



**North County
Community Council**

Council Officers

Beth Hovind
Chair

Carmen Wilson Lake
Vice-Chair

Michael Arendall
Secretary

Mark Hopkins
KidsFirst Representative

Council Members

Deputy Daniel Mattox
Ellen Navarro Anderson
Eric Clark
Dawn Handley
John White
Deputy Martin Guzman
Mary Sharrow
Nadine Spring Nickeson

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Minutes February 8, 2024, JWB North Community Council

I. Call to Order. The February 8, 2024, meeting of the JWB North County Community Council, was called to order by Chair Beth Hovind at 5:59 p.m. at the Advent Health North Pinellas Hospital Board Room, 1395 South Pinellas Avenue, Tarpon Springs, Florida.

In attendance were: Council Members Beth Hovind, Carmen Lake, Michael Arendall, Mark Hopkins, Eric Clark, Dawn Handley, Nadine Nickeson, Mary Sharrow, and John White; JWB Community Engagement Advocate Joanne Reich; Rebecca Gross Tieder, Director of Public Policy for JWB; and guests Ebonee Blackshaw of Learning Empowered, Andrea Vendetti of the Hispanic Outreach Center, Matthew Maichuk of PTA, Ron Haddad of Rotary, Charles Ponella of Boley, Adriana Palacio of the Mattie Williams Neighborhood Family Center.

Absent were: Council Members Ellen Navarro Anderson, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

Introductions: Members of the Council, Community Engagement Advocate Joanne Reich, and guests introduced themselves and provided a short biographic information about themselves.

II. JWB Updates

- A. Andrea from the Hispanic Outreach Center described the Center's successful breakfast with Santa event at the High Point Recreation Center in December, an event funded by JWB's Community Events Funding initiative. The Center partnered with the Mexican consulate to provide citizenship services for Mexican nationals in attendance. The Center also coordinated with health providers to offer a number of complimentary select medical screenings and examinations. Other community vendors also participated, including an immigration law firm. The event included an opportunity to have a photograph taken with Santa. There was also a jewelry vendor who taught some attendees how to make jewelry.
- B. Rebecca Gross Tieder, Director of Public Policy for JWB, presented to the Council regarding legislative advocacy, working with local elected officials, the county's state legislative delegation, and the county's Congressional delegation. The Florida Legislature is approximately halfway through its 2024 session. There is a special districts bill working through the Legislature, and although there was concern initially about a mandate in the bill that would send JWB to a general election referendum (asking county voters whether to reauthorize JWB), the mandate currently is not in the latest version of the bill. One observation from JWB's advocacy effort perspective is that, unlike prior years, there was no specific JWB legislative agenda; instead, JWB created a subject matter experts directory to serve as a

resource to legislators. JWB has highlighted some of its key focus areas, including Children's Mental Health Initiative, in meetings with legislators. JWB also was invited to The White House last year to participate in a dialogue regarding mental health, media and children and family services. Rebecca updated the Council about her participation in the state Senate confirmation process for JWB Board members appointed by Governor DeSantis, and she happily reported a smooth, successful confirmation process. She is tracking approximately 400 bills working through the Legislature this session. One of the bills she is excited about is business tax relief designed to be passed along to employees related to child care. Long-term, Rebecca shared her hope for community early learning centers in a public-private partnership, taking some lessons from the pandemic and looking at how we live differently, and observing that we need new or restructured connection centers to reinforce our shared humanity. Rebecca asked attendees to imagine a scenario where public entities and private business join forces to create state of the art neighborhood centers providing care and education to children of employees of those entities, with tax incentives to the participating businesses. Finally, Rebecca fielded several questions from Council members about certain bills moving through the Legislature.

- C. Michael provided an update about the Community Councils Executive Leadership Committee meeting held at the JWB Office on January 22, 2024, sharing that the meeting included a presentation by JWB Chief Program Officer Karen Boggess about a directory of currently funded programs (and a desire by council leaders to have a directory for each council that would contain the funded programs available in their respective council regions); a discussion about the draft work plans for each of the three community councils; an update regarding each council's Grand Families Event; and a summary of the Community Events Funding program. Beth circulated a copy of the FY2024 JWB Funded Program Spreadsheet, and the Council indicated its hope that a digital version of the Spreadsheet would be available to council members. The Council also expressed support for the council-region specific program directory. Eric asked about the work plans of the other councils, and the Council agreed to look at the Mid- and South County Councils' work plans at a future meeting in order to get a sense of the other councils' priorities. Beth mentioned that the Executive Leadership Committee meeting included a short dialogue about a new idea: council leaders attending a meeting of the other two councils once per year as visitors and observers. Beth also passed around a copy of the JWB Community Events Funding Support Application Packet and emphasized that up to \$3,000 per event is available to fund non-recurring contingent events without regard to JWB-funded status, considered by a special screening committee on a first come, first serve basis, with a total fiscal year cap of \$15,000.
- D. The Council is reminded of the Community Councils Grand Families initiative, and the Council will be hosting the north county event for Grand

Caregivers on March 14, 2024 at Clearwater Hall Rentals in Dunedin. Joanne invited Council members to volunteer on the day of the event if their schedules permit. March 4, 2024 is the current cut off day for registration, but if there is limited community support for the Grand Families Event then a decision may be taken prior to March 4 to postpone the event to a later date in the fiscal year.

III. Council Business

- A. The Council took up the draft Work Plan for the Council for the FY2024-2026 Biennium. Beth briefly summarized the Work Plan's components. Rebecca offered to help facilitate advocacy efforts, whether locally or in Tallahassee. Eric suggested that we update and maintain our directory of elected officials, especially in light of the upcoming elections, and that the Council consider speaking briefly during the public comment portion of local municipal council or commission meetings as in past years. Mary moved that the NCCC Work Plan be adopted, and Carmen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- B. Carmen moved that the Council's January 2024 minutes be approved, and Dawn seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Community Updates

Ron announced that the annual Rise Against Hunger meal packaging event will be held at First United Methodist Church in Tarpon Springs from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, February 24, 2024. Volunteers are solicited, and Ron passed around a flyer advertising the event.

Carmen reminded the Council of the Community Baby Shower event she is helping to plan at Mt. Moriah A.M.E. Church in Tarpon Springs on Saturday, February 17, 2024. Non-profit agencies and churches are teaming together to put the event on, and they are soliciting mothers and expecting mothers to attend.

Dawn announced that her non-profit organization, Speak Up, has set a date for a community event, funded through a recently-approved grant, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 20, 2024 at the Boys and Girls Club in Tarpon Springs. Stay tuned for more.

Matthew announced that he is hosting a banned book movie night at the Unitary Universalist Church in Tarpon Springs on Saturday, February 24, 2024.

Nadine announced that planned construction will be starting at the Maddie Williams Neighborhood Family Center in Safety Harbor on Friday, March 1, 2024.

There being no further business, on a motion by Michael and seconded by Eric, the Council meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m. The Council's next meeting is

Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Advent Health North Pinellas
Hospital Board Room, 1395 South Pinellas Avenue, Tarpon Springs, Florida.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Arendall
Secretary