



Hillsborough / Pinellas Workforce Development Consortium Minutes

Date: April 2, 2024

Location: Hybrid – CSTB (Meridian) 4350 W. Cypress Street, Tampa FL. 33607

Consortium Members Attendance

Present:

- Hillsborough County: Commissioner Gwen Myers and Commissioner Joshua Wostal
- Pinellas County: Commissioner Chris Latvala and Commissioner Rene Flowers

Others in Attendance

Present:

- **Hillsborough County Government:** Ron Barton, Ken Jones (remote), Jonathan Wolf.
- **Hillsborough County Attorney’s Office:** Katherine Benson (remote), Mary Helen Farris.
- **CareerSource Tampa Bay (Board Members):** Sean Butler (remote), Gary Hartfield.
- **CareerSource Tampa Bay (Staff):** Rich Beynon (remote), Sheila Doyle, Barry Martin (remote), Anna Munro, Dolores Martinez (remote), Doug Tobin, Michelle Zieziula, Tammy Stahlgren, and April Torregiante (remote).
- **Pinellas County Government:** Kevin Knutson, Tyler Bonneau (Commissioner Latvala’s assistant), Corey McCaster (remote).
- **Pinellas County Attorney’s Office:** Cody Ward.
- **Gray/Robinson:** Stephanie Marchman (remote).
- **CareerSource Pinellas (Board Members):** Cynthia Johnson (remote), Scott Thomas.
- **CareerSource Pinellas (staff):** Leah Geis (remote), Lysandra Montijo (remote), Michelle Moeller (remote), Steve Meier.
- **Other:** Tameka Austin (remote), John Flanagan (remote).

I. Call to Order, Welcome, Roll Call, and Remarks

Chair, Gwendolyn Myers, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. There was a quorum present.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comments

There were none.

IV. Action Items / Discussion Items

- A. Approval of Minutes - February 6, 2024, Hillsborough Pinellas Workforce Consortium Meeting

Motion:

To approve the minutes of the February 6, 2024, Hillsborough Pinellas Workforce Consortium Meeting.

Motion moved by Commissioner Rene Flowers and motion seconded by Commissioner Chris Latvala. Motion carried.

B. Approval of Bylaws for New Regional LWDB

Commissioner Flowers requested language to be added in Section 4.7 (D) that acknowledges consistency with the Board of County Commissioners appointment processes for the Board appointees that are current County Commissioners. It was agreed this language can be added without requirement for additional approval by the Consortium.

Motion:

To approve the Bylaws for the new Regional LWDB.

Motion moved by Commissioner Rene Flowers and motion seconded by Commissioner Chris Latvala. Motion carried.

C. Appoint Members to the New Regional LWDB

Members reviewed a slate of candidates for appointment to the new Regional LWDB as presented by the Advisory Committee.

After discussion, it was agreed to add Commissioner Joshua Wostal, representing Hillsborough County, and Commissioner Chris Latvala, representing Pinellas County, to the slate of candidates as follows:

Business Sector

- Mitchell Allen, Tampa Bay Economic Development Corporation, Hillsborough County
- Sean Butler, Titan Technologies, Hillsborough County
- David Fetkenher, Crown Automotive Group, Pinellas County
- Benjamin Friedman, Duke Energy, Pinellas County
- Gary Hartfield, Serenity Village Company, Hillsborough County
- Barclay Harless, Valley Bank, Pinellas County
- Ben Hom, McKibbon Hospitality, Hillsborough County
- Nikisha Lezama, CoreRx, Pinellas County
- Esther Matthews, All Enterprise Solutions, Pinellas County
- April Neumann, Ultimate Medical Academy, Hillsborough County
- Jeremy Robinson, Choice Hotels, Pinellas County

- Roy Sweatman, Southern Manufacturing Technologies, Hillsborough County
- Thayne Swenson, Swenson Construction, Hillsborough County
- Scott Thomas, ProMedica Senior Care, Pinellas County
- Elizabeth Siplin, Empact Solutions, Pinellas County
- Sophia West, C.S. West and Associates, PA, Hillsborough County
- Russell Williams, Power Design, Pinellas County
- Mercedes Young, Vivid Consulting Group, Hillsborough County

-

Workforce Sector

- Robert Blount, Abe Brown Ministries, Hillsborough County
- Joseph Eletto, Veterans Council of Hillsborough
- Elizabeth Gutierrez, Enterprising Latinas, Inc., Hillsborough County
- Michael Jalazo, PERC, Pinellas County
- Jim Junecko, IUOE Local 487, Hillsborough County
- Shawn McDonnell, IBEW, Pinellas County
- Kenneth Williams, Teamster Local Union No. 7, Pinellas County

