

**THE WORKSESSION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
OF BENSON, ARIZONA HELD APRIL 28, 2008
AT CITY HALL AT 6:00 P.M.**

**MAYOR FENN
OPENED THE MEETING AT 6:00 P.M WITH
THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

**PRESENT WERE: MAYOR FENN, VICE MAYOR KING,
COUNCILMEMBERS LODZINSKI, McGOFFIN, SACCO, SUAGEE, and TIPTON**

NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation by Jan Leshar of the
Arizona Department of Commerce
Regarding Economic Development:

Mayor Fenn introduced Jan Leshar, the Director of the Arizona Department of Commerce. Mayor Fenn stated he had previously had the opportunity to attend a meeting at the Department of Commerce with other Mayors throughout the State and that Ms. Leshar gave an informative presentation regarding economic development. Mayor Fenn then stated Ms. Leshar had agreed to give the presentation to Council.

Ms. Leshar addressed Council stating the meeting Mayor Fenn had mentioned was the Mayors Summit and it had focused on the governor's plans for economic development. Ms. Leshar stated the governor had rolled out a program, Arizona Economic Resources Organization (AERO) and gave a brief history on the creation of AERO. Ms. Leshar stated as budget talks begin each year, the elimination of the Department of Commerce is discussed. Recently, the governor convened a group of business leaders, who worked under the title "Project DCTR" (Department of Commerce Total Revamp). Ms. Leshar stated the business leaders came back with the recommendation to strengthen the Department of Commerce and make it be stronger in the coordination of economic development in the State. With the recommendation, new areas to focus on were created and it kicked off AERO.

Ms. Leshar stated the Energy office had been expanded to add significant expertise in solar and energy policy and that the research administration division was moved from the Department of Economic Security to the Department of Commerce allowing them to focus on the research of the state, including population, statistics, etc.

Ms. Leshar then spoke of the need to diversify the economy and that those efforts need to be coordinated. Some programs that exist in the State are the Greater Arizona Development Authority, the Commerce and Economic Development Commission, the Research and Development Arm, the Arizona Global Network. Ms. Leshar stated AERO is now the coordinating body for these programs and is to triage projects out to communities and to regional economic development organizations. Ms. Leshar stated that AERO is to examine state-wide policies

and determine which are keeping Arizona from being competitive and then make recommendations to the state.

Ms. Leshner then stated the Department of Commerce does not envision AERO as competing with other entities for economic development, but is to enhance what others are doing, since 80-85% of inquiries in economic development come to the State.

Ms. Leshner then said the State's role is to find ways to brand and market Arizona to companies not only around the country, but internationally and to then provide a safety net for parts of rural Arizona that do not have access to larger economical development organizations, making sure everyone has a chance to have a job in Arizona and that those jobs are available in all portions of the state.

Adjournment:

Vice Mayor King moved to adjourn at 6:40 p.m. Seconded by Councilmember Lodzinski. Motion passed 7-0.

Mark M. Fenn, Mayor

ATTEST:

Vicki L. Vivian, City Clerk