MEETING MINUTES

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

Date: January 5, 2016 **Time:** 7:30 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT
Terry Benelli
James Christensen
Natascha Ovando-Karadsheh
Dominic Perry
Jeff Pitcher
Steven Shope
Jo Wilson, Vice Chair

EX-OFFICIO
Mayor John Giles (excused)
Chris Brady (excused)
Rich Adams (excused)
Brian Campbell
Jeffrey Crockett
Sally Harrison (excused)

STAFF PRESENT
Bill Jabjiniak
Julia Lichtenberger
Kim Lofgreen
Jaye O'Donnell
Janet Woolum

MEMBERS ABSENT
Laura Snow, Chair (excused)
Robert Stanger (excused)

GUESTS PRESENT
None

1. **Chair's Call To Order**

Vice Chair Jo Wilson called the Economic Development Advisory Board meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

2. **Items from Citizens Present**

None.

3. **Approval of Minutes from the December 1, 2015 Board Meeting**

Vice Chair Wilson called for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 1, 2015 meeting.

MOTION: Terry Benelli made a motion to approve the minutes.
SECOND: Dominic Perry seconded the motion to approve the minutes.
DECISION: Passed unanimously

4. **What Works Cities - Open Data**

Vice Chair Wilson invited Janet Woolum, Performance Administrator, to begin her presentation. Janet Woolum shared that she oversees the Performance Management Initiative for the City of Mesa. What

Works Cities is an initiative spearheaded by the Bloomberg Philanthropies out of New York. Bloomberg Philanthropies believe that when a City has data and evidence, it will be easier to solve problems and deliver better results. The City of Mesa was one of eight cities originally selected to participate in this program. Since July, the initiative has increased to 21 cities. The Bloomberg Philanthropies is providing resources for mid-size cities, in particular, and their primary objective is to elevate and accelerate cities' use of data and evidence to engage citizens, make government more effective and improve people's lives. Ms. Woolum pointed out, that by the City of Mesa participating in this initiative, they are committing to accelerating their use of data across the City. The business model is for Bloomberg Philanthropies to fund the leading research organizations, academic institutions and non-profit organizations. The cities that are participating in the initiative get the benefit of technical assistance from the following organizations: The Sunlight Foundation, Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab, Johns Hopkins University, and Results for America. As a participant city, the City of Mesa is given access to these organization's resources.

Since July, the City of Mesa has been working with both the Sunlight Foundation and Johns Hopkins University, both of which have made visits to Mesa. Ms. Woolum shared that her group is focusing on two specific areas: the first is open data, which is the idea that cities should make their data open and available, without restrictions or copyright, to anyone who might desire to use it. Diane Gardner, who works for City of Mesa Information Technology, has been working with the Sunlight Foundation, to capture the most popular data sets of the City of Mesa, and begin to make them available to residents.

The second area of focus is to enhance the City's current performance management system. Currently, staff is working at the department level, but desires to elevate the work to the citywide level. Additionally, it is desired to apply more complex analytics, in an effort to elevate the usage of the data sets already available. Ms. Woolum cited examples from Memphis and New York City, and the way in which each of these cities used complex analytics to help them with problem solving in specific areas of concern to their individual city. Memphis used the analytics to look at urban reinvestment and New York City used the data to provide better small business support. She mentioned that this will open up great potential for the City of Mesa. Shortly after being selected for this program, Mesa chose two areas to begin working on: Transforming neighborhoods and increasing prosperity of Mesa residents.

Janet and her team have put together cross-functional teams from across the City of Mesa. In the area of transforming neighborhoods, they have reached out to transportation, neighborhood services, police, and a variety of different departments to pool their information together to determine what the neighborhood conditions are in Mesa. This group produced a map, which detailed an overlay of factors related to potential for blight. This data overlay included: code violations, crime rates, incidents of graffiti, and vacant properties. These areas were then merged together into a map, which indicated where the potential areas of blight might be in the City of Mesa. She conveyed that this type of data can then be used to target distressed areas.

