

CEDS COMMITTEE MEETING MARCH 30, 2015

M I N U T E S

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Belinda Akes called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Belinda Akes, Bobby Davis, Sam Hosler, Melissa Rabago, Marissa Garnett, Jennifer Evans, Richard Wilkie, Tim Kanavel, Bill Bolin.

Staff Present: Brad Mecham

Guests:

A quorum was established.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, December 3, 2015

Mr. Davis made a motion to approve the December 3, 2015 CEDS Committee minutes as presented. Mr. Hosler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Year to Date Review

Mr. Mecham presented a brief overview of what has been accomplished to date and what needs to occur in the near future. Mr. Mecham presented the priority areas to the CEDS Committee for review. The Committee provided feedback that under *Quality of Life* there needed to be some strategies relating to tourism and marketing the region to visitors.

Priority Areas:

- 1) Workforce Development
- 2) Broadband Infrastructure
- 3) Traditional Infrastructure – Water, sewer, gas, power
- 4) Economic Diversification
- 5) Water Conservation/Management
- 6) Regional Flood Control

- 7) Quality of Life
- 8) Regional Transportation Network

B. Performance Measures and Resilience

The CEDS Committee held a discussion on how to benchmark the region based on key statistics in order to track performance and economic resilience. Following is a summary of committee input:

Ms. Rabago: Resolution Copper tracks workforce statistics and is looking to hire students out of high school as part of future expansion.

Mr. Hosler: Natural resources need to be identified and preserved. Funding is a key issue and should be tracked. Winkelman's Natural Resources Conservation District recently was awarded \$300,000 for Tamarask removal. Tamarask is a non-native species that is a critical fire hazard. Mr. Hosler also mentioned Henderson, Nevada as a potential template for communities that may be interested in xeriscaping.

Ms. Akes: Eloy has interested builders if the economy keeps ticking back up. Keeping track of housing starts would be beneficial.

Mr. Bolin: It would be beneficial to track investments in broadband infrastructure in the region. Mr. Bolin is working to find funding for network expansions and new services throughout the state. Expanding the network would help attract visitors to the region. Keeping track of visitor counts and preferences would be data worth collecting.

Ms. Rabago: Ms. Rabago participates in the Copper Corridor Economic Development Coalition. CCEDC considers tourism an important part of the local economy for visitors and winter visitors alike. Mr. Bolin suggested using ASU grad students to track tourism statistics in the Copper Corridor.

Mr. Hosler: Tracking winter visitors and spending would be a benefit to several communities. Our chambers could be doing more to reach out to winter visitors through marketing brochures and other forms of marketing.

The Committee had a discussion on CAG's role in tourism. CAG can assist communities as requested. Funding is a key issue, but hosting meetings, facilitating discussions, and providing some design support for marketing would fall under current funding streams. Additional funding would need to be identified in order to form a more robust program.

Mr. Wilkie: Mr. Wilkie suggested also utilizing community college students to provide presentations and support in marketing, apps for smart phones, and hosting workshops in communities for local businesses. He also suggested that Arizona Public Service has

partnered with several communities for printing marketing materials and other documents. These students could also be beneficial in helping to update town websites while towns can keep track of website visitors.

Ms. Evans: The Arizona Trail is an important asset. Knowing the number of tourists on the trail and their spending potential could help businesses learn how to market to these visitors.

C. Business Resources Discussion

The CEDS Committee provided feedback on an initial draft of business resources within the region. This resource listing will be posted on the CAG website when completed.

D. CEDS Committee Roundtable

Each member of the CEDS Committee had the opportunity to share what is going on in their communities and professions. Mr. Wilkie suggested that rural communities participate on the Arizona Association for Economic Development Rural Committee. Mr. Davis is on that Committee and shared that it is open to anyone. Mr. Davis also shared that there would be an AAED Economic Roundtable for Central/Eastern Arizona on April 20th, 2016 in Payson.

V. CALL TO THE PUBLIC/MEMBERS

There were no comments from the public.

VI. FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting will be held May 11, 2016 at the main CAG office in the City of Apache Junction.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Belinda Akes adjourned the meeting at 3:15 PM.

Approved by: _____ DAY OF _____, 2015