

Office of Economic Development
Economic Development Advisory Board
MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 3, 2004 Time: 7:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Gary Smith
Raul Cardenas
Debra Duvall
Mike Elliott
Don Evans
Linda Flick
Vern Mathern
Pat Schroeder
Jack Sellers

EX-OFFICIO

Mayor Keno Hawker
Mike Hutchinson

GUESTS

Roc Arnett
Teresa Brice-Heames
Doug Himmelberger
Bob McNichols
Jennifer Urquhart
Lois Yates

STAFF PRESENT

Betsy Adams
Tammy Albright
Wayne Balmer
Sue Cason
Harold Decker
John Gendron
Micah Miranda
Eric Norenberg
Emily Stowe
Lori Quan
Tom Reyes

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mike Garcia (excused)
Jim Zaharis

Chair Gary Smith called the February 3, 2004 meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Board to order at 7:01 A.M. in the City of Mesa Plaza Building, 20 East Main Street, Room 170.

Chair Smith called for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on January 6, 2004.

MOTION: Mike Hutchinson moved that minutes from January 6, 2004 be approved.

SECOND: Linda Flick.

DECISION: Passed unanimously.

1. City of Mesa Primary Election – March 9, 2004

Chair Smith distributed a draft EDAB Position Statement expressing opposition to Propositions 104 and 105. Discussion ensued as to what will be done with this document. Chair Smith explained that City staff members are limited in their capacity to assist in circulating this type of information, but noted it will be reflected in the EDAB minutes.

Deb Duvall commented that an effort should be made to broaden its exposure, perhaps as an op-ed piece in area newspapers. Vern Mathen agreed with her

suggestion, noting a preference for forwarding the EDAB Position Statement to editorial boards, and recommended listing each advisory board member's name individually.

Deb inquired as to whether EDAB members have a conflict given their status as mayoral appointees. Mike Hutchinson responded that staff would check on this issue, but didn't think it posed a problem.

Mike Elliott noted there are other groups supported by the Mesa Chamber of Commerce that are supporting and/or opposing upcoming ballot initiatives.

MOTION: Debra Duvall moved that the EDAB Position Statement be forwarded to area newspapers for dissemination to the general public.

SECOND: Linda Flick.

DECISION: Passed unanimously (Mayor Hawker and Mike Hutchinson abstained).

Chair Smith was authorized to make revisions, as long as the original intent of the approved EDAB Position Statement was not lost. It was further clarified that the Mayor, City Manager and City staff played no role in preparing or discussing this document.

2. Recap Joint Council/EDAB Meeting

Chair Smith referenced a document that summarizes comments received from the Mayor and Council during the Joint Council/EDAB meeting held on January 22. Discussion revolved around the following items:

Adequacy of the planning and zoning referral process: EDAB members offered comments about the existing "Guidelines for Responding to Rezoning Requests for Retail Development". Inquiries focused on the amount and timing of EDAB involvement in zoning cases.

Will EDAB take a position on Riverview and other similar projects: Comments focused on EDAB's role to assist with "vision compliance" in helping to ensure that development projects are consistent with Mesa's Economic Development Strategy.

EDAB involvement in recruiting: Involvement should continue on an "as needed" basis, although it was suggested that EDAB prepare a list of contacts and organizations in which they are involved that could serve as a resource for business recruitment.

Focus on micro as well as macro implementation: A consensus was reached that EDAB members should keep a "big picture", long-term perspective.

How do we educate our citizens (and Council): EDAB members expressed their satisfaction at having the Joint Council/EDAB meeting broadcast on Mesa Channel 11. Further discussion concentrated on the advisory board serving as interpreters of complex public policy issues impacting economic development, promoting the City's master plans, and enhancing techniques for communicating EDAB recommendations to the City Council.

It was further suggested that these items be reviewed at future EDAB meetings.

3. Freeway Landmark Monuments and Special Events

Mike Hutchinson initiated this discussion by encouraging EDAB members to recognize the complexity of this issue and take note of other cities' current policies.

John Gendron, Zoning/Civil Hearing Administrator, Planning Division, made a presentation on freeway landmark monuments and special events. He gave an historical perspective on signage issues and referenced draft Freeway Landmark Monument Guidelines that have been discussed with the City Council.

