

**MINUTES – August 30, 2018**

**FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance – Board of Director’s Meeting  
Co: Lab- 418 W Garden Street - 3rd Floor Conference Room**

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

**Associate Members Present:** Jonathan Tucker

**Staff Present:** Scott Luth, Danita Andrews, Sena Maddison, Melissa Stoker, Margaret Stopp

**Members Not Present:** Wendell Smith

**Public Citizens Present:** Paul Miller

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Vice President Donnie McMahon at 2:02pm
2. **Public Notice:** This meeting was publicly noticed on August 10, 2018.
3. **Public Comment:** Vice President Donnie McMahon asked the room if there was any public comment. There were none.
4. **Action Items**
  - a. **Approve July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Meeting Minutes:** Motion to move made by Jim Waite. Seconded by Rebecca Ferguson. Approved unanimously.
  - b. **Approve July Financials:** Scott Luth presented the financials to the board. Karen Sindel moved to approve. Tim Haag seconded. Approved unanimously.
  - c. **Approval of FY 17-18 Budget Amendment:** Scott Luth reviewed changes made to account for first floor Co:Lab renovations and recommended approval, which will be reflected in the monthly financials beginning next month. Tim Haag moved to approve. Karen Sindel seconded. Approved unanimously.
  - d. **Authorization to Distribute Request for Proposals (RFPs) for Professional Services:** Scott luth requested board approval to begin RFP process. Once ready to proceed, a committee will be requested for next steps. Jim Waite asked if there are extension clauses for any of our current vendors. Scott Luth explained that we have extended services before. Jim Waite indicated that an extension clause may be a good option if we are happy with services provided. If authorized to move forward, Scott Luth will bring a list to the next board meeting of specific vendors needing to be addressed. Jim Waite moved to approve beginning the RFP process, utilizing extensions where we can and want to. Karen Sindel seconded. Approved unanimously.
  - e. **Approval for Zoom Prospector:** Scott Luth reviewed our current sites and building database contract with Atlas, which has ended. Zoom Prospector is a new database which is also used by FGW as does the state of Florida. The new company also has a partnership with a commercial MLS company. All systems would sync weekly. Another advantage is our exploration of a partnership with Santa Rosa County to share a license. Scott Luth, FloridaWest, will take the lead on the contract with FirstPlace Partners funding the program at approximately \$24k. A formal presentation will be set up for the board at a later date. Jonathan Tucker asked about the technical requirements for this. Scott Luth indicated that there are no major changes from our current technical requirements and any changes would be included under the contract with Zoom Prospector. Lewis Bear moved to approve. Karen Sindel seconded. Approved unanimously.
5. **Discussion Items:**
  - a. **Strategic Planning Update:** Scott Luth expressed that he feels we made a strong presentation to the county. He expressed his appreciation for support at the

presentation. We received a multiyear commitment from the county. The date of the city meeting is September 10th, which will be confirmed via email, requesting additional support at that meeting. We will be asking for a multiyear commitment from the city as well.

