

MEETING MINUTES – March 28, 2017
FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance – Board of Director’s Meeting
CoLab – 418 W Garden Street, 3rd Floor Conference Room

1. **Call to Order:** This meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM.
2. **Meeting publicly noticed on March 1**
3. **Public Comment:** Vice President McMahon asked if there was any public comment. There was none.
4. **Action Items**
 - a. **Welcome and Confirm New Members:** Wendell Smith of Gulf Power Company; Karen Sindel, representing Escambia County, and Jim Grimes, representing Escambia County. It was **MOVED** by Lewis Bear, Jr., and **SECONDED** By Tim Haag, to approve the new members to the Board. The motion carried unanimously.
 - b. **Approve January 31 Minutes:** It was **MOVED** by Lewis Bear, Jr. and **SECONDED** by Rebecca Ferguson to approve the January 31 minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.
 - c. **Approve Special Called March 16 Minutes:** It was **MOVED** by Lewis Bear, Jr. and **SECONDED** by Rebecca Ferguson to approve the March 16 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
 - d. **Approve January Financials:** Chris Walker of Bizzell, Neff & Galloway welcomed new board members and presented the January 2017 financials. It was **MOVED** by Tim Haag and **SECONDED** by Lewis Bear, Jr. to approve the January 2017 Financials. A question was raised in discussion on whether or not the budget included funding from additional members. Scott Luth responded, saying yes, it has been budgeted to add an additional two members and a line item for additional private sector fundraising. With no other discussion, the motion went to a vote and passed unanimously.
5. **Discussion Items:**
 - a. **First Place Partners:** John Hutchinson of Hutch-Touch Consulting presented a plan for a new private sector organization, First Place Partners, to the Board. The organization’s goal is to reengage the private sector in supporting economic development in Escambia County and Santa Rosa County, with a tiered membership that would allow for a diverse membership, and one that includes nonvoting/nonpaying public sector individuals, such as university partners.
 - b. **Economic Development Updates:** Kelly Reeser, Director of Entrepreneurial Development, presented metrics to the Board on the newly rebranded CoLab business incubator and gave an update on recent renovations and managed IT system for tenants. Danita Andrews, Director of Business Development, presented a year to date report to the board on business development and prospect activity this fiscal year. She mentioned in her presentation that there are opportunities being missed due a lack of shovel ready sites. Scott Luth updated the Board on the developing Cyber Strategy.
 - c. **Board Forum:** Lewis Bear, Jr. gave an update to TRIUMPH activity in the Florida House, stating that Florida’s Great Northwest would like to continue to advocate for funding to be allocated to Northwest Florida, and specifically, have some of those funds allocated



to economic development activities. Mr. Bear also wanted to stress the importance of private sector fundraising

6. Adjourn

Donnie McMahon

FY 16-17 Schedule:

- May 30 @ 2:00
- July 25 @ 2:00
- September 26 @ 2:00

New Billing Address:

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PO Box 1992
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