NORTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCIL
Executive Committee Meeting
December 4, 2025

MINUTES

The Northeast Florida Regional Council's Executive Committee held meeting on Thursday, December 4, 2025 at 10:00 a.m., at the Jessie Ball DuPont Center, 40 E. Adams Street, Room 320, Jacksonville, FL 32202.

President Bennett called the meeting to order with the following members present, representing a quorum:

BAKER	Commissioner Bennett, Mr. Register
FLAGLER	Commissioner Dance
NASSAU	Commissioner Martin
ST. JOHNS	Commissioner Murphy
Excused:	Councilmember Amaro, Commissioner Harvey, Commissioner Renninger
Staff Present:	Eric Anderson, Robert Jordan, Tyler Nolen, Elizabeth Payne, Donna Starling, and Sheron Forde

President Bennett welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that members of the public are welcome to speak on any item before the Board.

Mr. John Nooney, 8356 Bascom rd., Jacksonville, FL 32216, addressed the Board regarding the Pottsburg Creek Public park efforts.

*CONSENT AGENDA

President Bennett called for a motion on the consent agenda. Commissioner Martin motioned to approve the consent agenda; seconded by Commissioner Dance. Motion carried.

OTHER REPORTS/ACTION ITEMS

*October 2025 Financial Report
Ms. Starling presented the Council's financial report for the month of October 2025, which is the first month of the fiscal year. The Council posted a net income of $4,791.

President Bennett called for a motion. Commissioner Murphy moved approval of the October 2025 Financial Report; seconded by Mr. Register. Motion carried.

Secretary/Treasurer Position Discussion
Ms. Payne stated that Mr. Register is stepping away from the Treasurer position, which requires a nomination for someone to fill that position. Currently, the President can sign checks during this vacancy, which allows the Council to continue with no interruptions to processes. She added that

this is being brought before the Committee for their input to be brought to the full Board to vote on. Discussion followed.

By the consensus of the Committee, President Bennett directed staff to ask Mr. Doug Conkey if he would be interested in serving as the Secretary/Treasurer for the Regional Council. If Mr. Conkey is unable to serve in this role, consider speaking with Commissioner Whitehurst to see if he would be interested. If neither is able to, this item will be brought back to the Board for further consideration.

President Bennett recommended that the Committee put forth its recommendation at the January Board meeting to give the Board a chance to weigh in, get their guidance and thoughts and bring it back in February for a full vote.

<u>Strategic Planning SWOT Follow-up</u>
Ms. Payne shared some of the findings of the two strategic planning sessions; one with staff and one with Board Members. She highlighted the shared opportunities and threats, which centered around marketing, outreach, and public understanding of the work of the Council. Based on the similarity between staff and the Board, it is clear the Council needs to work on community engagement. With that, she stated she would like to act on this priority right away by bringing on a firm to help with a communication strategy through a Request for Proposal. Discussion followed.

By consensus, the Committee recommended that staff provide a draft of the Request for Proposal for the Presidents review prior to going out for bid.

<u>2025 Workplan Update: Solid Waste</u>
Mr. Nolen provided an update on the Council's workplan on solid waste. He highlighted some activities staff have been involved in such as coordination calls to solid waste professionals, the Department of Environmental Protection and University of Florida. Staff learned that Northeast Florida does not have a capacity issue and that there is no game changing piece of technology. He stated that going forward, staff will continue periodic collaboration efforts, conduct discussions about recycling, research waste to energy facilities, and have discussions on lithium-ion battery disposals. A brief discussion followed.

<u>*Awards Selection</u>
Mr. Nolen presented an overview of the awards nominations received and staff's recommendations. He highlighted the Leadership and Special Recognition awards. Discussion followed.

President Bennett shared his appreciation to staff for their efforts in reaching this point in the awards selection process. **Commissioner Dance** shared the same appreciation.

Commissioner Martin motioned to accept the 2025 award recommendations as presented by staff include the Regional Awards of Excellence, the Leadership Award and the Special Recognition Awards; seconded by Commissioner Murphy. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Mr. John Nooney (address on file) stated that he commends staff on the selection of Allison DeFoor for the Leadership Award. He fully supports the choice and will share the information with others.

Local and Regional Discussions

Baker County – Regarding property tax reform, **Commissioner Bennett** stated that counties, especially smaller ones, will be reliant on the State for everything and would struggle to make sure they receive their share of the funding. It takes away home rule and prohibits the ability to make their own decisions on what is best for their counties. This is where he has concerns.

Flagler County – **Commissioner Dance** agreed with the conversation on the property tax reform. He also thanked staff for their recognition for Jorge Salinas.

Nassau County – **Commissioner Martin** commented on the property tax reform bill and encouraged Members to reach out to their Sheriffs, as their association is opposed to it, and ask them to chime in.

St. Johns County – **Commissioner Murphy** added that if property tax goes away, emergency responses to situations such as auto accidents will need to be paid up front.

CEO Report

Ms. Payne presented a revised staff county assignment to the Members.

President Bennett suggested that when staff attend the BOCC meetings, they should be prepared to provide a brief (two to three minutes) comment or update on the Regional Council; during public comments.

Ms. Payne stated that the Council was recently awarded a Fish & Wildlife Foundation grant for environmental work on the connectivity of waterways and salt marshes, which furthers our resiliency work. She also stated that the Council is once again applying for the US EPA Brownfields grant to address sites in our region.

Next Meeting Date

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2026.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:29 p.m.

Jimmy Anderson
President

Elizabeth Payne
Chief Executive Officer