

**MINUTES**  
**November 4, 2021**

**Council Members Present:** Carlos Mercado, Laurel Kosharsky, Keith Sabiel Jr., Richard Rock, Donna McGill, Heather Cameron, Julianne Pérez, Carol Bumiller, Sara Bleattler, Neil Brickfield, Harold Paxton, Marilyn Walker

**Council members Absent:** Asia Clermont, Cheko Carter, Deputy Siem, Carol Weideman

**Guest:** Christine Britt, City of Pinellas Park

**JWB Staff:** Yaridis L. Garcia & Millicent Battle

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Richard Rock, Chair 6pm. Welcome-Members & Guests: In addition to Council Members in attendance, a Pinellas Park Public Works Staff Assistant, Christine Britt joined as a guest. The JWB Community Planner of South-county, Millicent Battle was also in attendance. Approval – October minutes: October 2021 minutes were approved.
  
- II. **JWB Updates- JWB Representative:** Yaridis Garcia provided several documents to review related to updates.
  - a. **RFPs:** JWB wants to hear from community representatives including representation from North, Mid, and South-county Community Councils. Requesting assistance of at least 2 members per council. Looking for assistance from mid-county for early childhood development (0-3) and school readiness RFPs.
    - Key difference this year, broken into multiple phases. Phase 1, Letter of Intent is an initial screening by RFP Committee to review applicant's alignment with category (e.g., school readiness). Applicants that move forward to Phase 2 will be asked to provide the full packet of more detailed information (budget, etc.). Looking for Community Council support for Phase 2.
    - RFP committee (part of Phase 1) includes different JWB staff (evaluators, executive team including Dr. Barbara, finance staff, etc.) from across departments.

- **Time required for Council representatives supporting Phase 2:**
  - 1-hour virtual training
  - Read and score proposals (approx. 5-25 proposals depending on RFP area)
  - Attend 1 full day public evaluation meeting at JWB to bring forth recommendation as a team
- **Looking for 1 or 2 volunteers from Mid-county:**
  - Laurel volunteered (early childhood starts in 11/2022)**
  - Marilyn volunteered (school readiness starts in 2/2023)**
  - Keith volunteered (early childhood starts in 11/2022)**
- b. **Eckerd Connects** has lost funding. JWB representative from Suncoast Region presented to JWB staff. Another entity may take over contract. Press conference this afternoon with Sheriff. Changes TBD.
- c. **Ongoing issues with 211**, have been in corrective action for over a year without significant improvement. JWB and County are funders. The council members and meeting attendees discussed:
  - Known issues with 211 include: Long hold times. Not responding to texts. Resources out of date or communicating service offering of an organization that isn't a service they provide. Not responding to calls.
  - JWB uses 211 for front side of FSI.
    - I. **Need to either look for a new provider or take on role internally.**
  - 211 was set-up to be just referral not case management. What is their capacity for what is expected from the community?
  - There are not successful national models to follow, systems navigation is an issue across the U.S. System navigation is important in our community. Who can be that system navigator? Needs further discussion.
- d. Contract was renewed for JWB's CEO Beth Houghton, and salary increased.
- e. Carol Bumiller mentioned suggestions for guest JWB Board representatives at upcoming meetings:
  - Will set-up for every other month.

III. The Council reviewed updated Bi-laws and agreed on an additional update.

- Quorum will be accepted if virtual or in-person as long as council members inform 24 hours in advance if a member is going to participate by Zoom
- First and seconded. No objections.

IV. **Work Plan**

- Council discussed accomplishments in Q1 including Hispanic Heritage Month Proclamation and suggestions for priority areas to focus on for Q2 (Jan-April).
- The following three priorities were raised and discussed:
  - Coral Heights**
  - Advocate for expansion of services**
  - Youth Leadership Council**
- Re: Coral Heights:**
  - No current updates re: Cheko's rotary club (idea for basketball courts).

- **Looking for an active resident in the community.** Challenges: it's a transit community.
- Carlos Mercado has Coral Heights as an outreach site, connects with Ms. Gene who is chair of neighborhood association.
  - **To-do: Carlos to invite Ms. Gene to a council meeting in January.** Could also invite neighborhood church, neighborhood association community members.
  - **To-do: Neil to invite Commissioner Seel to council meeting in January.**
  - Considerations for meeting space for Jan meeting in Coral Heights:
    - ◆ Yaridis to reach out to Courtney to see if there is a meeting space.
    - ◆ Carlos: Abundant Life Church could be a good place to meet as well. New Executive Pastor of Abundant Life Church.

## V. Youth Project Update

- Richard Rock provided an update of the Youth Leadership Program. Hannah is working on a nutrition project and has developed a survey (for those 11-17 years old, middle school to seniors in high school) about food preferences.
 

Gathering this information to see what answers we get to then inform addressing nutrition. Hoping to get 50-100 responses. Next step will be for Hannah to create a project informed by survey findings. Emerging takeaways: teens would eat healthier if options were cheaper. Richard met with Joanna M. of JWB (in charge of Child Hunger Initiative).

To-do (**done**): Richard to send link to survey. **IMPORTANT**: only for middle school to high school.
- JWB is currently working to revive the Youth Leadership Council
 

Past challenges have included: turnover of youth graduating, leadership needs, COVID impacts.

Richard Rock: One child from each site would be ideal. Need to find ways to keep youth engaged, such as focusing on projects.

## VI. Adopt a Family for the Holidays

- Yaridis identified a family in apartment complex. Family of 6. The 2-year old that has cancer.
 

**To-do: Yaridis will ask for more details about family (Ages, clothing size, wish list) to bring to next meeting on Dec 2**

In this apartment complex the manager reaches out and shares resources to families.

  - To-do: Neil to look up Bay Area Apartment Complexes Monthly Dinner upcoming dates. Could be opportunity to connect and share resources with Apartment Managers.

- Carlos Mercado mentioned: CHAFE Properties runs most of the apartments in High Point. They are using facility for youth empowerment center. High Point Village Mobile Home Park.
- Other information to share: GRAYDI (housing), public housing and section 8, older adult complexes.

**VII. Open Agenda**

- 100 turkeys provided for Coral Heights
- Food Drive November 18: provides food to Pinellas Park pantries
- Teen works will be at Rec Center next Saturday (will send to Yaridis)
- African American Heritage Celebration February 26 (Julianne will send to Yaridis)
- Lealman (Feeding Tampa Bay has Trinity Café, “dining with dignity”, job positions available as well) To-do: Yaridis to reach out for tour of facility.
- Invite for Thanksgiving Dinner, Saturday Nov 20<sup>th</sup> at Lealman

**Future Meetings/Notices:**

- Mid-County Community Council: Thursday December 2, 6:00 PM @ Public Works Building (may be other location, look for email update)

Respectfully submitted by: Julianne Perez, Mid-County Community Council Secretary