

Meeting Minutes

EDAB Business Retention and Expansion Subcommittee

Date/time: Monday, November 10, 2014
8:30 AM

Location: Benedictine University
51 E. Main St, Gregory Hall
Mesa, AZ 85201

Members Present: Jo Wilson, Sally Harrison, Tony Ham, Leah Palmer, Steven Shope
Staff Present: Andrew Clegg

1. Chairman's Call to Order Jo Wilson

Chair Jo Wilson called the November 10, 2014 meeting of the EDAB/Business Retention and Expansion Subcommittee meeting to order at 8:38 AM at Benedictine University Gregory Hall, 51 E Main St., Mesa, AZ 85201.

2. Approval of Minutes Jo Wilson

Chair Jo Wilson asked for a motion to approve the minutes from June 9, 2014.
Motion: Tony Ham
Second: Leah Palmer
Decision: 4-0

3. Items from Citizens Present Jo Wilson

None

4. Review of Business Retention and Expansion Plan Activities Andrew Clegg

Chair Jo Wilson asked Mr. Andrew Clegg to give an update on the first round of business retention and expansion visits. Mr. Clegg began by reminding the committee the initial goal was to visit 60 businesses in a 90 day period. The goal for the first round of visits was met.

Mr. Clegg discussed the method for the visits. Businesses met with City staff and a member of the Mesa Chamber of Commerce staff. Businesses targeted were primarily

manufacturing or aviation related. In order to create a list of business targets, the Maricopa Association of Governments Employer Database and Hoovers employer research data were used to identify Mesa businesses. Visit results were also being maintained with the City of Mesa Office of Economic Development.

Mr. Clegg outlined the program goals for the second round of visits which are scheduled to begin in January of 2015. The goal was set at 60 visits over a 120 day period. Visits would continue to be conducted with Mesa Chamber of Commerce staff, and where appropriate members of either the Arizona Commerce Authority or the Greater Phoenix Economic Council.

Mr. Clegg discussed the main concerns that were identified during the interviews. The most commonly identified issue, brought up by multiple employers, was the availability of a qualified workforce. The lack of soft work skills was highlighted as one of the greatest concerns as well as a deficit in technical skills. The interviews demonstrated the businesses were not familiar with the workforce resources available to employers. Mr. Clegg provided contact information to the employers in follow up communications.

The committee discussed the workforce concerns and how soft skill gaps are being seen across different industries. Chair Wilson suggested City staff could have a conversation with Benedictine University staff responsible for adult/workforce education. The committee also discussed a need to get more businesses involved in internships, and how would be the best way to create an internship database that could be used by all of the Mesa higher education establishments.

In addition to workforce resources, businesses were unaware of other tools that were available to them, specifically incentives and grants that were available through the Arizona Commerce Authority. Mr. Clegg provided this information to employers as well.

Mr. Steven Shope asked Mr. Clegg about the accuracy of the Employer Database used to create the target list. Mr. Clegg described the list as not complete and the information was not 100% accurate. Time was needed after a company was identified to ensure that the business was still in operation and in Mesa. Mr. Shope stated that this is a good indication of why the City should have a business registration database and that he would like to discuss this in further detail in a future full advisory board meeting.

Mr. Clegg asked the committee for direction on where they would like to take the data and feedback from employers. Chair Wilson suggested that staff should continue with the second round of visits and compare the results with the first round which the committee agreed with.

Committee members discussed when the next meeting should occur. It was decided that the next meeting would be called after the second round of visits was completed.

5. Adjournment

Jo Wilson

Chair Jo Wilson adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:39 AM.

Submitted By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William J. Jabjiniak", is written over a solid horizontal line.

William J. Jabjiniak
Economic Development Director
(Prepared by Andrew Clegg)