

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

Date: August 3, 2021 Time: 7:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jim Kasselmann, Chair
Rich Adams, Vice Chair
Brian Campbell
Matt Likens
Christopher Nickerson
Natascha Ovando-Karadsheh
Dominic Perry
Brad Wilson

EX-OFFICIO

Mayor John Giles (Excused)
Chris Brady, City Manager (Excused)
Sally Harrison
Jeffrey Pitcher
Jennifer Zonneveld

STAFF PRESENT

Jaye O'Donnell
Lori Collins
Maribeth Smith
Chris Molnar
Kelley Keffer
Elyce Gobat
Celine Kilic

MEMBERS ABSENT

Deb Duvall

GUESTS

James Christensen

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 Economic Development Advisory Board meeting to order at 7:32 a.m.

2. Items from Citizens Present - None

3. Approval of Minutes from June Board Meeting

Chair Kasselmann called for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 1, 2021, meeting.

Brian Campbell moved to approve the June 1, 2021 minutes as presented; seconded by Christopher Nickerson.

AYES – Kasselmann, Adams, Campbell, Likens, Nickerson, Ovando-Karadsheh, Perry, Wilson
NAY – None

Chair Kasselmann declared the motion carried by unanimous vote.

4. Hear a presentation on the Mesa Financial Network

James Christensen, President/CEO, of Gateway Bank in Mesa began the presentation on the Mesa Financial Network by discussing how the Mesa Chamber of Commerce represents an important confluence point for the business community and as a trusted resource, the Chamber can leverage their relationship management skills to support the community. The Mesa Financial Network provides the ability to recognize and leverage the opportunity for competing businesses in the same industry to have a "safe space" to share and work together on topics and issues that impact them universally. With both of Arizona's Senators being assigned to the banking and Finance committee of the United States Senate, there was a unique opportunity to engage Mesa's financial community in communal work in the financial

sector. We created a forum for the financial industry to collect and share their individual feedback in an actionable format not just for our senators, but for the Chamber to engage in advocacy efforts on behalf of the industry.

The Mesa Financial Network meets monthly with interested parties and topics are decided by the chair and/or community feedback. Data is collected for Federal representatives and Additional activities as warranted.

The Mesa Chamber Capital Opportunity Program is designed to create a consultative, friendly approach for small businesses that need capital but are intimidated by the financial system. The program incorporates the Chamber as an intermediary resource, to encourage dialogue that will help the small business become more comfortable with their ask. It is also designed to create measurable outcomes in the community for the purposes of economic development.

The program is sponsored by participating institutions. Sponsors receive the leads generated from the program and date on capital flow from the program. The onboarding process includes an initial assessment of the quality of the ask by the Chamber. If needed, the client is connected with resources to assist in the quality of the ask or directed to additional resources if the ask is not strong enough for the program at that time. Determination of which financial institution the ask would best fit with is determined by the ask amount, business type, etc. Warm connections are provided to one or more of the matching sponsorship institutions.

5. Hear a Presentation on the Mesa Business Builder Technical Assistance Program

Kelley Keffer, Project Manager with the City of Mesa Office of Economic Development, began the presentation by briefly reviewing what the City of Mesa has been doing to support small businesses for the last several years; however, the main topic today is the new technical assistance program and the assets and services we developed last year for the Mesa CARES Small Business Reemergence Program and what stays for this fiscal year and into the future.

The Office of Economic Development (OED) exists to enhance Mesa's economy, by supporting the creation of quality jobs and to improve life for residents. We promote Mesa as a premier location for business and we do this through different "Lines of Service" including entrepreneurship and small business development. As you know, for years, the OED has had several existing programs to support small businesses and entrepreneurs. And over the years, we have enhanced our offerings for businesses. For example, every year, we publish the Mesa Business Resource Guide, we offer Size Up Mesa – a Market Analysis Tool for businesses to evaluate how they can be more competitive, and Site Search Mesa for business looking for location assistance. These services are all online and free to businesses.

Mesa OED also provides cooperative marketing programs and promotions like our Business Export Assistance Program and Mesa Business Connection our Retention and Expansion program. And the City provides workshops, workspaces like ThinkSpot, and office and Lab Space at LaunchPoint and Arizona Laboratories for Security and Defense Research. So, moving forward – what is the next level for the City of Mesa and for supporting our small businesses? The answer is Mesa Business Builder – and more specifically: the Technical Assistance Program which is (essentially) Mesa CARES 2.0. The mission is to provide assistance to Mesa small businesses with the goal of building business competency, increasing competitiveness, and promoting resiliency.

