



**North County  
Community Council**

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**Council Officers**

**Beth Hovind**  
Chair

**Carmen Lake**  
Vice-Chair

**Michael Arendall**  
Secretary

**Mark Hopkins**  
KidsFirst Representative

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**Council Members**

Maria Amado  
Eric Clark  
Dawn Handley  
Pinellas County Sheriff Office  
Mary Sharrow  
Nadine Spring Nickeson  
Niko Stergiotis  
John White

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**Joanne Reich**  
Community Engagement  
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I. Call to Order. The April 17, 2025 meeting of the North County Community Council, Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County, was called to order by Vice Chair Carmen Lake at 6:07 p.m. at Dunedin Mease Hospital, 601 Main Street, Dunedin, Florida.

In attendance were: Council Members Carmen Lake, Mark Hopkins, Dawn Handley, Deputy Short, Niko Stergiotis, John White, and Maria Amado, as well as guests Adriana Palacio of the Area Agency on Aging Pinellas & Pasco; Darice Flournoy of Boley Centers, Brenda Carvalho of Baycare, Ellie Ferro of Baycare, Thomas Payne of Evara Health and Cathy Coomes of Tarpon Springs Housing Authority Home Share program.

Absent were: Council Members Beth Hovind, Mary Sharrow, Eric Clark (on leave through summer), Michael Arendall, Nadine Nickeson

A quorum of the Council was present.

Introductions: Council Members and guests introduced themselves briefly.

II. Special Presentation: Brenda and Ellie from Baycare gave an overview of all the various services offered to women and families and discussed their various brochures. Many do not realize that Mease Countryside has some pediatric ER beds. When asked what changes they have been seeing since COVID they said that many expectant moms come in with little social support and visitors, also many moms are not getting prenatal care but just waiting till close to childbirth to come in. Thus they are seeing many more sicker women and children and more complications that may have been avoided with more pre-natal visits. There is also a decline in the Hispanic population seeking care. We need to continue to build trust in the community and share the importance of preventative care with vulnerable populations.

III. JWB Updates

- A. Beth Houghton CEO will be retiring in July and while we are very sorry for her to go we are delighted that she will get to retire and spend more time with her husband and family.
- B. Grandfamilies event is coming along nicely and will be happening April 26, 2025 at the Cap Center.

IV. Council Business

- A. Eric Clark is going on temporary leave of absence through summer as he and his wife have become recent foster parents.
- B. Dawn made a motion to accept December 2024, January 2025, and February 2025 minutes and Maria seconded and all approved.

- C. Dawn made motion to accept March 2025 minutes and John seconded and all approved.
- D. The May and June meeting will be at the Training Center of Advent Health North Pinellas

V. Community Updates

Carmen shared that there will be an event at Mt. Moriah in Tarpon Springs sponsored by the Supervisor of Elections on the same day as the Grand Families Event, April 26, 2025, to encourage voters not only to be a registered voter but also to be registered to receive a mail ballot if desired.

Cathy Coomes shared about the Home Share Program where people who have space in their home can be matched with a person needing housing for a month to month contract at below market rates. So many seniors suffer from isolation and could benefit from having a trusted and screened individual to pay to live in their house. This is a great program and we wish more people would take advantage of it.

Maria shared that Empath Health has upcoming program related to Advanced Directives and other paperwork towards end of life care or emergency.

Thomas Payne shared about Evara and looks forward to participating in future meetings and events.

Mark shared about the Inness Paintings being available April 27<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 in conjunction with a Rainbow Fair at the Unitarian Universalist Church providing resources to our LGBT neighbors and friends.

And, there being no further business, on a motion by Mark that was seconded by Nick, the Council adjourned without objection at 7:14 p.m. The Council's next meeting is Thursday, May 1, 2025 at 6:00pm at the Advent Health North Pinellas Hospital.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Reich  
JWB Community Engagement Advocate