

Governor's Council on Small Business

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Friday, February 6, 2009

1:00 p.m.

Executive Tower, 6th Floor Conference Room
1700 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Minutes

Call To Order / Welcome

Chair Judy Wood called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Members Present: Michael Coles, Kent Ennis, Mayor Michael Ong Hing, Stephen Macias, Lea Márquez-Peterson, Rosiland Moore, Ray Pugel, Choo Tay, David Williamson, Judy Wood, Julian Nabozny.

Members Absent: Pam Del Duca, Regis Sommers, Thomas Kiley, Michael Fox

Staff: Executive Director, Vanessa Gonzalez

Presenters: Dennis Doby, Kathy Rodriguez

Approval of Minutes

Chair Judy Wood continued with the approval of minutes from October 10, 2008 meeting. Ms. Rosiland Moore motioned to approve minutes. Mayor Michael Ong Hing seconded that motion. Motion adopted.

Remarks from Interim Director Kent Ennis:

Interim Director Kent Ennis introduced himself to the Council and offered his and Commerce's assistance.

Presentations:

Dennis Doby, Senior Director of Labor Market Information (1:06 p.m.) - introduced Arizona Workforce Informer. He presented a wide variety of state, regional and local labor market, demographic and economic data, including: employment statistics, occupation and industry estimates and projections, wage and price indices, and population/demographic statistics.

For more information on the Arizona Workforce Informer, visit www.workforce.az.gov.

Kathy Rodriguez, Assistant Director, Small Business Services (1:37 p.m.) – presented their online resource center available to the business community, where you can find information on business licensing, statewide resources, certification, procurement opportunities, and much more.

- Arizona Entrepreneur's Edge is a resource guide to help you start and grow your business in Arizona. Available in hardcopy and online.
- Step-by-Step Checklist to Start, Operate and Grow a Business in Arizona is a website that guides you to commonly requested licensing information and statewide resources, enables you to link over and download most of the business forms you many need, and allows you to create a free custom checklist of information pertinent to your business needs.

For more information and to access these two resources and more, visit the Small Business Services Homepage at www.azcommerce.com/smallbiz.

Commerce Update (2:15 p.m.)

Executive Director Vanessa Gonzalez gave an overview of Commerce's current status and provided the following remarks:

- **Interim Director Kent Ennis** has an amazing background in economics. Commerce is very fortunate to have him representing our Agency.
- **Budget update-** The damage to Commerce's budget was the same as it was for many other agencies. State funding for Commerce has been reduced and/or swept away; however, federal funding continues to be available. Since many Commerce programs intertwine with each other, the budget cuts have been very complicated.
If a grant was paid out before the freezing date, the client is fine. Commerce is not allowed to break any contract. No grants will be awarded until further notice.
- **No stances on bills or budget**
- **Senate Hearing** - Interim Director Ennis, Ms. Lisa Danka, Director of Finance and Investment, and Ms. Jaye O'Donnell, Director of Marketing and Business Attraction, represented Commerce in a Senate Hearing. They stated very clearly why Commerce exists and has continued to exist over the years and clarified that it is not duplicating efforts of other service providers. They described the state incentive programs and packages and elaborated on Business Attraction activities and Commerce and Economic Development Commission (CEDC). Commerce has supporters within the Senate; however other senators need more clarification as to why Commerce is essential for the sustainability of the State of Arizona.
- **Boards and Commissions** are currently on hold. No administrative staff has been identified.
This Council meeting was called to update members on our current situation as known to date. However, no meeting will be called unless a March Order is received.

Business Community Updates (2:17 p.m.)

Each Council Member provided an update of the issues and concerns their business communities are experiencing and their approach to solve the problem(s). The following points were expressed:

- Economic slowdown reaching a plateau.
- Closure of businesses
- Government purchasing from local vendors
- Businesses dealing with cutbacks
- Creating a friendlier business climate with not so many regulatory offices
- Chamber membership decline
- Refocusing efforts in their businesses
- Cut backs on education
- Costs of healthcare

Call to the Public (2:36 p.m.)

Chair Judy Wood made a call to the public at 2:36 p.m. No public present

Announcements (2:36 p.m.)

- Vice Chair Michael Coles commented that Governor Brewer is very responsive and if you email her office, you will have her staff answering in a timely manner.
- Mr. David Robert Williamson suggested creating a survey that the Council can present to their small business communities.
- Visit www.azleg.gov to check on the status of Bills.

Adjournment

Chair Judy Wood asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Michael Coles motioned to adjourn meeting. Ms. Márquez-Peterson seconded that motion. Motion adopted at 2:39 p.m.