of Government: Getting the Results We Need In An Age of Permanent Fiscal Crisis*, is considered the sequel to the seminal book, *Reinventing Government*. Counties are creatures of the state and historically have played a largely reactive role. Imagine what would happen if the County took the steps needed to shift to a proactive, collaborative problem solver. Kudos to the Board of Supervisors, department heads and CAO's office for exploring transformational possibilities.

Culture Key to Greatness

A couple of years ago at a membership meeting, **Dave McDonald** shared the Pelco Story, his vision for building a company that valued people and excellence and his steadfast commitment to maintaining a culture that celebrated those principles. As a key factor in choosing a partner, (Schneider Electric is acquiring Pelco), culture played an essential role. "...commitment to people, customers and community are considered core assets of the company." Pelco's story is inspiring and underscores why culture is the key to greatness. It's what is expected, done every day by everyone and considered a point of pride that determines the quality of a company and the quality of a community. Our challenge is to create and sustain a culture that brings out the very best in everyone.

Made In the Central Valley—Let's Celebrate the Central Valley Business Incubator (CVBI)

In a clever, innovative invitation to take part in the "Central Valley Stock Exchange", CVBI captures the spirit that has kept this powerful, community transformation machine humming for nearly a decade. Starting as an idea of **Dr. John Welty** that was embraced by the Business Council, **Claude Laval**, **Tim Stearns**, **Riley Walter** and a host of others have helped to launch businesses, empower entrepreneurs and change the Valley's culture. Come join the board and others committed to "economic development through entrepreneurship." The celebration (be prepared to be an investor ala Buffet, Gates, Schwab & Lynch) will be on October 25 at the Clovis Veterans Memorial Building at 5:30 p.m. Trelis is making the food with locally grown foods to showcase "All things Made in the Central Valley." Call 559.292.9033 for tickets.

