

= Scott Smith ( American politician ) =

Scott Smith ( born 1956 ) is an American businessman and politician , elected as the 38th mayor of Mesa , Arizona , on May 20 , 2008 . He took office on June 2 , 2008 and served until April 16 , 2014 , when he resigned to run for Governor of Arizona in the Republican Primary . In 2013 @-@ 14 , he served as president of the United States Conference of Mayors . His previous employment includes serving as president of both Great Western Homes and K. Hovnanian Homes . He also has financial and business consulting experience as well as a history of involvement in community organizations .

= = Early life and education = =

Smith spent his early childhood in Tucson , Arizona then grew up in Mesa after his family moved there in 1967 , when his father assumed the role of superintendent of Mesa Public Schools . He was a star basketball player at Westwood High School and graduated in 1974 . He obtained a BS in accounting in 1980 from the Brigham Young University Marriott School of Management . He subsequently attended Arizona State University where he obtained an MBA in 1985 and a juris doctorate in 1996 from the Arizona State University College of Law .

= = Business career = =

Prior to his time in office , Smith held various professional positions . Between 1988 and 1993 he was an accounting and finance instructor at the University of Phoenix . He held leadership roles in home building companies : from 1994 to 2003 he was president of Great Western Homes , and from 2003 to 2007 he was a regional president for K. Hovnanian Homes . Before and during the time that he held these aforementioned positions he was active as a financial and business consultant at ExecuShare , Ltd . Smith also held a variety of quasi @-@ public roles , such as the 2006 ? 07 campaign chairman for the Mesa United Way and as a member of the citizens tax initiative committee .

= = 2008 election for mayor of Mesa = =

Smith launched his campaign for mayor on May 1 , 2007 , with former U.S. Congressman Matt Salmon as his campaign chairman . Incumbent Keno Hawker was term limited . The primary election had two other candidates : restaurant businessman / three term city councilman Rex Griswold and vice @-@ mayor / two term city councilwoman Claudia Walters . Smith ranked first with 39 % of the vote , qualifying for the run @-@ off election . Griswold ranked second with 33 % of the vote and Walters was last with 28 % of the vote .

Walters endorsed Smith . In the May run @-@ off election , Smith defeated Griswold 56 % -44 % . It was the first time that a candidate defeated someone who had resigned from the City Council to run for mayor in more than a generation . Al Brooks was successful in 1983 and Willie Wong was successful in 1991 . His first attempt at public office , Smith was the first person since 1966 to be elected mayor of Mesa without having first served on the Mesa City Council .

= = Mayor of Mesa ( 2008 @-@ present ) = =

= = = First term = = =

Smith 's first term of office ran from June 2 , 2008 to January 22 , 2013 . Mesa , which is in Maricopa County , Arizona , along with Phoenix , is part of the Phoenix metropolitan area . It is the thirty @-@ ninth most populous city in the United States and the third most populous city in the state of Arizona ( after Phoenix and Tucson ) according to 2010 United States Census Bureau estimates .

It is the largest of seven incorporated areas with populations of 100 @, @ 000 or more ( followed by Glendale , Chandler , Scottsdale , Gilbert , Tempe and Peoria ) that surround Phoenix in its metropolitan area .

On August 6 , 2008 , after two months as mayor , Smith served as ceremonial driver for the first run of METRO Light Rail , a new light rail transit for Phoenix , Mesa and Tempe . The 20 @-@ mile ( 32 km ) light rail system had its grand opening on December 27 , 2008 .

Economic development has been a key aspect of Smith 's administration . During his first term , two major citywide elections involving economic development opportunities were brought to the voters . First , in March 2009 , Smith led the charge for a development deal that would bring a 1 @, @ 200 room Gaylord Hotel and Resort to the Mesa Proving Grounds . Proposition 300 , passed by the largest margin in the history of the city with 84 % of voters approving .

In November 2011 , voters in Mesa were asked to approve an incentive package that would build the Chicago Cubs a new spring training facility . The Cubs , who had trained in Mesa for over 50 years , had offers to move their operations to Naples , Florida . Taking the lead again , Smith helped Proposition 420 pass with 63 % of the vote . Renderings of the planned stadium , and accompanying " Wrigleyville West " entertainment district were released prior to the election and it is expected that the stadium will be complete by the 2014 spring training season . In August 2011 , it was reported that the Arizona State University baseball team would join the Cubs and move their facilities to the new stadium upon completion instead of renovating Packard Stadium , however they later moved to Phoenix Municipal Stadium .

Smith has pushed his H.E.A.T. initiative to focus on industries of opportunity that Mesa has had success in . H.E.A.T. is an acronym for healthcare , education , aerospace and tourism / technology .

Smith played a significant role in the Air Force Research Lab ( AFRL ) agreement , which allows Mesa to lease the facility and eventually own it while maintaining its highly classified status . The AFRL site is the only such secured facility in Arizona and is one of just a handful in the United States .

In January 2011 Smith unveiled iMesa , an initiative designed to invigorate Mesa through transformative community projects . Leveraging technology for civic engagement , iMesa is a grassroots improvement effort where residents submit , vote and comment on ideas that will transform the community .

= = = Second term = = =

Smith was unopposed in his election for a second four @-@ year term on August 28 , 2012 . His second term of office runs from January 22 , 2013 to January 23 , 2017 . Smith is term limited .

He was president of the United States Conference of Mayors ( USCM ) . He is the first Arizona mayor to serve as president of the organization .

The Wall Street Journal , Politico and the Arizona Republic have run op @-@ ed pieces about the national debt crisis co @-@ authored by Smith , then USCM president Antonio Villaraigosa ( mayor of Los Angeles ) and USCM vice president Michael Nutter ( mayor of Philadelphia ) . Smith has also been featured on Bloomberg TV , MSNBC with Andrea Mitchell , CNBC 's The Kudlow Report and in the Washington Post .

= = 2014 election for governor = =

After much speculation throughout 2013 , Mayor Smith announced that he would run for Arizona Governor on January 9 , 2014 .

He was endorsed by Governor Jan Brewer on August 6 , 2014 , adding energy to his campaign ahead of the Republican primary . However , he placed second to Doug Ducey in the Republican gubernatorial primary .

= = National news coverage = =

Smith published an article in The Ripon Forum in 2013 discussing his successes as a mayor . Smith implemented a reorganization of city government , saving nearly 20 % of the total budget in doing so . He began commercial airline service at Phoenix @-@ Mesa Gateway Airport . Additionally , Smith oversaw the development of five new fire stations , two new police stations and over \$ 150 million in street and road improvements , and oversaw development of a three @-@ mile extension of the Mesa light rail .

= = Personal life = =

He has raised his children in Mesa .