



Thursday, July 21, 2016

3:00PM

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| <p><u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u> Lucretia Free Linda Morales Kent Blumenthal Joy Soler Mark Miller Rhonda Pina Ken Goodman</p> | <p><u>MEMBERS ABSENT</u> Lyra Done Gabrielle David Patricia Brown Marion Hook</p> <p><u>OTHERS PRESENT</u> Felipe Garcia Teresa Bravo Aurora Hernandez Rhonda Lynn Stubbs Christina Parisi Patrick Cavanaugh Tom Moulton</p> |
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Call to order-the meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Free at 3:10 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance – the pledge was led by Chairwoman Free.

Approvals of Minutes- Minutes of the May 19th meeting were approved unanimously.

Chair’s Report- Chairwoman Free relinquished her time to the speakers.

Vice-Chair Report- Vice-Chair Done absent- no report

Small Business and Mexico Opportunities- Felipe Garcia-Visit Tucson, Christina Parisi –US Commercial Services, and Teresa Bravo from Pima County Economic Development Department came and spoke to the Commission about Small Business Opportunities with Mexico.

Christina Parisi from the US Commercial Services said they have three offices in Mexico; Hermosillo, Mexico City and Guadalajara. They work with smaller businesses in international trade matching them to each other in different countries. They assist companies in obtaining the proper documents and permits for exporting to comparable companies, finding a work force in other countries that match their needs. They not only work with companies in Mexico, but companies internationally.

Felipe Garcia Vice President of Visit Tucson spoke about Visit Tucson’s role in economic development for Pima County. Visit Tucson works to bring in the tourists from Mexico who spend 24-25 million a year shopping in Tucson. There is now a program that keeps count of how many times they cross the border and extended the “Border Zone” giving a bigger area and a better idea of how monies are being spent. Tucson is now the top destination of choice for Mexican tourists.

Teresa Bravo, Pima County Coordinator of Economic Development and International Projects, Pima County works very closely with Visit Tucson and the City of Tucson at their sister office in Hermosillo. There is a lot of interest in trade with Mexico but people are unwilling to try because they think it is very difficult to do. There are many issues that need to be simplified and Teresa is now working on a listing of what needs to be done and whom to contact both here and in Mexico. They are working on step by step instructions of what is needed to be able to export or import from Mexico.

There are also trade missions where US companies are taken to Mexico to tour the areas and interact with companies. Mexico is a bi-cultural nation more than bi-lingual; time needs to be spent there getting to know the people and the companies to build relationships as opposed to learning the language, since most companies are English speaking. And they are now creating a new program where Mexican companies can come down to Tucson and building relationships here.

The three entities work very closely together and the SBC will continue to support them. The Commission will also try to find ways to get small businesses interested in importing and exporting products to Mexico.

At this time the remainder of the agenda was deferred to next month.

Other Commissioners Reports – Commissioner Blumenthal distributed a draft of the SBC Award Application form for further review by the Commission.

Call to the Public- No response.

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 PM.