Janet also detailed their efforts in the area of improving prosperity. She pointed out that improving prosperity is related to both economics and education. The data examined in this area was as follows: median household income, per capita income, free and reduced lunch eligibility, and percentage below the poverty line. In the area of median household income and per capita income, Janet provided a map showing the City of Mesa in relation to Maricopa County. In the area of free and reduced lunch programs, she provided a map which highlighted the areas with schools with the highest concentration of eligibility for free and reduced lunch programs.

Question: Dominic Perry asked for clarification on how the map could show an area saturated with free and reduced lunch programs, and in the midst of this area, there could be one school that didn't have a high concentration of free and reduced lunch.
Answer: Janet Woolum answered this is the type of question they will seek to answer by using these data analytics. She also had noted this same condition in two different areas on the map.

Janet Woolum continued her presentation by providing a chart showing the percentage of Mesa residents living below the poverty line and pointed out that this number has been increasing over the past few years. She stated that these are the types of data sets which are available to study neighborhood conditions. This will help with making strategic decisions about how resources are allocated, and will help determine which of the City's services are working better than others. Ms. Woolum conveyed they will be continuing these cross-functional collaborations, in an effort to follow-up and answer the type of question posed by Mr. Perry. Janet shared that her team is also working to increase their capacity to conduct data analytics and to support the City's efforts to use this data and evidence to improve City services. She concluded her presentation and asked for questions.

Comment/Question: Brian Campbell was curious about the source of the information that was used in the preparation of the maps and tables that had been presented. He asked how the sources are identified and also asked if this is cross-checked against other sources.
Answer: Janet Woolum answered the same sources currently used by City of Mesa are being used. She shared that the source they are using to do the mapping is ESRI Community Analyst, which is based on US Census data. She mentioned that the way in which they would choose sources was discussed extensively in one of the early cross-functional meetings. In the end, the source used is the same source the Economic Development Department had already been using.

Comment: Brian Campbell stated that he would also suggest other sources and suggested that Janet and her team consider using MAG (Maricopa Association of Governments), which has a very high recognized quality standard for analytics in the region. He pointed out that this would be a great source to double-check the data with.
Response: Janet Woolum answered that one of the next parts of the initiative would be to bring other stakeholders in to participate in the conversation.

Comment/Question: Jeffrey Crockett indicated that he had heard a radio program on the power of data and the program pointed out that those who understand the power of data are willing to invest in gathering good data. Mr. Crockett applauded the efforts of Ms. Woolum and her team. Regarding a graph showing median household income data, he asked for clarification on the fact that it showed Mesa below the Maricopa County line in this area and he wondered if this graph told the whole story. He also conveyed that this type of statistic underscores the importance of the work that EDAB is doing, in terms of focusing on good quality, high paying jobs for the City.
Answer: Janet Woolum deferred to Jaye O'Donnell, Economic Development Deputy Director, to answer the question. Jaye O'Donnell shared what the data team has been working on is a way to produce the data in a way that contextually will make sense. In this case, rather than just showing a slide comparing the City of Mesa to Maricopa County, it also makes sense to look at other cities in the region and how the City of Mesa compares to other cities like Gilbert, Chandler, Glendale, etc. This data is included in additional slides that were not presented to the board in this presentation. Ms. O'Donnell mentioned that income levels in urban, metro areas are often somewhat lower, due to the diversity in these areas. She acknowledged that this does not mean this type of statistic should be ignored, but rather recognize this is a somewhat normal occurrence. However, that being said, Ms. O'Donnell also pointed out that it is the City's desire to be above the county average and that is why they focus on higher wage, quality jobs, so the number can be brought closer to the county average.

She further conveyed that one of the goals in their strategic plan was to have high quality jobs, determined by jobs that are 125% of the county median wage.

Comment/Question: Steven Shope stated that it appeared that the per capita income showed at least two workers per household. He wondered if that was typical of the United States.
Answer: Jaye O'Donnell said she believed this was the case nationally, but when examining household makeup in our area, Mesa has a larger number of members per household than the rest of the county.

