



**North County
Community Council**

Council Officers

Beth Hovind
Chair

Carmen Lake
Vice-Chair

Michael Arendall
Secretary

Mark Hopkins
KidsFirst Representative

Council Members

Eric Clark
Dawn Handley
John White
Mary Sharrow
Nadine Spring Nickeson
Pinellas County Sheriff's Off.

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Community Engagement
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I. Call to Order. The February 6, 2025 meeting of the North County Community Council, Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County, was called to order by Chair Beth Hovind at 6:05p.m. at Dunedin Mease Hospital, 601 Main Street, Dunedin, Florida.

In attendance: Council Members Beth Hovind, Michael Arendall, Nadine Nickeson, as well as guests Danielle Hintz of JWB, Michael Havelka of JWB, Laura Peele of JWB, Jerome Kynard of JWB, Devon McTier of R'Club, Adriana Palacio of the Area Agency on Aging Pinellas & Pasco, Dante Glover of Operation Par, Shakerah Molligan R'Club, Viridiana Lopez-Lugo South County Council Member and St Pete College.

Absent: Council Members Carmen Lake, Mark Hopkins, Mary Sharrow, John White, Eric Clark, Dawn Handley.

A quorum of the Council was not present.

Introductions: Council Members and guests introduced themselves briefly.

II. Special Presentation on Data by Michael Havelka of JWB

Responding to the Council's request for historical data on education, socioeconomic, health, and other markers in North County, Michael offered a comprehensive presentation comparing Child Opportunity Index (COI) data markers from 2019 to 2023. In response to a question about tracking more granular health data, Michael said that while the COI tracks certain categories, JWB is developing additional metrics that may be available in future assessments. COI data is used in JWB's evaluation of RFAs and RFPs so that the data are considered in conjunction with programming decisions. More specific data on the categories the Council requested are available using the US Census Data instruction handout. In response to a question about how to assess the importance of data, Michael shared that essential needs may be the highest priority, including housing and food. JWB has not recently conducted any formal focus groups, but it has relied on the various data sources, community councils and partners to provide important feedback. Deeper analysis is critical, as some data appear to present challenges (red colors), when in reality some of these tracts are simply industrial-centric versus residential-centric areas. One idea was to overlay certain key additional metrics, flood zones for example, to give additional context to the data, or essentials such as gas stations or grocery stores.

Special Presentation on the Fatherhood Initiative by Danielle Hintz and Jerome Kynard of JWB

After a brief refresher on the Collective Impact focus areas, Childhood Hunger Initiative, Pinellas Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, and the Pinellas Fatherhood Collaborative, Danielle emphasized that there are some changes that may be experienced based on federal and state funding decisions. Last year, over 6 million meals were served through

collaborative efforts across Break Spot and Summer Bridge locations, as well as supporting food pantries and the St. Pete Free Clinic. On literacy and grade-level reading, JWB partners with the School District, as the district measures student progress and success in literacy, among other metrics. JWB has been using data to help direct programming to support grade-level reading. The two Book Busses will be available for JWB to serve communities during the first three weeks of July. Tarpon Springs will be visited by a Book Bus on June 30 and July 1 this year. Brianna Ray is the initiative's staff person who can assist with Book Bus questions. Jerome shared that the Fatherhood Initiative seeks to ensure that dads are seen, valued, and heard in the lives and educations of their children. The Initiative seeks partnerships with agencies and others to work towards this goal. Jerome shared a map of Fatherhood and Father-focused Services & Support, and the Council immediately observed that nearly all of the current partners are south of Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard, and all current partners are south of Sunset Point Road, suggesting a big need in the North County region. When asked about the potential of reaching non-traditional partners like private employers, Jerome stated that the Collaborative would love the opportunity to better reach non-traditional partners, especially in areas of the county that are in need of partners. If interested in getting involved, Council Members are invited to email Jerome. The Collaborative also helps drive marketing and advertising for its partners' father-focused events and services. Mr. McTier, Collaborative Liaison, shared that he is tasked with bringing people together, including through a Community Events Committee. In response to a question about direct services, Jerome responded that the Collaborative supports service providers in serving fathers but does not provide any direct services. The Collaborative is supporting an upcoming car show themed event "Fueling Fatherhood" in conjunction with the Turbo Babies campaign. The Collaborative hopes to break down barriers that may exist with fathers who might initially be skeptical or anxious about being engaged. In response to a question about the impact of immigration policy changes, Danielle shared that there are efforts to stay apprised of developments and provide advocacy where possible. Language and cultural barriers do exist, particularly for fathers in immigrant / refugee families. Joanne reminded the Council about anticipated future reports from JWB's advocacy staff members regarding information about where the Council's advocacy efforts may be impactful in light of pending legislative policy proposals. The Collaborative is finding that some fathers are actively trying to break the cycle of past familial experiences from their own childhoods. DJ with Operation Par introduced himself and shared a short summary of the ways in which Operation Par supports parents and families dealing and recovering from substance abuse.

III. JWB Updates

- A. Joanne shared that the applications to join the Council submitted by Niko Stergiotis of the Children's Home Network and Maria Amado of Empath Health Community will be considered at the upcoming JWB Board Meeting.

- B. The Grand Families Event will be held at the CAP/Union Academy Family Center in Tarpon Springs from 10:00AM to 1:00PM on Saturday, April 26, 2025. It will be open to the community at large, and the hope is to achieve 200 or more attendees. There will be Kona Ice, activities, and a DJ, as well as giveaways including a teen food box and a children food box, but no food or drink will be served to attendees. The Teen Council will be in attendance to interface with teens who attend. Dawn will be doing arts and crafts for kids (volunteers welcome), and there will be opportunities for vendors (including legal support), per the link circulated by Joanne today. Evara Health will be available for health screenings and to make appointments for childrens' health needs. There will be ASL and Spanish language services. Grand Families will be encouraged to attend through JWB's marketing plan through the court system, school system, and case managers. Council Members can sign up for shifts or to work the event in total, and Council Members are invited to share with Joanne their availability.

IV. Council Business

- A. Consideration of the Council's December 2024 and January 2025 minutes was postponed.
- B. The Council is reminded that it will meet for the next 2 additional meetings (March and April 2025) in the community rooms of the Dunedin Mease Hospital.

V. Community Updates

The Council dispensed with Community Updates presentations.

There being no further business, on a motion by Michael that was seconded by Nadine, the Council adjourned without objection at 7:38 p.m. The Council's next meeting is Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 6:00pm at the Dunedin Mease Hospital.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Arendall
Secretary