

---

**MINUTES**  
**July 11, 2024**

**Council Members Present:** Richard Rock, Julianne Pérez (Virtually), Harold Paxton, Caterina Tassara, Carlos Mercado, Jeanne Lafler

**Council members Absent:** Carol Bumiller, Keith Sabiel, Cheko Carter, Fidel Johnson, Deputy Corey Studt, Fred Green, Angel Addison, Carol Weideman, Cristine Britt

**Guests:** Brenda Carvalho, Jessica Conway, Helena Von Otto, Selina, Nowaczyski, Arelys Escalera

**JWB Staff:** Yaridis L. Garcia

- I. Call to Order-** The minutes called to order by Harold, Paxton Vice-Chairman at 6:00 pm.
  - a. Welcome- Members & Guests
  - b. Approval- April & June Minutes – **no quorum, so could not approve minutes.**

**II. Council Business – Community Events Funding Presentations**

**Time to Check in on Your Buddy – PEMHS, Helena Van Otto**

This campaign has to do with mental health (inquire, time, and support). Aims to raise awareness and provide education on mental health and suicide prevention. The focus was education of the public to recognize signs of suicide and listening empathetically, engage in supportive conversation, and provide tools for help.

This JWB grant helped to sponsor a May 9<sup>th</sup> event in Clearwater that reached an audience ages 20 – 80-year-olds. The target audience were adults. 500 individuals were reached overall with a goal of 5,000. The campaign length is 1.5 years. Thus far, 90% of participants reported increasing their ability to recognize the signs of suicide and enhance their listening skills and gain practical tools. They did also experience a 40% increase in calls to the suicide prevention hotline during the month of May over last year's numbers. Despite the success there were challenges related to the stigma itself. They are open to making more presentations. Carlos Mercado asked the question if the event had translation services? It did not. There is a big stigma and need in this community to print things in Spanish and to ensure there are interpretation services.

Caterina Tassara Runyon asked if data was collected on parent participation. It was not, it was suggested that future data be collected on how many attendees were parents.

## **Juneteenth Celebration, Learning Empowered - Jessica Conway**

JWB funded this celebration with \$3,000 to host 200 guests and 14 community partners were present. A hot meal was provided to all guests. Dr. Kanika Tomalin was the key speaker. They plan to continue the event next year. It was very well attended by children and families.

## **General Community Presentation:**

### **Clothes to Kids, Selena Knowensinski – Director of Finance & Program Services**

They have 3 locations across Tampa Bay (Tampa, Clearwater, and St. Petersburg). They provide new or recently used clothing to families in need to include a whole shopping experience for children ages 4-18. Documentation of free and reduced lunch eligibility is a requirement or if they are in crisis. A full wardrobe includes a jacket, 2 accessories, shoes, dresses, and 5 tops and shirts, along with socks and underwear. Last year they provided 82,000 pairs of socks and underwear. For their organization, on every dollar, 89 cents goes directly to children. They always accept donations M-F from 8:30 – 4:30 pm and the clothes needs to be age appropriate and gently used or new.

## **Elections**

There will not be a meeting in August. We need volunteers for the Election Committee. The Election will be held in September with new Executive Team beginning in October.

## **Community Events Funding**

We still have funding available up until September. If you apply this year you must wait for the next year.

## **III. JWB Updates**

- **Strategic Plan** – It has been 5 years since JWB went through a strategic plan and the community councils were a part of the plan through focus groups to help identify needs. This process will begin again this year.
  
- **Joint Community Executive Leadership Meeting** – Every quarter there will be an internal meeting with JWB to have interaction with the community councils. Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> there will be a meeting from 6 – 7:30 pm at JWB. On Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> there will also be a presentation to the JWB Board regarding the outcomes of the Grand Families events across Pinellas County. Planning for the May 2025 event will be underway very soon. All events were very well attended. In the future, we should consider reaching out to the school district with the principals and the school counselors. Other suggestions were that we continue to partner with the Family Support Services to ensure that foster parents are engaged in next year's outreach campaign. Everyone is welcome to attend either meeting.
  
- **Book Bus & Back to School Events** – Total of 77 sites visited. JWB Staff, Board members, elective officials and other leaders throughout Pinellas County volunteered. Yaridis has also sent out the calendar to all members regarding Back-to-School Events. The first will be July 27<sup>th</sup> from 9 am – 12 pm at SPC Health Center, Pinellas Park. PAL event on the will be August 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9 am – 12 pm and later that day at the Largo Public Library.
  
- **Youth Leadership Committee** – Their projects will be presented at the upcoming JWB Board Meeting next Thursday at 9:30 am.

## **Announcement:**

- Sunday September 15<sup>th</sup> from 2-9 pm is the El Grito event in Largo.
- The food distribution event was held on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, and more than 200 families participated. Persons received chicken, eggs, fruits, cereals etc.

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm by Chair Richard Rock.

*Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted by Caterina Tassara, Council Member*