Question: Terry Benelli asked how to view the data that Ms. Woolum's group had collected.
Answer: Janet Woolum answered they are currently developing the data to be made available to the public. The data sets that will be available are currently being selected and should be available within the next thirty days.

Comment: James Christensen pointed out that from the fourth quarter of 2010, when the recovery began, it surprises him that the number of Mesa residents living below the poverty line has continued to go up. He thought the board should pay particular attention to this number and try to address it.

Comment: Jeff Pitcher stated he felt it would be important to compare the data on Mesa residents living below the poverty line to the entire county. In this type of comparison, they would be able to gain helpful insights.
Response: Janet Woolum stated the trends are being looked at now, but she will gladly come back and provide comparatives to EDAB.

Comment: Bill Jabjiniak said that many site selectors are using data to make decisions. He believes that having this type of data analytics available will greatly assist site selectors in this process. He shared that currently 4 of 13 staff members are working on this effort. The data collection process will help in identifying and addressing specific concerns in different areas of the City of Mesa and will be very useful in decision making and recruitment strategies.

Question: Steven Shope asked if the education component is being looked at and the skill level of the populace.
Answer: Janet Woolum indicated this is on their agenda. They have looked at some basic educational attainment data, and welcome questions like this, as it will help to determine areas to specifically focus on.

Question: Jeff Pitcher asked if Mesa Public Schools was one of the stakeholders.
Answer: Janet Woolum answered affirmatively. MPS has provided some of the data that will be going out on the "Open Data" portal and will be included in future discussions.

Vice Chair Jo Wilson thanked Janet Woolum for her presentation.

5. **Website Analytics**

Vice Chair Wilson invited Kim Lofgreen, Marketing & Business Development Manager, to begin his presentation on Website Analytics. Kim Lofgreen shared details regarding the Mesaaz.gov/economic website. He discussed some of the analytic terms to be showcased: Pageviews, Unique Pageviews, Average Time on Page, and Bounce Rate. Mr. Lofgreen then shared a slide showing these four areas on the website during the period of August 13th through December 31st of 2015.

There have been 17,613 page views and 14,096 unique page views during that period of time. The average person spends about 1 hour 37 minutes on the site and the bounce rate is 60.57%. He pointed out that this information becomes more meaningful as individual pages are looked at. He shared that on the left-hand navigation bar on their homepage, there are about ten different places that can be navigated to. He shared the top five pages that are being chosen. These are: Business environment, Business districts maps, Newsroom, About us, and Start-up. He then shared a slide showing the different page paths for each of these areas. Under Business-environment, the top five places visited were: demographics, utilities, taxes, major employers and workforce. Under Business district maps, the top five places visited were: Fiesta district, Falcon district, Mesa Gateway area/Elliot road technology corridor, Downtown Mesa, and Mesa Gateway area. Under newsroom, the top five places visited were: economic reporter newsletter/Fourth quarter 2015, news, press releases, expansion locations and newsletters.

Question: Dominic Perry asked how people received the newsletter. He wondered if people had to come to the newsletter on their own or if the newsletter was sent out to people.
Answer: Kim Lofgreen answered that an email blast is sent out to approximately 3,000 people and of that group, 654 navigated to the newsletter and read it. It was previously in the form of a PDF document, but is now a page on the website. Mr. Lofgreen shared that this helps drive people to other places on the website.

Kim Lofgreen continued his presentation. He pointed out a graph that indicated spikes in pageviews on particular days surrounding announcements important to the City of Mesa. He said this is one way to measure the effectiveness and value of their PR. He stated that a similar thing had happened shortly after Staff had attended a BioMed conference in December. An email blast was sent out to ask people to come by their booth at the conference and this generated a lot of traffic in the period following the email. An increase in traffic was also noted the day after the conference was over. He also showed page views for Mesa SizeUp, which had 755 page views. He presented this tool to the Mesa Chamber's Grow your Business group which was attended by about 20-25 people. Within the group, was an ASU student, who wrote an article about the tool. In addition, there was a press release about the site, and had radio interviews. The next day, there was a spike in page views. Mesa SiteSearch, which is reached through the City's available real estate page, had 779 page views. To sum up, Mr. Lofgreen pointed out that analytics aren't used just to see what the traffic looks like, these are used to help make good decisions, to measure the effectiveness of campaigns, events and PR, and to decide what is to be accomplished and whether or not it is being accomplished. This can then connect these analytics to events going on in the outside world, which also helps them to make better decisions. Mr. Lofgreen then pointed out that currently they are only touching the surface of the information the analytics can provide, but they hope to increase their ability to make applications from the analytics.

