



MINUTES – September 28th, 2018
FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance – Board of Director’s Meeting
Co: Lab- 418 W Garden Street - 3rd Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Wendell Smith, Donnie McMahon, Jim Waite, Tim Haag, Lewis Bear, Rebecca Ferguson, Karen Sindel, Bonita Player

Associate Members Present: Jonathan Tucker

Staff Present: Scott Luth, Melissa Stoker, Margaret Stopp

Members Not Present:

Public Citizens Present: John Hutchinson, Dottie Dubuison

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by President Wendell Smith at 1:00pm
2. **Public Notice:** This meeting was publicly noticed on September 11, 2018
3. **Public Comment:** President Wendell Smith asked the room if there was any public comment. Dottie Dubuison referenced her visit to our board meeting a few months prior at which point we discussed the County Commissioner meeting and our 5-year strategic plan. Dottie encouraged us to be sensitive to conversations concerning working with our local elected officials. President Wendell Smith asked if there were additional public comments. There were none.
4. **Action Items**
 - a. **Approve August 30th, 2018 Meeting Minutes:**

Motion to move made by Karen Sindel.
Seconded by Donnie McMahon.
Approved unanimously.
 - b. **Approve August Financials:** Scott Luth presented the financials to the board. He indicated that the modifications and changes approved at the last board meeting are now reflected in the financial statements. All city and county funding expected has been received to date. We do have one more month of CIE rent that will put us on point with the budgeted amounts. Sites and Buildings database looks to be a go after October 1st. The invoice sent to First Place Partners is expected back for the new fiscal year. Wendell Smith asked about dues discrepancy on the financials. Scott Luth indicated that there were additional dues hoped for and expected that ended up not coming on board as planned. We are expecting to come in on target for each line item for the end of the fiscal year. Wendell Smith asked if Co:Lab renovations had begun. Scott Luth indicated that we have, and expenses will begin to show on the September financials. Donnie McMahon asked if the First Place Partners would be added to the financials. Scott Luth indicated FPP will be reflected October 1 in the new fiscal year.
Karen Sindel moved to approve.
Lewis Bear seconded.
Approved unanimously.
 - c. **Private to Public Account Loan Transfer \$200K:** Scott Luth is requesting an approval to make this transfer as Karen Sindel has now reviewed.
Jim Waite moved to approve.
Tim Haag seconded.
Passed unanimously.

- d. **Workforce Agreement – CareerSource EscaRosa:** Scott Luth asked Margaret Stopp if she had any comments after reviewing the agreement. Margaret Stopp indicated that she had a few modifications on dates listed but nothing major. Karen Sindel asked about next steps. Scott Luth requested Board approval to execute. Rebecca Ferguson asked about Section 20 (Page 4) regarding records accessibility language and Sunshine Statute. Scott Luth indicated that the Sunshine Statute language is already referenced on page 2. Karen Sindel moved to approve.
Jim Waite seconded.
Passed unanimously.

5. Discussion Items:

- a. **FloridaWest Officer Nominating Process:** Wendell Smith indicated that the Nominating Committee would be meeting directly after this meeting. The President position will be open.
- b. **Strategic Planning Update:** Scott Luth thanked the board for their support at the City and County strategic plan presentations. Donnie McMahon expressed confusion from the County Meeting in that there was a \$50k discrepancy for funding even though we got the 3 year commitment. It has been recommended to us to come back in a couple months after the new fiscal year and make the request. As we roll in to October/November, we will make that request for the additional funding. Donnie McMahon asked if we could amend this year's request. Scott Luth indicated that because of the move to LOST, we can request the amendment anytime. Donnie McMahon indicated that there is language reflecting funding for workforce. Rebecca Ferguson stated that it is a good time to address this given the current political climate around workforce development. Scott Luth discussed the resumes that have been received for the Workforce Innovation Director position, which will be addressed and discussed by the committee next week. Scott Luth intends to go back in front of the city and county introducing that new hire to show our progress towards achieving the objectives. Tim Haag expressed a sense of urgency to ensure we do this before Grover transitions as we have his support. Wendell Smith thanked Bonita Player for stepping up at the end of the City meeting to include efforts specifically for the diversity side of workforce development. He stated that the entire council showed that this is a shared passion. Karen Sindel addressed how this is valuable in that it impacts the entire county rather than specific districts.
- c. **City & County Budget Updates:** Scott Luth indicated the budget process has completed and is locked in. We will be working with the interlocal agreements and update accordingly. He thanked everyone for their help in making that happen.
- d. **ED Project Updates:**
 - i. ITEN Wired has kicked off today with the Career Expo. Our staff is out at the expo at Pensacola Beach. This event is cohosted by FloridaWest in collaboration with IT Gulf Coast. We have been at capacity for the last three years and are looking for a larger venue, which isn't available unless we move out of the community. We have a significant presence this year from IBM as well as from the military. If interested in dropping in, please let us know. Scott Luth indicated his appreciation of Cox Business as well. It continues to get bigger and better every year.
 - ii. **Cybersecurity Implementation Update:** Scott Luth indicated that Bob David has been with us for about a month and has been actively reaching out to our private and public sector contacts to reignite momentum. We are getting positive feedback and looking at late October/early November for a meeting of key players. Discussions with Chris Middleton at UWF are resulting in positive