Chair Smith remarked that Mesa Economic Development Strategy consultants commented on the need for increased visibility for the community, particularly in relationship to freeway interchanges. Supporting comments referred to poor visibility from depressed sections of the regional freeway system. Overall feedback on Desert Ridge signage was favorable.

Mayor Hawker expressed concern about the impact freeway signage might have in terms of encouraging Main Street auto dealerships to consider moving to more visible freeway locations.

Mike Elliott inquired as to whether or not staff has encountered developers requesting better signage. Mike Hutchinson responded by indicating that most list it as a key location factor. He also encouraged EDAB members to drive along the region's freeways to evaluate current signage practices.

Chair Smith noted this would be an action item for next month's EDAB meeting.

4. Future Focus

Chair Smith encouraged EDAB members to review the Governor's Council on Innovation and Technology's (GCIT) Draft Recommendations, stating that it may be

discussed at future meetings. He further commented that Governor Napolitano will be talking about these recommendations at the “Governor’s Technology Forum” being held from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. on February 10 at the Hyatt Regency in Phoenix. EDAB members interested in attending were asked to contact staff.

East Valley Rail Study

Mike Hutchinson acknowledged the contributions of Roc Arnett, East Valley Partnership and Wayne Balmer, Office of Project Manager, Williams Gateway Area of Regional Economic Activity, with the East Valley Rail Study. He noted that a group had recently visited Alliance, Texas to look at their rail system. The Williams Gateway Airport employment center and Mesa’s Pinal County Water Farm are being evaluated as potential locations for a rail spur.

Mesa Town Center: Northeast Quadrant Analysis

Chair Smith encouraged EDAB members to review this report. Mike Hutchinson informed the advisory group that City staff have been asked to form a team to move forward with key recommendations outlined by Hunter Interests, Inc.

5. Staff Reports

Chair Smith encouraged EDAB members to review the staff reports provided in the agenda packet, which included:

- Development Advisory Forum/Public Advisory Workshop (Agenda – January 14, 2004)
- GPEC Executive Committee Meeting – January 15, 2004 (Agenda/Minutes - January 15, 2004)
- Monthly Report - December 2003

Vice Chair Flick provided a brief update on Development Advisory Forum activities.

Chair Smith commented that GPEC is nearing completion of the IBM Global Marketing Project.

Lori Quan pointed out that staff would provide a more comprehensive briefing on business development activities in the near future. She also reminded EDAB members about information made available through the City’s web site at www.cityofmesa.org/econdev, including the Mesa Economic Development Strategy Executive Summary, which is available for download. She made a brief comment about staff’s efforts to keep it as up-to-date as possible and encouraged EDAB

members to direct people towards it. Extra copies of the Office of Economic Development Annual Report for FY 2002-2003 were also made available.

Wayne Balmer encouraged EDAB members to review the Williams Gateway Airport Annual Report. He reported that more information will soon be available on passenger service and new tenant activity.

Emily Stowe reported that the Final Draft Report for the Fiesta Mall “Super-Regional Retail District” should be finalized by the next meeting. She also provided an update on recent retail recruitment activities (i.e. Falcon Gateway, Sprouts, Target and new car dealerships).

Micah Miranda provided a brief status report on the GIS/real estate web application and Enterprise Zone application.

Tom Reyes reported that advanced training for 41 new and 39 current employees of Mesa-based Acoustic Technologies is being made possible through an Arizona Department of Commerce Job Training Grant. The reimbursement award will cover training costs totaling nearly \$142,000 over the next two years.

Tammy Albright reported on progress with the Arizona Health & Technology Park and www.DoSmallBizMesa.com web site.

Jack Sellers spoke about attending the GPEC FBR Open Executour with Harold Decker and shared feedback offered by site selection consultants (i.e. inadequacy of using job training grants as incentives).

6. Other Business: Public and Board Comments

Chair Smith encouraged EDAB members to attend as many community events as possible listed on the 60-Day Calendar.

Laminated copies of the Mesa Economic Development Strategy Executive Summary were placed at each seat. Chair Smith asked that they be collected at the end of each meeting and made available at the next month’s meeting.

It was noted that the next EDAB meeting will be held on March 2, 2004.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 8:55 A.M.

Submitted By:

Richard K. Mulligan, CEcD
Economic Development Director