



NORTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCIL
Board of Directors Meeting
February 3, 2022

MINUTES

The Northeast Florida Regional Council Board of Directors, pursuant to Chapter 120.525, F.S., held a hybrid meeting both in-person, at 100 Festival Park Avenue, Jacksonville, FL, and virtually via Zoom, on Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.

President Harvey welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order with the following members present:

BAKER: Commissioner Jimmy Anderson **(in person)**
Commissioner James Bennett (via zoom)
Michael Griffis **(in person)**
Mr. Darryl Register **(in person)**

CLAY: Mr. Michael Bourre **(in person)**
Commissioner Betsy Condon **(in person)**
Commissioner Jim Renninger **(in person)**

DUVAL: Councilmember Randy DeFoor **(in person)**
Mayor Sean Lynch **(in person) (in person)**
Councilmember Joyce Morgan **(in person)**

FLAGLER: Mayor Catherine Robinson (via zoom)
Commissioner Joseph Mullins **(in person)**
Commissioner David Sullivan **(in person)**

NASSAU: John Drew (via zoom)
John Martin **(in person)**

PUTNAM: Commissioner Larry Harvey **(in person)**
Donald Holmes (via zoom)

ST. JOHNS: Commissioner Paul Waldron (via zoom)
Commissioner Christian Whitehurst **(in person)**

EX-OFFICIO: Mr. Curtis Hart (DEO) **(in person)**
Mr. Brian Austin *for* Ms. Karen Taulbee (DOT) (via zoom)
Mr. Doug Conkey (SJRWMD) **(in person)**
Mr. Russell Simpson *for* Mr. Strong (DEP) (via zoom)

Excused: Commissioner Roxanne Horvath, Michael Lednovich, Commissioner Jeff Rawls

Absent: Mayor Elaine Brown

Staff Present: Kate Haigh, Fara Ilami, Robert Jordan, Elizabeth Payne, Jack Shad, Donna Starling and Sheron Forde

INVITATION TO SPEAK

President Harvey stated that members of the public are welcome to speak on any item before the Board and will also be recognized during public comment.

*CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Payne informed the Members that, due to technical issues, staff was unable to provide the Clay County Adopted Amendment 21-1ESR prior to the meeting. Staff explained that the transmitted version was completed prior to Clay County rejoining the Council; therefore, Council staff did not review it. A brief overview of the adopted amendment was provided.

President Harvey asked if anyone would like to pull any item on the consent agenda for discussion. Hearing none, he **called for a motion on the consent agenda. Councilmember DeFoor motioned to approve the consent agenda; seconded by Councilmember Morgan. Motion carried.**

OTHER REPORTS/ACTION ITEMS

FY 20/21 Audit

Mr. Zach Chalifour, auditor with James Moore & Company, provided an overview of the Council's FY 2020/2021 Audit, which received an unmodified opinion that the financial statements are presented fairly. He stated that the net pension liability decreased from approximately \$1 million last year to just over \$400,000 this year due to the strong investment performance of the market as a whole that translated to FRS. He reminded the Members this is not a liability that is due and payable by the Council, but it is required to be shown on the balance sheet for accounting purposes. The Council's obligation is to make its contributions monthly based on payroll, and that has been done. The net pension liability is purely for reporting purposes only.

Mr. Chalifour highlighted the three audit reports in which two, the report on financial statements and the report on compliance for major federal programs, received an unmodified opinion. This is the best opinion that can be issued, effectively saying that they can be relied upon. The third report is on internal control and compliance, which revealed no material weaknesses. He concluded with the financial highlights related to grant revenues, total fund balance and total net position. He stated that, the agency is in a very strong financial position. Discussion followed.

Mr. Register informed the Members that there is a small change that will be made on page 6 under personnel services. Mr. Chalifour informed the Committee that it was a case of receiving late information from the State and it will be corrected.

Mr. Register motioned to accept and approve the FY 20/21 Audit, with the correction as noted; seconded by Councilmember DeFoor. Motion carried.

Commissioner Mullins arrived after vote.

Workforce Development Presentation

Dr. Anna Lebesch, Sr. VP, Strategy and Talent Development, **JASUSA Partnership**, provided a presentation on the Regional Workforce in Northeast Florida.

Their goal is to promote economic growth and maximize the resources available in this Region to build our communities. As a public/private partnership, in addition to the Counties, there are other organizations that partner with them; CareerSource being a vital partner. She highlighted the Elevate Northeast Florida plan, of which they are in the fourth year of the plan; Talent being the new currency; the Regional Workforce; Annual Growth Rate; Talent Development; Talent Alignment, where they launched the career pathway campaign that is regionally focused; Local College Access Network; Talent Attraction; and Business Recruitment and Retention.

Commissioner Rawls joined.

