

MEETING MINUTES
Office of Economic Development
Economic Development Advisory Board
57 E. 1st Street, Mesa, AZ 85201
Lower Level Council Chambers

Date: June 7, 2022 Time: 7:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rich Adams, Vice Chair
Brian Campbell
Deb Duvall
Michelle Genereux
Matt Likens
Christopher Nickerson
Dominic Perry
Brad Wilson

EX-OFFICIO

Mayor Giles (Excused)
Chris Brady (Excused)
Sally Harrison
Jim Kasselmann, Chair
Natascha Ovando-Karadsheh
Jeff Pitcher
Jennifer Zonneveld (Virtual)

STAFF PRESENT

William Jabjiniak
Lori Collins
Chris Molnar
Jaye O'Donnell
Maribeth Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT

GUESTS

The EDAB meeting was conducted in-person and via virtual platform with options for public participation.

1. Chair's Call to Order

Chair Kasselmann called the June 7, 2022, meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Board to order at 7:31 a.m.

2. Items from Citizens Present - None

3. Introduction of New Board Member

Chair Kasselmann welcomed Kathleen "KJ" Jolivette to the Board. KJ is the vice president of Attack Helicopter programs at Boeing in Mesa.

4. Approval of Minutes from May 3, 2022, Meeting

Chair Kasselmann called for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made to approve the May 3, 2022, minutes by Rich Adams, seconded by Deb Duvall.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Adams, Campbell, Duvall, Genereux, Jolivette, Likens, Nickerson, Perry, Wilson
NAYS – None

Chair Kasselmann declared the motion carried by unanimous vote.

5. Election of Chair & Vice-Chair for FY22-23

Brian Campbell nominated Rich Adams as Chair and Jennifer Zonneveld as Vice Chair of the 2022/2023 EDAB Board. Dominic Perry seconded the nomination.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Adams, Campbell, Duvall, Genereux, Jolivette, Likens, Nickerson, Perry, Wilson

NAYS – None

Chair Kasselman declared the motion carried by unanimous vote.

6. Hear a presentation on Mesa Office of Economic Development Fiscal Year 2023-2026 Strategic Plan Overview

Jaye O'Donnell, City of Mesa Assistant Economic Development Director, stated that she has been involved in several strategic plans over her 12 years with the Office of Economic Development (OED). We are developing the FY23-26 Strategic Plan and are requesting feedback, direction, and comments from the Board. Ms. O'Donnell reviewed the content of the plan which includes a market overview, strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results, strategic action plan and performance measures as well as definitions and supporting data.

Chair Kasselman asked what we are referencing when we say advanced infrastructure.

Ms. O'Donnell replied that we're referring to how the City invests in infrastructure and partners with service providers to bring them to the table for clients. Additionally, how the City focuses infrastructure investment with a short- and long-term vision.

Mr. Kasselman suggested that we specifically identify the attributes that companies are looking for such as cost of energy vs. California and reliability of infrastructure.

Dominic Perry suggested that as Arizona enters its 23rd year of drought we also highlight the City's water management history.

Brian Campbell echoed Mr. Perry's comment and suggested highlighting water management within the City as a theme. He also mentioned the leadership Council displayed by declaring the first stage of its Water Shortage Management Plan, which received national attention.

Mr. Adams mentioned the inclusion of a "built-in workforce" but stated there is conflicting information in the press about workforce and where they'll live. Do we have a built-in workforce?

Mr. Jabjiniak stated that if look outside the Valley we compare well, especially with overall quality of life and cost of living. A recent company locate moved to Mesa from Reno due to these very things.

KJ stated that Boeing is struggling with workforce. They are running out of aerospace experience and due to the industries growth, they are all struggling, but she believes it will improve.

Jaye O'Donnell also highlighted the attributes of the team in general, not just OED, but City decision makers, community, and service providers. She stated that it is important to promote that team as a

differentiating feature. This point was expressed in a recent survey that our people make a difference and economic development projects may not work as smoothly in other communities.

KJ echoed this sentiment and referenced Boeing's recent building project experience in Mesa. We don't see this type of partnership in other cities. Chair Kasselman also agreed with this sentiment.

Mr. Likens mentioned his 2011 experience of receiving appropriate zoning within 6 weeks when they grew into a location at Stapley and US60. A government organization that can respond to the needs of a marketplace is very important.

Ms. Ovando-Karadsheh suggested including and marketing with testimonials as they are very impactful for those without personal connections.