Who do we serve? Our targets are "micro-sized" businesses with less than five employees, main street businesses, mom & pop shops, small restaurants, professional and medical service providers, home-based businesses, and other small operations. We will also target businesses with less than 25

employees (FTE) that need assistance to modernize, update marketing, and have a desire to become more competitive in today's business climate.

So, how will we do this without the CARES Funds we had last year? The good news is Council approved the Mesa Business Builder Program as part of the City's budget at \$300,000. Online applications open Aug. 16 and will be on a first come, first serve basis. This program provides professional consulting/education – It is NOT a financial grant. The program also provides customized one-on-one technical assistance, specialty trainings, and classes as well as free access to the Mesa HUUB Online Platform. This upgraded platform currently serves 400+ businesses. Registered businesses on HUUB receive an hour of free consulting, management of technical assistance scheduling, performance reporting, online chat feature, demographics, and community engagement – think of it as an enhanced social networking program for the Mesa small business community.

The Mesa Business Builder HUUB is a bilingual online learning and networking platform. The platform expands entrepreneurial resources to under-represented communities in partnership with government, subject matter experts, and community partners and provides 24/7 access. Through the HUUB, we can now offer a central point for on-demand, immersive and personalized learning experiences for those who want to start and grow a business, and a community learning framework that is vital for their success that may include advisors or technical assistance. This platform provides access for an unlimited number of businesses to register and engage on the HUUB. It is branded specifically for Mesa and also captures demographics and company information we need for analytical purposes and for making informed decisions.

This year we will continue to offer a variety of technical assistance in the categories of Business Planning & Operations, Marketing, Finance/Financial Literacy, bridging the Digital Divide/Computer Literacy, and we will deliver those services in a variety of ways: One-on-one Consulting, Live and recorded Webinars – New programs in FY 22 and currently there are 100+ on Mesa HUUB – many of them are in both Spanish and English and a few are subtitled in Chinese, Group Trainings/Small Classes.

6. Director's Report

Jaye O'Donnell introduced the two newest members of our team. Elyce Gobat, Economic Development Project Specialist, comes to us from SE New Mexico where she was the Director of Research. She did a lot of business development, totaling \$8B in investment attraction. Currently, she is handling e-Tracks and assisting me with the annual report. She is a University of Arizona graduate with a degree in French and speaks some Mandarin. Celine Kilic, Economic Development Project Manager, comes to us from Boston where she worked for the United Kingdom Department for International Trade. She graduated from ASU with a degree in Political Science and speaks Turkish and German. Celine will lead the business retention and expansion effort.

Lori Collins was recently named the new President of the Executive Board for the Arizona Association of Economic Development (AAED). Lori has held all the positions within the Board and will do a fantastic job!

Our office submitted six award applications to the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) and were notified of four awards: Gold for HUUB; Silver for Economic Development Organization of the Year; Young Economic Development Professional of the Year – JD Beatty, Sr. Project Manager; and Citizen Leadership of the Year – Rich Adams. Congratulations Rich! I had reviewed past winners and thought about Rich's long career of servant leadership in various capacities in Mesa. He was gracious enough to work with me on the application that included letters of support from the Mayor and Mesa Chamber of Commerce. The awards will be presented officially in October in Nashville.

Rich Adams thanked everyone for their congratulations and stated that the City of Mesa affords its citizens many opportunities to make a difference and get involved. It's been a pleasure to work with Mesa's Office of Economic Development.

Jaye stated that we continue to work on numerous projects. Take a moment to follow our office on LinkedIn for updates. Bill has given various media interviews and we've received national and international press for the Exro and ElectraMeccanica announcements.

Matt Likens offered congratulations on the awards and Chair Kasselmann congratulated Rich for the honor.

Chair Kasselmann expressed gratitude on behalf of Dexcom to the City, Mayor, and City Manager for the support from Mesa Fire and Police while running the recent vaccination pod at their location in SE Mesa. Mesa Fire and Police were superior, top-notch professionals and a pleasure to work with!

7. Other Business

- The next EDAB meeting is September 7, 2021.

8. Adjournment

Chair Kasselmann called for a motion to adjourn.

Brian Campbell moved to adjourn the August 3, 2021, meeting at 8:27 a.m.; seconded by Natascha Ovando-Karadsheh.

AYES – Kasselmann, Adams, Campbell, Likens, Nickerson, Ovando-Karadsheh, Perry, Wilson
NAY – None

Chair Kasselmann declared the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Submitted By:



William J. Jabjiniak
Economic Development Department Director