



## MINUTES

### Economic Development Commission

January 22, 2014

Town of Queen Creek

22358 S. Ellsworth Road, Queen Creek, AZ 85142

San Tan Conference Room

7:30 am

#### 1. Call to Order and Introductions

Each member introduced themselves

Lee Ester, Chairman  
Sam Cruz  
Jason Gad  
Warde Nichols  
Cindy Barnes Pharr  
Tom Lindsey  
Jason Barney  
Mark Schnepf  
Derek Neighbors

SRP  
Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport  
Town Council  
ASU Polytechnic  
CGCC  
Queen Creek Unified School District  
Circle G Development  
Schnepf Farms  
Resident

Doreen Cott  
Kim Moyers  
Joy Maglione  
Chris Anaradian  
Debra Kuffner

Town of Queen Creek  
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#### **Absent:**

Carson Brown, Vice Chairman  
Steve Sossaman  
Perry Rea  
Matt Frank

W Holdings  
P& Z Liaison, Resident  
Queen Creek Olive Mill  
Unison Bank

The meeting was called to order at 7:43 a.m. by Chairman Ester.

#### 2. Public Comment:

No public comments were received.

#### 3. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

A. Consideration and possible approval of the October 23, 2013 minutes.  
*Commissioner Nichols moved to approve the minutes of October 23, 2013. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

B. Presentation, discussion and possible recommendation on the QC Incubator program

Economic Development Director Doreen Cott gave an overview of the QC Incubator program. She reported that the Town received a grant for a feasibility study and an office style incubator was recommended as a good fit for our community at that time. The incubator has been in operation for three years at two different locations. Ms. Cott noted that they work closely with other incubators in the area and the AZ Board of Incubators Association, where Kim Moyers sits as a board member. Ms. Cott highlighted some of the success stories at QC Inc. and said that staff continuously explores new ideas for different types of incubator programs that could complement our strategic plan.

Ms. Cott stated that Town Council discussed the incubator program at their annual retreat and asked staff to provide an update on program goals, missions and the criteria for determining success for the program. The item will be on the Feb 19 Town Council agenda.

Economic Development Specialist Kim Moyers reported that the incubator is running at full capacity and has 10 tenants along with several part time tenants. The incubator is currently an office style incubator and includes a variety of professional service businesses. QC Inc is a one-stop shop providing small business assistance; counseling; mentoring and networking opportunities. Ms. Moyers said that commercial office space in Queen Creek is limited and the incubator provides a stepping stone for home-based and small business owners to build a base and grow their business. It also helps to attract businesses that may consider Queen Creek risky and would not otherwise consider locating here.

Ms. Cott asked the committee for ideas on the direction of the incubator, how to get to the next level and what type of user we would like to see in the future.

The committee discussed cost recovery; rental rates; the need for more office space in Queen Creek; options for additional incubator space if needed; other incubator programs in the East Valley and how to accurately measure the success of the program.

Commissioner Neighbors gave a brief background of his experience with incubator programs. He commented that the purpose of incubators is to create a climate for innovation and provide a path to generate ideas and build connectivity. He said that incubators do not typically generate sales tax or lead to new employees, particularly with office style incubators. He suggested that we try to plan a path for growth by creating adequate office and industrial space, so if we were able to land a big high-tech tenant they could easily remain in Queen Creek.

Commissioner Barney added that local service type businesses create a good base to build on, but the next step should be to attract innovative businesses that wouldn't normally come here.

Council Member Gad explained that Council is looking to collect information, determine what the next phase for the program will be and determine how to judge success of the program.

*Commissioner Barney made a motion to stay the course and evaluate a new strategic plan for the incubator program. Commissioner Neighbors seconded. Motion carried.*

C. Discussion on activities at Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Centre

No discussion was held on this item.

D. Update and discussion on the 2013 Major General Amendments and related studies.

Community Development Director Chris Anaradian reviewed the General Plan Amendments with a focus on the 4 cases that have impact on commercial and industrial property within the town. He reported that the Town's focus is to determine what is an adequate balance of commercial, industrial and residential uses for the future of the Town.

He explained that the Town has commissioned TischlerBise to study the fiscal impacts of the General Plan Amendments cases. In addition, a new fiscal balance report from MAG (Maricopa County Association of Governments) was recently released which addressed the return of investment for Queen Creek and other east valley cities. He reported that numbers for Queen Creek changed significantly, with residential construction increasing from .60 to .90 per dollar. The two reports will be reviewed by staff to try to determine a range of how much land is needed for retail, office and industrial development.

Mr. Anaradian also discussed market absorption for new projects; the down side of holding onto too much commercial/industrial land; uncertainty of East Valley commercial developers post recession and the anticipated needs for our town at 90,000 residents in 2040.

He concluded that we have to preserve the appropriate amount of land with a focus on location and coordinate with the private sector to provide additional infrastructure so we can begin to create shovel ready sites. Mr. Anaradian will ask the Planning & Zoning Commission to slow down their work to allow for a careful review of the new analysis that was recently received.

E. Discussion on the 2014 Economic Development Summit

Ms. Cott reported that initial meetings to plan this year's summit have begun and Development Services staff has expressed an interest to become involved and combine forces. Ms. Cott will be asking the Commission for volunteers to sit on a subcommittee to help plan this year's summit.

F. Summary of current events – Reports from Chair, Commission Members and Economic Development Staff.

- Ms. Cott reported on the RFP for the 20-acre town-owned parcel. Three proposals were received and Town Council requested additional information from two developers.
- Commissioner Lindsey distributed a copy of the Queen Creek Unified School District Community Report. He said it is an important tool to educate the community on the accomplishments of the school district.
- Ground breaking for Harkins Theatre is on Saturday, February 15 at 10 a.m.
- Grand opening for the Communiversity is on Thursday, February 20 at 8:30 a.m
- Commissioner Barnes Pharr announced that Chandler Gilbert Community College is holding their annual scholarship fundraiser. Tickets are available if needed.
- Economic Development Commission meetings are held monthly on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:30 a.m. Email notifications will be sent as needed.

**4. Announcements**

None

**5. Adjournment**

*Commissioner Barney moved to adjourn. Commissioner Schnepf seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.*

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TOWN OF QUEEN CREEK

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Lee Ester, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Joy Maglione, Town Clerk Assistant

I, Joy Maglione, do hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and January 22, 2014 meeting of the Queen Creek Town Economic Development Commission. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

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Joy Maglione

Passed and approved on APRIL 23, 2014