MEETING MINUTES  
BUSINESS ATTRACTION & RETENTION COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, December 20, 2016  
CALLED BY: Co Chairs Brian Andersen and Brian Montes  
LOCATION: Irvine Chamber of Commerce  
36 Executive Park, Ste. 100  
Irvine, CA 92614

I. OPENING
• Meeting called to Order at 4:10 p.m., by Co-chair, Brian Andersen.

II. SELF-INTRODUCTIONS
Brian Andersen welcomes Brian Montes as the incoming Co-Chair of the Committee.  
Other attendees include Dan Han, Jennifer Oswald, Scott Schultz, Deena Brown, Richard Gomez, Linda DiMario, Brenda Callen, Pepper Russell.

III. COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT & STRATEGIC PLAN
Brian Montes reviews the Mission Statement which outlines the work to be done by the Committee Task Forces in order to complete the identified goals.

IV. NEW BUSINESS
• Large Company Outreach  
This is a new Task Force that is being assembled to assist the larger companies in our area. The Task Force will be headed by Christina Cala and will meet before the next BAR meeting in February, 2017.

V. TASK FORCE REPORTS
• Business Outreach – Update provided by Brian Andersen.  
The Business Outreach Rally Task Force has a new Leader, welcome Brenda Callen. The group will meet soon to discuss strategy moving forward.

The results of the Business Outreach Rally were reviewed. The Common Themes were discussed first:  
City Permitting, inspecting and fixing issues – it appears that the City’s employees have not increased to match the rate of the growth of businesses in the area. This has caused unnecessary delays in several areas.

Traffic and parking issues – there are not enough stop lights to assist traffic flow. Industrial areas are seeing more residential growth encroaching on their turf and the number of traffic accidents has increased significantly in these areas.

Networking, word-of-mouth, finding new sales and marketing channels – this issue is new to the survey, we need to find a way to get the word out to the business community that we have these resources for them for the offering, but they must also be willing to take advantage of the opportunities.
Workforce – lack of preparedness for the workplace and/or soft skills – also a new issue to the survey, we have a program (Career Edge) in the Economic & Workforce Development Committee to address these skills gaps and to prepare candidates who are ready to step into the work fields succeed. Rents, leases too high to accommodate expansion/need for growth – with new construction and housing increasing in the city there is an obvious need. We cannot do anything about this issue.

Scott Schultz speaks about the traffic issues: The City of Irvine has done a traffic study with an independent consultant and has that information on file. It may be that the process will move more quickly now that the election season has passed.

Linda DiMario asked the group to describe the current perception of people who have had prior chamber experiences (not with the Irvine Chamber)? The responses were that the Irvine Chamber of Commerce is much different from other Chambers and that where other Chambers may be considered old fashioned and “stuffy,” the Irvine Chamber is quite the opposite.

Chamber positives were listed as: Continual networking opportunities, business making (Leads) opportunities, working Committees, Ambassadors, diversity of the Chamber membership, outreach to the business community, member to member discount opportunities, educational and informational resources, relationship building opportunities, and the ability to advocate with the City on behalf of the local businesses.

A suggestion was made that we consider holding symbolic “Ribbon Cuttings” for those businesses without the brick and mortar locations. Businesses operating online could gather at the Chamber location quarterly to have their “Ribbon Cutting” here, with pictures and set up just as an actual Ribbon Cutting ceremony would be held.

INTERESTING THEMES in the Survey Results:
1. Language problems between the City and local businesses in accomplishing the permit processes. Is it possible to engage younger entrepreneurs to fill interpretation needs of those businesses needing this service?
2. Companies need assistance with sales pipelines. Find more ways to market our networking opportunities and resources to the local business world.
3. Companies are asking for help with building customer relationships and connections. Same as #2.


• Start-Up Eco-System – Brian Montes provided updates. The Task Force met and is working with a data company to identify ways to assist and focusing on “What do we need to do to retain start-ups?” Their attention is now on these goals:
  1) Dovetail on properties – helping new companies find spaces to utilize and rents that are not prohibitive.
  2) Collective mindset building – using HUBS as a collaborative effort to network, possibly using open spaces to hold events to bring start-ups together.

VI. CHAIRS’ COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION – None.
VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS
- December 21 – EWD Meeting @ 4:00 p.m. at the Chamber
- December 22 through December 27 – CHAMBER OFFICES CLOSED, MERRY CHRISTMAS
- December 30, 2016 through January 2, 2017 – CHAMBER OFFICES CLOSED  HAPPY NEW YEAR

VII. ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m., by Co-Chair Brian Andersen.

Minutes recorded by Pepper Russell.

Next Meeting:
February 21, 2017
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Irvine Chamber of Commerce
36 Executive Park, Ste. 100 Irvine, CA 92614