

RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2023 - 10:30 AM

Hybrid Meeting

ACA - Humphrey's Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://azcommerce.zoom.us/j/7887648493>

I. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chairman Danny Seiden, Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry called the meeting of the Rural Business Development Advisory Council to order at 10:34 AM. Heather Escobedo, Arizona Commerce Authority, noted roll call.

Committee Members Present

- Angie Harmon, Statewide
- Mayor Tom Murphy, Pima County
- Danny Seiden, Maricopa County (Chairman)
- Tricia Lewis, Yavapai County Committee
- Danny Smith, Graham County
- Doug Nicholls, Yuma County
- Keith Watkins, Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA)
- Dustie Robinette, Greenlee County
- Deanna Beaver, La Paz County

Committee Members Not Present

- Tony Boone, Cochise County
- Gary Kellogg, Mohave County
- Jaime Chamberlain, Santa Cruz County
- Julie Pastrick, Coconino County
- Keith Johnson, Navajo County
- Nathan Levi Esquerra, Tribal Representative
- Fernando Shipley, Gila County
- Paul Ramsey, Apache County
- Steven Miller, Pinal County

Other Members Present

- Jamie Kerr, VP, Rural Economic Development (ACA)
- Heather Escobedo, Project Manager, HR/Operations (ACA)
- Sarah Forlano, Executive Assistant, Arizona Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- J. McGill, State of Arizona, Auditor General's Office

II. **Welcome and Remarks - Danny Seiden, President and CEO of Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

Chairman Danny Seiden gave updates on the following:



- ACA is continuing to exceed their yearly goals with a number of new and ongoing initiatives.
- HB 2209 is making its way through the legislature. The bill is an agency continuation bill of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).
 - OEO is the authoritative data repository for the state that brings together demographic research and workforce data to inform the work of the state agencies, and economic development in particular
 - OEO is currently slated to sunset July 1, 2023
 - HB 2209 extends this date to July 1, 2027
- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) or Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation (BIL) continues to roll out federal grants including the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). These are once-in-a-generation funding; please stay abreast for these opportunities.
- The Arizona Chamber of Commerce is also very supportive of HB 2809 which is an infrastructure funding bill that counties, cities, and towns can utilize to get reimbursed for large funding outlays related to infrastructure projects that serve employers.

III. **Consent Agenda***

Approval of October 19, 2022 RBDAC Meeting Minutes

Tom Murphy moved to approve minutes, as is. Keith Watkins seconded the motion; all in favor; the motion approved.

IV. **IIJA Task Force - Keith Watkins, Senior Vice President, Arizona Commerce Authority**

Keith Watkins provided details and updates on IIJA Task Force.

V. **Broadband Update - Keith Watkins, Senior Vice President, Arizona Commerce Authority**

Keith Watkins provided updates on Broadband initiatives.

VI. **ACA Update - Keith Watkins, Senior Vice President, Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA)**

Keith Watkins provided updates on ACA projects and initiatives which included Int'l offices and year to date project updates of 15 Rural projects, 1300 jobs and 2M Capital Investments.

VII. **Roundtable Discussion**

Each attendee gave an update regarding their respective community.

VIII. **Call to Public**

Chairman Seiden called for comments from members of the public. No members of the public were in attendance.

IX. **Adjournment**

Chairman Danny Seiden moved to adjourn meeting; Tom Murphy seconded the motion; all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 11:17 AM.

