



Macomb Daily staff photo by David Dalton

From left, businessman Gebran Anton (holding pager), county Clerk Carmella Sabaugh and Arthur Mullen of the Mount Clemens Downtown Development Authority.

Business leaders boost project to equip jurors with pagers

When Gabe Anton saw a proposal to put pagers in the hands of Macomb County jurors had stalled due to a lack of funding, the longtime Mount Clemens-based businessman decided to kick-start it.

"I'm getting too old to wait from year to year, and we want things to happen," Anton said Wednesday.

So he went to the Community Central Bank and the Mount Clemens Downtown Development Authority and asked them to donate \$5,000 each to the project. Anton said he added another \$5,000 "from my little pocket," and with that, half the funds for the 150 restaurant-style pagers was raised.

Anton said he was impressed with county Clerk Carmella Sabaugh's proposal to give jurors restaurant-style pagers so they can explore the downtown while on a break or awaiting duty, then head back to the courthouse when the pagers buzz and light up.

"It gives us an opportunity to showcase

the downtown to a captive audience that changes every day," Anton said. "Here we have this group sitting, they're bored and we've got something to show them, and it seemed to be a very inexpensive approach to getting that many people into our downtown."

Sabaugh thinks her idea is a first for Michigan courts, but versions of it are in effect in at least a few spots elsewhere in the U.S.

Jurors could walk up to a mile away from the courthouse with the pagers, which also would have an out of range indicator light.

Sabaugh said the clerk's office will provide the remaining \$14,700 from a special projects fund.

She will present the plan to the county's budget committee on Tuesday, and if approved, she will ask the Board of Commissioners on June 19 to award a bid of \$29,700 to pager-maker USA Mobility Inc.

— The Associated Press