MEETING MINUTES

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

Date: December 2, 2014 **Time:** 7:30 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT	EX-OFFICIO	STAFF PRESENT
Terry Benelli	Mayor John Giles (excused)	Bill Jabjiniak
Dominic Perry	Chris Brady	Andrew Clegg
Jeff Pitcher	Rich Adams	Karen McNulty
Steve Shope	Brian Campbell	Jaye O'Donnell
Laura Snow, Chair	Jeff Crockett	
	Sally Harrison	

MEMBERS ABSENT	GUESTS
James Christensen	
Tony Ham (excused)	
Jo Wilson (excused)	

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

   Chair Snow called the December 2, 2014 meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Board to order at 7:36 A.M. at the City Council Chambers, Lower Level, 57 E. 1st Street, Mesa, AZ 85201.

2. **Items from Citizens Present**

   None.

3. **Approval of Minutes from the November 4, 2014 Board Meeting**

   Chair Snow called for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on November 4, 2014.

   MOTION: **Ms. Benelli made a motion to approve the minutes.**
   SECOND: Dr. Shope
   DECISION: Passed unanimously

4. **City Manager Annual Follow-Up**

   Mr. Chris Brady, City Manager, provided a summary of the five or six focus areas of focus from the City's past strategic plan that will impact the economic growth of the City of Mesa.

   - Gateway Airport - investors are looking at this area for growth and expansion.
   - Falcon Field - continues to be a focus for opportunities to grow the area.
   - Downtown - focus continues on universities and working on redevelopment of downtown, and attracting, encouraging and bringing in new businesses.
   - Fiesta District - streetscape improvements have created a different look and feel. Buildings and malls are being repurposed to bring investors.
   - Riverview - the area has a new office building breaking ground in January which will bring new jobs. The new Sheraton Hotel is nearly completed and focus continues to bring in new businesses.
   - Empire - has added significantly to their facilities.

   The Board discussed the following items with Mr. Brady:

- More manufacturing, light industrial to create jobs and opportunities to refurbish older parts of the community and repurpose buildings.
- The Board expressed their concern and the importance of protecting the employment areas, resisting residential encroachment, and continuing the policy that when the Planning Department sees a residential project or any other type of project that could be in conflict with economic development and employment preservation goals, they be brought to the Board for discussion and consideration for recommendation.
- Mr. Brady was asked if there are adequate resources available to achieve the goals and keep up with the pace. Mr. Brady advised that yes, resources are available and have grown.
- Strategy for quality of life and how this is being communicated to the citizens. Mr. Brady noted Desert Trails Park and Riverview Park as well as other locations in the plan are for the public to enjoy. The City has been designing urban core concepts to create even more energy and activity with special places downtown. The Mayor is committed and is promoting Mesa as a great place to do business at every opportunity he has to meet with the public and prospective investors.
- The Board inquired if Visit Mesa can include more focus on the working attraction standpoint of Mesa. Mr. Brady noted that more branding and new messages to bring in business after the first of the year are in progress.
- The Board inquired how the City is looking forward to opportunities in trade zones, European and Canadian investments. Is there a way to push that forward? Mr. Brady advised that while in Washington, he and Mayor Giles met with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Commerce to discuss this subject, attend conferences and build connections. The Federal Government has Mesa on its radar screen.
- The Board inquired how they can assist and help in the area of economic development. Mr. Brady advised to keep working and do better at the state level and larger regional levels. The Board responded by pushing the message, partnering with organizations to seed individuals and resources in the community and make this a focus point and future agenda items.

Mr. Brady noted that the objective is to keep jobs and bring in quality investment. Developers may look for a certain type of workforce to develop, but it has to be driven by jobs with a focus on how the developer is going to create the jobs and spur economic development; residential should support economic development, but not be the driver. Mr. Brady noted one perspective is that in order to have a vibrant downtown and thriving retail, restaurant and nightlife, you must have residential to drive the activity. It is a balancing act between residential and economic development.

5. <u>OED Metrics</u>

This agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

6. <u>Business Registration/License Database</u>

Steve Shope, BR&E Subcommittee member

Dr. Shope discussed the importance of gathering data and information on small businesses and trends through a web based system. It is vital, critical and valuable to obtain current trends and focus on new trends in small business to help with outreach to new small businesses and current small businesses.

Dr. Shope offered to head this project and suggested that either MAG or GPEC fund the project, and invite other cities to opt in or out as a valuable tool and resource.

Mr. Brady commented that an agenda item is scheduled for next Monday to discuss the outdated software program for permits and plan review that tracks activity Staff is reviewing the next generation of software packages and funding to map out the process of interaction with businesses without another form of registration. Many existing businesses have alarms and have to come in to get permits for fire inspection. The goal is to create a portal that will collect information about the

business, size of building and number of employees. This will develop a registry and consolidate at least 80% of current businesses.

The database can then be used as a resource for businesses to reach the City for assistance. Home-based businesses not requiring permits could also register to have access to City resources. Mr. Brady suggested that MAG may be a good resource for valley-wide, regional trends.

7. **Committee Updates**

- **Accelerator** - The next meeting is being planned. The Chamber has offered memberships to the group and encouraged involvement. The College of Engineering is growing and will be helpful for resources and relationships with industries and be a major plus.
- **Healthcare** - Ms. Benelli stated that there was no update on Healthcare.
- **Higher Education** - Mr. Campbell stated that there was no update on Higher Education.
- **Marketing/Research** - No update on Marketing/Research.
- **Business Retention & Expansion** - No update on Business Retention & Expansion.

8. **Director's Report**

- AZLabs Update: Continues to be a work in progress, small activity and small square footage is being predicted going forward. A commercial realtor that has experience with federal and non-federal commercial entities looking for SCIFS has been engaged.
- GPEC Update: The push for Mesa is important and more engagement is taking place with still more to be done. It is still important to pull on the GPEC resources. We are seeing fewer quality projects where average salaries are down. The number of jobs are meeting goals with call center and back office locations driving some parts of the market.

  GPEC is on top of North America initiatives and strategies.

  The Annual Open House is scheduled for December 11.
- Marketing & Business Development Activities: New documents, brochures and website redesign are under way. No meeting has taken place on healthcare or education. Great discussions are taking place regarding the education perspective. There are some major initiatives to push and get on the table sooner rather than later, i.e., Fiesta District.
- State of the City will be held on February 3rd at the Convention Center with a check in time at 7 A.M.
- Mitzi Montoya's resignation from the Board has been accepted.
- Downtown housing update – The old Cox building at the corner of MacDonald and South First Avenue, has been demolished and market rate housing is forthcoming.

9. **Other Business**

- Mr. Jabjiniak provided a background of the Economic Utility Rate and updated the dialogue on the tool to use and reintroduce the utility rate for future projects
- Ms. Benelli suggested that the Transit Oriented Development guidebook be used as a tool for developing projects and community development. Mr. Jabjiniak suggested the opportunity to share knowledge is welcomed.
- Ms. Benelli provided the NEDCO annual report to the Board and announced her last day with NEDCO will be December 30, 2014. She has accepted the position of executive director of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation's (LISC) Phoenix program.
- Mr. Adams requested a future agenda item to provide an update on the Falcon Field Economic Activity Area Vision document.

- Chair Snow stated the next EDAB meeting will be held on January 6, 2015.

10. Adjournment

Chair Snow adjourned the board meeting at 8:54 A.M.

Submitted By:

William J. Jabjiniak
Economic Development Department Director
(Prepared by Beth Ann Moore)