Education Sector

- Belinthia Berry, St. Petersburg College
- Warren “Scott” Brooks, Hillsborough County Schools
- William “Mark” Hunt, Pinellas County Schools
- Dr. Brian Mann, Hillsborough Community College
- Dr. Rebecca Sarlo, Evara Health, Pinellas County

Government, Economic/Community Development Sector

- John Howell, Vocational Rehabilitation, Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties
- Dr. Cynthia Johnson, Pinellas County Economic Development
- Ocea Wynn, City of Tampa
- Commissioner Joshua Wostal, Hillsborough County
- Commissioner Chris Latvala, Pinellas County

Motion:

To approve the slate of candidates for appointment to the new Regional LWDB.

Motion moved by Commissioner Rene Flowers and motion seconded by Commissioner Joshua Wostal. Motion carried.

V. Update / Informational Items

A. CEO Selection Process

Members were updated on the CEO search timeline and that the Advisory Committee is progressing with the CEO selection process, having reviewed job descriptions and defined attributes for the role.

Commissioner Wostal voiced concerns about the integrity of the selection process due to previously expressed objections by Commissioner Flowers about the need for a CEO search. He worried this could affect perceptions of fairness for qualified candidates. A previous conversation with CSP CEO Steve Meier about his impending retirement added to these concerns. Commissioner Latvala defended Commissioner Flowers and spoke about the history of the two organizations and staffing levels. Commissioner Flowers recommended Steve Meier for CEO, emphasizing his operational knowledge and stating that the selection process should focus on the best qualified candidate.

Discussion on CEO Recruitment Process and Candidate Selection

Members advocated for appointing an experienced person through the merger to ensure normalcy and address staff apprehension during the merger. Additionally, the discussion included potential concerns from candidates outside the Tampa Bay area about the affordability of housing in the region.

Salary Discussion and Negotiation Process

This meeting section delved into the process of gathering information on salary expectations from candidates, the limitations of salary caps, and the role of the current chairs of both agencies as final negotiators. It also emphasized the importance of considering competitive salaries to attract the best candidates.

Updates and Encouragement

During an overview of the progress made in the merger process, collaborative efforts between the agencies and the focus on treating employees well and maintaining program consistency were highlighted. They also mentioned upcoming actions, including RFP's for benefits review and legal counsel, and discussed the positive energy and teamwork displayed by the staff.

The approach they are taking is to do no harm to the employees. Staff should not be asked to re-apply for their positions. Staff should not get hung up on titles, there is plenty of work to do. It will be the decision of the new CEO to determine what the team will look like.

B. Consolidation Agenda Calendar

Ron Barton presented and discussed the consolidation calendar, milestones, upcoming meetings and key action items associated with the consolidation.

C. RFP for Benefits Review

Kevin Knutson reported that one big piece of the consolidation puzzle are what benefits future employees of the combined organizations will have because they are currently different. An RFP for selection of a consultant to conduct a benefits review of both organizations and help with this decision went on the street last week.

D. RFP for Legal Counsel

Kevin Knutson reported that an RFP for Legal Counsel to represent the new regional LWDB will be going out next week.

VI. Future Action / Discussion Items (June 4)

A. Approval of Plan of Merger

B. Approval of CEO

C. Approve Agreement with New Administrative Entity/Fiscal Agent

D. Approve and Oversee the New Regional LWDB FY25 Planning Budget

E. Request New Regional LWDB Designation and Certification

F. Request Approval as Direct Services Provider (?)

G. Approve Grantee/Sub-Grantee Agreement

H. Request 1-year Extension for Submission of Local Area Workforce Plan (?)

I. Request 1-year Extensions of One-Stop Operator Agreements (?)

J. Request 1-year Extensions of MOU's with One Stop Partners (?)

VII. Open Discussion

Kevin Knutson mentioned that he and Steve Meier, CEO of CSP, were invited to CSTB staff meeting and Ron Barton and CSTB staff were invited to the CSP staff meeting. He added that energy in both meetings was really great and it was good to see all the employees get together and ask questions. Staff understands the process and know what's happening and they are working together to make this happen.

Commissioner Myers asked that staff not be required to reapply for their jobs and asked for as much as possible to be shared with staff to help them understand what's going on.

Commissioner Wostal asked if there is a working plan of which roles will be merged or ongoing.

Kevin Knutson added that staff is working on each of the areas to determine the needs of the new organization but have not made any determination about particular positions. The plan is for the new CEO to guide the conversation about what team they will need to lead the organization.

Ron Barton added that the philosophy taken is a no harm approach to programs, locations or people. Any changes will be led by the new CEO.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Tammy Stahlgren, Executive Administrative Assistant.