Jaye O'Donnell discussed the SOAR process that began in January. Strengths include space for business growth, new industries, and momentum or recent announcements as well as strong industry sectors: electric vehicles, semiconductor space and supply chain. Additionally, the City's financial strength, robust infrastructure, staff and being one of the 75 accredited economic development organizations in the world. We will apply for reaccreditation in 2023. Opportunities include developing a plan for workforce to bridge the gap between available employees and employers and how we could facilitate a dialogue with education providers, key redevelopment areas, and small business support. Aspirations include workforce for different industries, expanding upon the idea that Mesa is a great place for business while promoting the great live, work, play experiences available, and preserving land to grow office space for tech and finance. While we know office use has contracted due to the pandemic, we need to enhance our outreach to GPEC locates since the wage level in the manufacturing sector is lower than the office sector.

Mr. Campbell stated while the office component is interesting, it is not our strong suit. Is that what we want to emphasize in this document?

Dominic Perry mentioned that there is still a lack of office inventory in Mesa so we should continue to plan for its eventual return even though the vacancy rate is currently high.

Mr. Jabjiniak agreed on both points. He reminded the Board of our focus on industrial growth years ago and what has come to fruition recently. Since this document is projecting into the future three to four years, we need to reach for office locates to target higher wage jobs.

Rich Adams suggested considering a strong statement to preserve land for employment opportunities overall, not just office, considering the constant pressure for housing.

Brian Campbell also mentioned the need to protect flight patterns for both Mesa airports and surrounding aerospace businesses.

Jeff Pitcher stated that now is the time to focus on this since the housing market has slowed due to interest rates. He is seeing housing deals being cancelled by large builders.

Jaye O'Donnell spoke to measuring success and the key performance indicators in the Strategic Plan at a more granular level. Our broad goals include business attraction and expansion, branding and business development, and capacity building. Underneath each of these broad goals are objectives or strategies we prioritize and implement into an action plan.

Mr. Campbell asked about the definition of transformative projects?

Ms. O'Donnell stated transformative projects are a way to track our output that may not yet reflect in a performance measure. For instance, the Asian District, the Falcon District and the Transit Grant we'll be involved in are considered transformative projects because we are dedicating time, energy, and resources. One of Lori Collins many projects include a retail focus and recently our new webpage was sent to all retail brokers highlighting opportunities within the city. The focus this year will be on personal visits.

Dominic Perry stated that we need to inquire with our industry developers and be connected to the retail and hotel side of that company as well.

Mr. Campbell suggested we build a transformative project around retail.

Natascha Ovando-Karadsheh requested that Lori Collins provide additional progress details at a future meeting.

KJ asked how do we attract that new generation to stay in Mesa? Her younger generation workforce lives in the Scottsdale/Phoenix area and doesn't mind the drive to work so they can enjoy amenities close to home.

Mr. Jabjiniak stated that while we've come a long way in 14 years, the demographics of the city vary greatly by location and retail is demographic focused.

Jaye reiterated that we greatly appreciate the Board's feedback and engagement with the Strategic Plan and if they had any further comments after the meeting to feel free to email her. She also requested the Board be active in commenting and/or sharing OED's social media posts.

6. Director's Report

Bill Jabjiniak thanked Jim Kasselman for his leadership over the past 2 years as Chair. Mr. Kasselman has moved to the ex-officio side of the Board, representing Mesa on the Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) Board.

Mr. Jabjiniak thanked Brad Wilson for his three years of service and contributions. Mr. Wilson mentioned Skybridge was presented during his first Board meeting, and he has enjoyed his interaction on this Board.

While it is not official just yet, Jeff Pitcher will be transitioning to another City Board. He has served as an EDAB member/leader since September 2009. Bill thanked Jeff for his long service to this community and Board.

Deb Duvall has completed two terms as a member and previously served on the Board as well. Bill stated that he valued Deb's unfiltered input. Her opinions, based on her extensive knowledge of the community, have been invaluable. Ms. Duvall appreciated the opportunity to get to know her fellow board members and thanked Bill and his staff for the significant change and progress that has been made over the last 6 years.

Finally, Mr. Jabjiniak stated Matt Likens has been the voice of entrepreneurship on this Board. I've appreciated his quick wit, insightful one-liners, and thank him for his viewpoint over the past 6 years. Mr. Likens echoed Ms. Duvall's comment that the whole staff in the Office of Economic Development office is top notch. He stated it has been a privilege and he learned so much in his time with the Board.

Bill Jabjiniak mentioned that the FY22/23 meeting dates were provided with the handouts today.

7. Other Business

The next Economic Development Advisory Board meeting will be on Tuesday, August 2, 2022.

8. Adjournment

Chair Kasselmann called for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 a.m. by Christopher Nickerson, seconded by Brad Wilson.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Adams, Campbell, Duvall, Genereux, Jolivette, Likens, Nickerson, Perry, Wilson

NAYS – None

Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Submitted By:



William J. Jabjiniak
Economic Development Department Director