
**MINUTES
October 14, 2021**

Council Members Present: Richard Rock, Donna McGill, Heather Cameron, Julianne Pérez, Carol Bumiller, Sara Bleattler, Neil Brickfield, Harold Paxton, Deputy Siem, Carol Weideman, Marilyn Walker, Cheko Carter, Debbie Buschman

Council members Absent: Luis Pérez, Asia Clermont, Carlos Mercado, Laurel Kosharsky, Keith Sabiel Jr.

Guest: Michael Mikurak, JWB Board Chair & Debbie Buschman, Pinellas County School

JWB Staff: Yaridis L. Garcia

- I. Hispanic Heritage Month Proclamation:** Prior to the council meeting, several members attended the Hispanic Heritage Month proclamation at Pinellas Park City Hall at 6pm. This was the first Hispanic Heritage Month proclamation for the City of Pinellas Park. Jaclyn Boland of the Hispanic Outreach Center (Intercultural Advocacy Institute), and Yaridis L. Garcia of JWB spoke about their organizations' work in the Hispanic community alongside with Pinellas Park City Council Member and JWB Board member, Rick Buttler, and JWB CEO, Beth Houghton following the proclamation.
- II. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Richard Rock, Chair at 6:42pm. Welcome members & guests. This is the first meeting led by the new Community Council executive team voted in at the last meeting. Members and guests introduced themselves and their work in the community including their time with the Council. Comments included the importance of inclusivity of this community council, growth of the council, and the unique experiences and work of each member through volunteer, community development, and other efforts in the community. September 2021 minutes were approved.
- III. JWB Updates- JWB Representative:** Mike Mikurak, Chair of the Juvenile Welfare Board, shared updates about JWB's overall direction and priority areas including growing programs and focus on the zero-3 age group. He also referenced a recent discussion with a USF professor and JWB staff, as well as a focus on expanding awareness re: sleeping risks for babies. Mike highlighted

the importance of building community, including through trusted partners such as community councils and family/friend support networks of children, as well as nurturing, education, and training as a cohesive process to support young child development. Mike shared the goal of increasing advocacy for programs supporting this age group, connecting impact of programs to outcomes, and identifying and expanding strong practices/programs across the community (e.g., VPK system in Pinellas County schools, efforts in Lealman), as well as continued prioritization of how JWB measures and tracks success. Marilyn Walker, council member, asked how JWB plans to engage parents so they can see and support this vision and suggested mentorship opportunities for parents. Mike agreed that JWB wants to focus on more 1:1 communication with parents and other caregivers (grandparents, neighbors, etc.), and that community councils have an important role in connecting with local community members through their networks.

IV. Special Agenda Item: Appreciation of Yaridis Garcia

Cheko Carter, former Council Chair, presented an appreciation award on behalf of the Mid-County Community Council for Yaridis Garcia in recognition of her unwavering commitment and heartfelt support for community members and this Council. Cheko highlighted her humility, dedication, and positive impact on others.

Moment to Adjourn: The council agreed to adjourn the meeting and move other agenda items to the next Council meeting. Agenda items to move forward to next meeting include: Council Business (Bylaws Approval and Work Plan Approval).

Future Meetings/Notices:

- JWB Board Meeting: Thursday November 4th, 9:00 AM @ JWB & YouTube
- Mid-County Community Council: Thursday November 4th, 6:00 PM @ Public Works Building

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