Question: Steven Shope asked if the hits are being tracked to determine where the hits are coming from. He wondered if the hits were coming from within Mesa or outside of Mesa.
Answer: Mr. Lofgreen stated that this was a great question. At this point, this information is not being tracked, but this is something to dig deeper into in order to obtain this additional information.

Question: Steven Shope asked if they were currently buying Google AdWords.
Answer: Mr. Lofgreen answered no this is not currently happening. They are currently considering a digital ad program that would help drive additional traffic to the website and will put markers on the website to track the behavior of the individual users.

Comment: Steven Shope pointed out that currently the same person visiting the site multiple times is only counted as one visit. He felt like the additional visits by the same person would provide some valuable information and it would valuable to track this statistic as well.

Question: Natascha Ovando-Karadsheh asked if they are currently doing anything for lead capture. She suggested offering visitors some sort of free guide if their email address is entered. This would be an easy way to gain email addresses of some of their website visitors.
Answer: Mr. Lofgreen stated that with the new digital ad campaign, it would be possible to do things like lead capture, but also track behaviors to see if the person is looking for an expansion or relocation. The Mesa SizeUp tool does ask visitors to enter their email address in order to receive updates, but this is currently the only place where visitors are asked to provide this information.

6. <u>Director's Report:</u>

Vice Chair Wilson asked Director Jabjiniak to give an update. Bill Jabjiniak thanked Vice Chair Wilson for chairing the meeting in Laura Snow's absence. He thanked everyone that had attended the holiday get together. He mentioned that Council really enjoyed the opportunity to interact with the Board members. He pointed out that GPEC activities have been fairly slow due to the holidays. In the quarter ahead, GPEC will be traveling to several different shows. He reminded the Board about Business to Baseball. There have been several requests for Executours. The finalized date is March 10th, for Business to Baseball with the A's, but have not selected a date for the Cubs yet. Mr. Jabjiniak expects to have a good turnout at both of the Business to Baseball events. He mentioned a new brochure that had been created which discusses the Falcon Tech Center. He then passed out a copy of a brochure that was created in-house, which answers the question, "Why H.E.A.T?" Mr. Jabjiniak shared that he is excited about 2016 and expects many great things to take place throughout the year.

7. <u>Other Business</u>

Vice Chair Wilson asked if there was any other business to bring before the Board.

Comment: Brian Campbell stated that it is looking like tax allocation districts may gain some traction this year in the legislature. He asked if Staff had a team looking at this issue, in order to take advantage of it quickly, if the opportunity is presented.
Response: Director Jabjiniak said there has been early discussions with the Governor's office. The Mayor has been heavily involved in these discussions regarding the potential for tax allocation districts or TIF (Tax increment financing).

Comment: Brian Campbell applauded the efforts of Mayor Giles in this area and encouraged Staff and EDAB to think about the next stage in the process. He thought it would be a good idea to have a plan in place should this legislation be passed.

Comment: Director Jabjiniak reminded the Board that Mesa does not have a general fund property tax, so the impact for Mesa is significant, but not quite as significant as that to other communities.

Question: Terry Benelli asked what the support was like for this legislation outside of Maricopa County.
Answer: Brian Campbell stated that he had been pushing for a version of TIF for a very long time. He believes that if it does pass, everyone will pursue the opportunity aggressively. He has not heard anyone say they are against it.

Vice Chair Jo Wilson announced that the next meeting would be February 2, 2016. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Jeff Pitcher and seconded by Steven Shope. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 am.

Submitted By:

William J. Jabjiniak
Economic Development Department Director
(Prepared by Debbie Frazey)