- b. **City County Budget Updates:** Scott Luth has been monitoring the budget process for the City and County. Both entities have two more formal meeting before the new fiscal year. If Scott hears of any concerns he will reach out to board members for assistance.
- c. **PEDC Legislative Language Partnership Update:** Lewis Bear indicated that PEDC received the letter from FloridaWest requesting a partnership in addressing legislative language and bylaws of PEDC. Statutory changes are needed to move the two Chamber of Commerce appointments to FloridaWest or another entity. A committee meeting will be scheduled within the next 30 days to prepare the appropriate language. Karen Sindel and Donnie McMahon volunteered to serve on the committee.
- d. **ED Project Updates**
  - i. **Workforce Development:** Scott Luth provided an update on the efforts to finalize a job description for this position as well as the assembly of a hiring committee. The position will be posted through CareerSource Escarosa, who will also help hire and screen. CareerSource asks that the individual help to do outreach to support Santa Rosa Co. existing industry and the school systems. The amount of time this would require would fluctuate year to year but should not exceed 20% of the positions time. CareerSource Escarosa is willing to put \$25k towards this position should we agree to the terms. Karen Sindel asked who was drafting the job description. Scott Luth indicated that the job description will match the strategic plan through a collaboration with others. Lewis Bear indicated concern that if we have asked the county to fund \$50k after this year for workforce development, how do we explain to them that we are using it to help in Santa Rosa County. Scott Luth stated that the funds from CareerSource Escarosa would go towards salary and benefits. The money from the county would be for marketing and workforce initiatives within Escambia County. Jim Waite echoed those shared concerns. Donnie McMahon asked Margaret Stopp if there were any concerns with this contract being between both counties. Margaret Stopp indicated that because it is a dual county agency, it helps. She will review it again with the concerns mentioned in mind. Rebecca Ferguson indicated concern about clear metrics and leadership. Scott Luth indicated that this individual will be a FloridaWest employee first, reporting to the CEO. Scott Luth also indicated that should the position not work as we hope it will, there is flexibility to continue funding workforce development endeavors without taking a financial hit. Karen Sindel expressed her belief that this partnership is progressive and a good example of inclusion. She cited Navy Federal as an example because a number of employees live in Santa Rosa. Scott Luth indicated that he is hearing from the board to continue pursuing this opportunity and bring an update to the board at the next meeting.
  - ii. **Cybersecurity Implementation Update:** Scott Luth expressed his appreciation for Karen Sindel and Rebecca Ferguson's efforts on the contract for Bob David. Scott indicated he has a signed contract and will proceed with Bob starting Tuesday, September 4th.
  - iii. **Co:Lab:** Scott Luth indicated we are at just under 80% occupancy. Scott explained that the contract with Pensacola State College allows for what is called a "soft landing space" which allows for non-incubator company to lease space short term for economic development reasons. There is an interested company looking at half of the first floor for approximately a year which meets this definition. Tim Haag asked if floor plan renovations were of concern to the potential tenant. Scott Luth stated that there were no major concerns with the

current renovation plans by this potential client. As the project continues we will keep the board updated.

- iv. **Business Development:** Danita Andrews reviewed the Business Development Report. There have been 19 site visits, which is much higher than how we trended this time last year. She drew attention to the new rating metrics. Jim Waite asked that the rating be in the footer, which Karen echoed. Donnie McMahon asked if the 7 new were specific to this month. Danita Andrews indicated that is not specific to the month but rather to the year.
  - v. **Marketing/Workforce:** Sena Maddison advised the board on ITEN Wired coming up on October 1-2. There are currently 19 companies that will be participating in the Job Fair the Friday before. She will be sending details to the board after the Labor Day weekend. Scott Luth said that we are looking at expanding our Foreign Trade Zone through PEDC. There is a new alternate framework program. We are looking at expanding that to the new limits (60 miles or 90 driving minutes) instead of the current site-specific framework. It will be an advantage to our area if we allow for the change. All of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and parts of Walton County would be included. Donnie McMahon asked if there is opposition to the FTZ. Danita Andrews stated that there is none known. It is being encouraged for better utilization. If other companies use the zone status, PEDC will incur revenue. Gulf Power is bringing in site location consultants as part of the October Symposium. One is coming a day or so early, and we will have the opportunity to show them the Bluffs.
  - e. **Triumph/Legislative Funding Requests:** Scott Luth stated that ST Engineering airport project is the current big project. It's a \$210M project. There will be a request in front of the city and county. We will ask for \$8M from the city and \$12M from the county. This will create 1,300 jobs with an average starting salary of \$44K. Scott Luth believes the support is there, and he also believes the votes exist to pass it. We will know more next week. The school system is working with Triumph to get their contract complete. We will be gearing up for the full application of the Bluffs. We have a pre-application submitted and will work on the full application for the first phase of construction over the next several months. Lewis Bear stated that the UWF ask will be reviewed at the next meeting in Panama City.
  - f. **Other Business:** Rebecca Ferguson mentioned Paul Miller as a new partner in economic development, who is in attendance today. Tim Haag asked if there have been any developments with the FPL/Gulf Power changeover in regards to economic development. Scott Luth stated that there will probably not be any changes until first or second quarter 2019. Their participation in FloridaWest is confirmed for next year. Beyond that, it will be at the discretion of the new company.
6. **Adjourn:** The board adjourned at 3:05pm.

The next FloridaWest Board of Director's Meeting will take place on September 28, 2019 at 1:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Karen Sindel, Secretary/Treasurer  
FloridaWest EDA