partnership. Scott Luth will plan to request Bob David's attendance at perhaps our November board meeting to share progress with the Board. Lewis Bear indicated that UWF is the only college in Florida with a cybersecurity degree, and the first class is 180 students.

- iii. **Co:Lab:** Scott Luth shared that we are at 15 tenants with 3 new tenants in the last month. Of the 3 new, 2 came from our 1 Million Cups events. We are seeing those events pay off. Renovations have begun on the first floor. One current tenant will be moving down to the first floor due to a need for more space. A soft landing prospect is also looking at the first floor with potential to grow from 5 employees to approximately 20 in the next year or so.
 - iv. **Business Development:** Scott Luth referenced Danita Andrew's report. There are a few new RFPs going out. We had a great visit from an aviation company met at Farnborough. Partners from Florida's Great Northwest participated in this visit as well. ST Engineering participated also. We have already received word back that additional discussions are coming. Site consultants are coming here in the next few weeks with interest in our large sites including the Bluffs. We are working with BDI and VisionFirst to fine tune the presentation to showcase that site. They will then look at Shoal River and Jackson County megasites. Pipeline projects continue to move. At the port, Incoa is still interested and working on their due diligence package. Once presented, we will work with City Council to assist in making a factually based decision. During the first few weeks of October, one of our existing tenants at the port (Offshore Inland) will be picking up and adding new technology/opportunities for their customers that will possibly result in increased vessels at the port.
 - v. **Marketing/Workforce:** The Bluffs campaign has been extremely successful. We have won the state award, southern economic awards, and several Addys. The last submission was for the International Economic Development campaign, which we expect to hear about next week. We will update the Board accordingly. Donnie McMahan indicated he had a discussion with a businessman in the community who was unaware of the port project discussions going on. Donnie McMahan encouraged a local effort to educate through marketing. Scott Luth indicated that he will brainstorm with Sena Maddison to address this need. Tim Haag suggested Upwards and the County Media alerts as they may be eager to help with spreading the word. Rebecca Ferguson echoed those sentiments. John Hutchinson commented on the Bluffs retreat and that there is a communication plan being formulated with updated financials from the engineers.
- e. **ED Calendar Review**
 - f. **Triumph/Legislative Funding Requests:** Scott Luth said our projects are still out there. Triumph met this last month and approved a few submissions, but we are still working through a few local projects. He hopes to see progress by the October meeting. We may be asking for Board participation in the future as things develop. We are working on the PEDC request for the Bluffs, but we haven't submitted that full application yet. Pre-app has been approved. Scott Luth encouraged all board members to have conversations with Triumph trustees and staff about important projects and concerns. Lewis Bear echoed that encouragement of board members to pursue conversations with Triumph trustees and staff. Rebecca Ferguson asked how we are marketing to the larger audience to draw job creators here. Scott Luth stated that we are working through Florida's Great Northwest and that the message is definitely getting out. He encouraged everyone to go back and read previous applications and funding to gauge the Triumph board's position. Tim Haag stated that it's challenging to not have a seat

on the Triumph board despite being hit the hardest. Wendell Smith stated that we should all remember that those are public meetings. He will share with the Board when those meetings occur.

- g. Other Business:**
 - i. 18-19 Meeting Schedule: This will be set at the October meeting.
 - ii. County Appointee to FloridaWest Board: Scott Luth requested that anyone interested please go through the application process.
 - iii. Wendell Smith asked for any additional public comments. Dottie Dubuison indicated that many people don't realize that the port is deep water, setting it apart from others and an important factor in considering what to utilize the port for. Rebecca Ferguson also stated that there is no overhead obstruction to the port and direct access to the Gulf of Mexico. Dottie Dubuison indicated that there is funding available for Montessori public schools, and she would be interested in any contacts that may be impacted by these funds.
- 6. Adjourn:** The board adjourned at 2:17 pm by President Wendell Smith.

The next FloridaWest Board of Director's Meeting will take place on October 17, 2019 at 10:00am.

Respectfully Submitted By:

**Karen Sindel, Secretary/Treasurer
FloridaWest EDA**