Dr. Lebesch shared some of the work around the Region dealing with workforce development that has resulted in 17 announcements in 2021 of over 2,900 jobs coming into the Region. Currently, there are 67 active projects they are working on that could lead to over 12,000 more jobs for our area. She commends the Regional Council and CareerSource as partners in this work. Discussion followed.

CareerSource Northeast Florida

Mr. Bruce Ferguson, President, CareerSource Northeast Florida. They are one of 24 workforce regions in the State and serve Region Eight, which is the same as the Regional Council with the exception of Flagler County. He shared their Mission, which is essentially connecting employers to talent. He provided an overview of what they provide in the Region; i.e., serve as the talent component of economic development, link businesses with workforce, recruit and retain qualified workforce, convene partners in education, training, transportation, etc., and build workforce skills through apprenticeships and training. He also highlighted their funded programs and services, which includes multiple career centers and staff located on each state college campuses within the Region, welfare transition serves, youth services, job training, job postings, veteran's services, and SNAP employment and training program.

Mr. Ferguson provided information on the partnerships for development, which includes the Regional Council and JaxUSA. He shared their targeted industries and sector strategies. He shared statistics on December's employment, job order trends, and the top 10 occupations. Discussion followed.

Community Resilience Update

Ms. Ilami provided an update on resiliency activities, highlighting 1) the first Regional Resiliency Collaborative workshop with two options to attend on February 9th and 23rd. The registration information is provided in the agenda packet; 2) the South Atlantic Coastal Study, in which the US Army Corps of Engineers will be conducting workshops in the near future; 3) the ongoing resilience tasks for the Community Development Block Grants within and across multiple regions.

Program Spotlight: Overdose Summit

Mr. Nolen provided an update on the Council's upcoming overdose summit, highlighting the focus and statistics, topics to be covered, some successful local projects, invited speakers, and the target audience. The Summit will be held on March 31, 2022 from 9am to 4pm at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine. The event is free to attend with registration through Eventbrite. Mr. Nolen stated that he will be attending all of the County Board of County Commission meetings over the next few weeks speaking about this event.

2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Mr. Shad stated that we are required by our contract with the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) to update and rewrite the CEDS in 2022. He stated that the new plan will be shorter than the current 600+ pages. The new plan will have the five required elements; summary background, SWOT analysis, resilience, strategic direction/action plan, and evaluation framework. Staff will be working with the CEDS Committee that will be comprised of the Economic Resilience Task Force. Additional members will be added in order to meet the specific requirements of the EDA. Mr. Shad briefly discussed the CEDS rewrite timeline, with monthly updates to the Board throughout this process. Discussion followed.

Legislative Update

Ms. Payne provided a brief legislative update on Bills of regional interest, highlighting those related to resiliency, affordable housing, and others, i.e., peer support for mental health and substance use disorders, smart region zones, office of broadband, broadband infrastructure, and rural development.

President Harvey thanked Commissioner Whitehurst for chairing the Legislative Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

MEMBERS' REPORT / LOCAL & REGIONAL ISSUES DISCUSSION

None.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS' REPORTS

Department of Economic Opportunity

Mr. Darryl Register shared information from an article on workforce that contained interesting information on some of the non-traditional things, such as internships and apprenticeships; referred to as new-comer workers.

Florida Department of Transportation

Mr. Austin stated that there is no report at this time.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Mr. Simpson stated there are no announcements at this time.

St. Johns River Water Management District

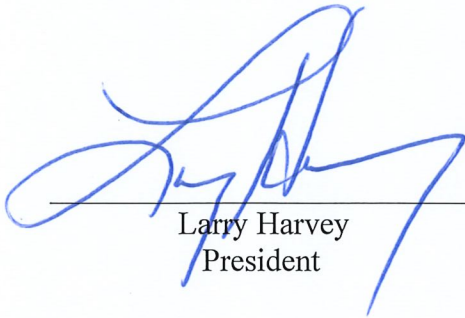
Mr. Conkey informed the Members that the WMD's cost share program closes on February 18, 2022; the Resilient Florida grants came out with Duval, St. Augustine and Fernandina Beach awarded funding to address funding and drainage. Congratulations to Duval in getting the USS Orlick downtown; and the FAA has pushed back on broadband as it impacts their ground proximity warning systems and approach. He stated he is excited to help with the Cultivation issue.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

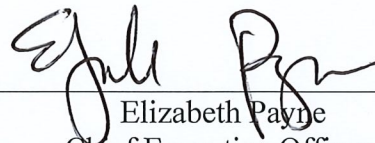
Ms. Payne informed the Members that the Regional Community Institute (RCI) will be taking on the issue of silviculture and cultivation as economic development this year. Mr. Conkey is a member of RCI and has volunteered to chair the committee. Commissioner Waldron also serves on the Committee, and they have already started reaching out for information.

Next Meeting Date: March 3, 2022

Meeting Adjourned: 11:27 a.m.



Larry Harvey
President



Elizabeth Payne
Chief Executive Officer