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## Industry and Economic Development Committee Meeting

**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023

**Time:** 11:30 a.m. MST

**Location:** Workforce Solutions Borderplex, Inc.  
304 Texas Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room  
El Paso, Texas 79901

**Committee Members Present:**

Ruben Torres  
Joseph Biernacki  
Christina Gonzalez  
Art Garza

**Committee Members Absent:**

Ralph Adame  
Leonard Goodman  
Dr. William Serrata

**Staff Members Present:**

Leila Melendez  
Abigail Ruiz  
Alma Aranda  
Bianca Cervantes

Denisse Wiley  
Eduardo Anaya  
Karina Castillo  
Marisela Correa

Myriam Guerrero  
Niquisha Washington  
Zonia Sigala

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## MINUTES

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND NOTE OF ATTENDANCE

*Ruben Torres, Industry and Economic Development Committee Chair*

*Mr. Ruben Torres, Industry and Economic Development Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:36 am. MST. Quorum was cited.*

### 2. ACTIVITY REPORTS

**A: Discussion and update on the Business Collaboration Contracts**

*(Bianca Cervantes, Communications Director)*

- Overview of completed contracts
- El Paso Hispanic Chamber and El Paso Chamber Presentations – Immigration Forum *(Terri Reed EPHC -Business Center, El Paso Project Director and Mia - Romero Director of Advocacy)*

*Ms. Bianca Cervantes, Communications Director, discussed the Business Partnership agreements WSB has with El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, El Paso Chamber, Borderplex Alliance, Paso Del Norte Community Foundation and Technology Hub. Ms. Desirae Manzanarez EPHC -Business Center, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy and*

*Ms. Mia - Romero Director of Advocacy discussed the advocacy for immigration reform and addressing labor shortages and a broken immigration system.*

**B:** Discussion and updates on Economic and Workforce Development projects  
*(Leila Melendez, Chief Executive Officer, and Alma Aranda, Director of Innovation and Development)*

- EDA Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program Grant
- NSF Regional Innovation Engines Grant: Paso del Norte Innovation for Defense and Aerospace (IDEA) Engine

*Ms. Leila Melendez, Chief Executive Officer, and Ms. Alma Aranda, Director of Innovation and Development, discussed two grants that staff is currently working on; EDA Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program Grant and NSF Regional Innovation Engines Grant: Paso del Norte Innovation for Defense and Aerospace (IDEA) Engine.*

### **3. ADJOURN**

**A:** Discussion on items of interest for next agenda – August 16, 2023

*The meeting adjourned at 12:19 pm. MST.*