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News

By: Steve Cahalan

New business council identifies its focus

A day after the organization's creation was announced, some officials of the new Wisconsin Business Council said Wednesday in La Crosse they want to work with leaders throughout the state to make it a better place to start and expand businesses.

The council initially will focus on four issues: economic development, infrastructure, education and workforce development, and taxes and regulation, President and CEO Phil Prange said during an interview at the Tribune.

The new organization, which eventually will hire lobbyists, plans to have quarterly business roundtable meetings throughout the state. The first roundtable probably will be in September.

As the economy began to slide last fall, Prange said, it became clear Wisconsin needed such a nonpartisan, pro-business organization. Both Democrats and Republicans are among the council's leaders, he said.

Solutions should be collaborative, Prange said, adding the council plans to work with other organizations, including Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce.

"The broad objective is to work together with any organization," said James Senty of Onalaska, a member of the new council's advisory board. He is president of Midwest Natural Gas in La Crosse and chairman of Park Bank in Madison.

Senty said he wants council members to keep in mind all areas of the state, including western Wisconsin.

For more information about the new Wisconsin Business Council, go online to wibusiness.org.

<http://www.lacrossetribune.com/articles/2009/07/09/news/zz08bizcouncil09.txt>