

## GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY

August 15, 2022

**Meeting Convened:** 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held in person at the Fire Department Training Room, 625 Ute Avenue, and live streamed via GoToWebinar.

**City Councilmembers Present:** Mayor Pro Tem Abe Herman, Councilmembers Phil Pe'a, Randall Reitz, Dennis Simpson, and Mayor Anna Stout

**City Councilmembers Absent:** Councilmembers Chuck McDaniel and Rick Taggart

**Staff present:** City Manager Greg Caton, City Attorney John Shaver, City Clerk Amy Phillips, Deputy City Clerk Selestina Sandoval, Finance Director Jodi Welch, Financial Analyst Matt Martinez and Best and Brightest Fellow Andrea Brush

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### **1. Discussion Topics**

#### **a. Chamber/GJEP Volunteer Leaders – Roles and Collaboration**

Chair of the Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Ivan Geer and Chair of Grand Junction Economic Partnership Board of Directors (GJEP) Karen Troester presented the joint efforts to create a strong local economy in the City.

Ms. Troester spoke of the North Star report with the key outcome of clarifying the roles and responsibilities of GJEP (business recruitments), the Chamber of Commerce (business retention and expansion) and the Business Incubator (business creation). When there is an opportunity for business, all three entities work together to create a seamless experience for companies to thrive in the community. Several examples were noted. Mr. Geer expressed their commitment to leverage their strengths and resources to maximize the City's investment in the community.

Discussion ensued regarding updating the existing Economic Development (ED) Partners Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

#### **b. Chamber of Commerce Report**

Vice President of the Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce Candace Carnahan gave an update on the business retention and expansion program. Ms. Carnahan outlined the goals of the program and summarized some of the impacts of the last 12 months: \$36.1 million in capital investments, 80 new jobs, 112 business visits and that a position was taken on 43 pieces of legislation that would directly impact the local business climate. She also spoke of the ongoing efforts of the program.

### **c. Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP) Report**

GJEP Director Curtis Englehart gave a presentation on highlights of the last year: six jumpstart companies approved, 500 attendees at the Western Colorado Economic Summit, Welcome Wagon website specific to remote workers, marketing and communications outreach reached historic highs and they hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual West Slope StartUp Week. The impacts, as a result of those efforts, translated to 310 potential new jobs, \$52,650 average wage and \$5,775,000 capital investment. He summarized the 2023 focus areas of the organization which included continued recruitment of prospects, especially to Las Colonias Park, increased fundraising efforts, strategic planning with economic partners, development of economic impact/return on investment (ROI) reports and maximizing the Economic Summit on the Western Slope.

Conversation resumed regarding updating the MOU and allowing the current, new leadership of the economic partners time to settle in their positions before moving forward with any updates to the document to ensure there are no gaps that need to be addressed. Council expressed their appreciation for GJEP's focus areas of 2023, requested that the Latino Chamber of Commerce be included in the MOU and that a workshop be scheduled to further discuss changes.

### **d. Industrial Development Inc. Report**

Executive Director of Industrial Development, Inc. (IDI) Diane Schwenke gave a brief history of IDI noting it is the oldest economic development organization in the valley, originally encompassing all three economic partners (Chamber of Commerce, GJEP and the Business Incubator). She stated that IDI brings additional community assets to the table, many times in the form of land. She summarized IDI's mission, the current incentive fund balance/obligations, and highlighted 2021/2022 IDI efforts.

Discussion ensued regarding the land that IDI holds and past developments it has assisted with.

### **e. Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance Report**

Co-Executive Director of the Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance Diane Schwenke spoke of the organization's goals given the current air service industry: enhance access to the global and national air transportation to Grand Junction business passengers, increase access to affordable air service at Grand Junction Regional Airport (GJT), attract new service on existing routes, and make GJT the airport of choice for residents within a 200-mile radius. She outlined the ongoing efforts going forward which included the Catchment Study, hiring a marketing firm to brand and promote GJT and \$550,000 of incentive dollars committed for nonstop daily service to San Francisco.

Discussion ensued regarding Montrose Airport's model and potential partnerships with other nearby airports.

Council asked the ED Partners if they were in agreement to schedule a workshop before the end of the year to discuss the ED Partners MOU and possible changes. Those present agreed.

## **2. City Council Communication**

Councilmember Simpson asked for Council to consider changing the budget presentation process. After discussion, an additional budget workshop was added.

Councilmember Reitz asked about the selection process for the future external auditor. Finance Director Welch stated they are working on a Request for Proposal.

Mayor Stout spoke of her visit to Greeley where she met with their City Manager and Mayor about their work with Richmark.

Councilmember Reitz updated Council on a discussion with Councilmember Taggart regarding next steps if he is elected as Representative of House District 55.

## **3. Next Workshop Topics**

City Manager Caton reviewed upcoming topics

## **4. Other Business**

There being no further business, the Workshop adjourned at 6:56 pm.