

# LIVINGSTON COUNTY ATR in agreement with county

**By Paul Westermeyer**

Staff Reporter

Though the last few Livingston County Board meetings have been dominated by the topics of wind energy ordinance and the spending habits of the county police, there was a bit of big news that got otherwise buried: the April approval of a new incentives deal with Advance Technology Recycling, facilitated by the Greater Livingston County Economic Development Council.

The deal was approved at the April 13 board meeting, with all members approving with the exceptions of Joe Steichen and Mark Runyon, who voted “no,” Carolyn Gerwin, who abstained and Paul Ritter, who was absent. The agreement called for a grant of up to \$155,000 be given to ATR, in exchange for the creation of jobs.

In a release issued May 16, GLCEDC CEO Adam Dontz said that the funds would be used for “building improvements necessary to expand production,” and that the “project (would) be completed with lien waivers provided not later than October 31.” He added that “collectively, ATR has restored over 125,000 square feet of vacant buildings which are now used for production and office space in Pontiac.”

As in the GLCEDC deal between Caterpillar and local governing bodies back in 2016, the benefit promised to the latter is the creation of jobs. County Board Executive Director Alina Hartley clarified, however, that the deal was different this time around. With Caterpillar, the county itself entered a direct loan agreement with the company. In this instance, the county was bankrolling a deal between GLCEDC and ATR.

The release stated that, on top of the 44 full-time jobs already boasted by ATR, “26 total full



*Adam Dontz*

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time positions will be created.” In addition, “all positions meet the \$29,201 minimum wage and benefit requirement” and that “up to 10 of the 26 positions can qualify for a super incentive of \$7,500 per employee provided the employee has a wage and benefit package of \$43,802 or more,” or 150 percent of first figure.

Dontz noted in the release that “in exchange for the additional incentive amount, ATR is agreeable to retaining the positions for 24 months instead of the customary 12 month monitoring period.”

When reached for comment, Dontz said that he had a positive outlook for the agreement.

“Pontiac, the surrounding communities, and the Livingston County area are establishing a reputation that we are pro-business and willing to invest in our future and our people,” he said. “ATR has developed a track record over nearly two decades of consistent growth and I’m pleased the GLCEDC and Livingston County could bolster ATR’s creation of 26 new jobs at their Pontiac headquarters.”

On what the deal meant for the economic health of the Livingston County area, Dontz said that anytime a company willing to make “meaningful investments” and “capital commitments” in an area is a good omen.

The GLCEDC CEO noted ATR’s track record of expansion by pointing out that the company had nine offices “coast to coast,” adding he was thrilled that ATR chose to stay in Pontiac, continuing to provide and create good jobs.

“It is important for our area to have ‘move up’ employment opportunities, and ATR provides those opportunities,” he said.