

### MINUTES

April 3, 2025

**Council Members Present:** Julianne Pérez, Harold Paxton Jr., Fidel Johnson, Caterina Tassara, Brenda Carvalho, Angel Addison, Deputy Studt, Carol Weideman

**Council Members Absent:** Carlos Mercado, Richard Rock, Jeanne Lafler, Dianelys Ruiz, Carol Bumiller, Keith Sabiel, Cheko Carter, Cristine Britt

**Guests:** Jessica Conway, Thomas Payne, Meg Taylor, Marsha Brown, Meggan Jetter

**JWB Staff:** Yaridis L. Garcia

**I. Call to Order:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

- A. Welcome – Member and guest introductions.
- B. Approval - March Minutes were postponed due to lack of quorum at the time.

### II. Presentations

- **Summer Program Overview:** *Ericka Reckenwald, ESOL Family Outreach Coordinator  
Pinellas County Schools*

PCS has an electronic monthly Newsletter for families that can now be translated by each family into a language of their choosing. In the April newsletter, all of the Summer Bridge information will be appearing. This year, Summer Bridge is only for students performing below grade level. Summer Bridge for Elementary and Middle School students will be held June 2<sup>nd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> from 8 am to 12 pm. High School students have more options with opportunities test preparation sessions as well as the opportunity to make up courses during the summer. PCS is also continuing its Summer Camps at \$75 per session for all other students. Parent workshops will also continue during the summer. For families with Free and Reduced lunch the camps will only be \$25 per session. There are also learning options on the Clever platform that students access during the summer via a PCS laptop on loan or PCS website [www.pcsb.org](http://www.pcsb.org) with their student ID#.

- **Barbara S. Ponce Public Library:** *Meg Taylor, Senior Librarian – Barbara S. Ponce  
Public Library*

April 23<sup>rd</sup> NASA will be presenting children's STEM activities. Meeting rooms are available for the community with spaces up to 70-250. Every Thursday there are ESL

classes. There is a poetry contest coming up along with Book Clubs focused on Meditation and more. There are classes on topics such as Computers and Technology Support. They have a gardening series and community crafting and free movie nights, trivia nights, all free. Every Monday from 10-12 pm Metro Ministries is also there helping with basic needs. The Homeless Leadership Alliance also meets at the library. The Hispanic Outreach Center is there from 3-5 pm on Tuesday's and the American Heart Association is there with CPR Classes. They also have an Empowerment Series of books on topics where there is stigma and are difficult topics to ask for help. They Library also regularly holds FAFSA fairs for students in various languages. They lower barriers and increase access for everyone in the community.

### **III. Open Agenda - Community Partner Updates**

- *Learning Empowered* has 2 summer camp locations that are opening June 2<sup>nd</sup> – Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> Registration is \$25 and there is a \$150 fee per week per child. Camp is 7:30 am -5:30 pm.
- *Pinellas Co. 's Housing Authority* has a Program Coordinating Meeting that meets quarterly with the next meeting in May. Join to learn more about housing in Pinellas County.
- *Lealman and Asian Neighborhood Family Center* received a grant from the Pinellas Community Foundation Senior Services for utility assistance for grandparents/older adults 55+ yrs in need living in Lealman, Pinellas Park, Kenneth City, or north St. Petersburg.
- *City of Largo* had its 2nd of 6 focus groups with Spanish speakers at the High Point Family Center. Key take aways were that more community unity is needed, more leadership is needed whereby leaders make the community feel more welcoming, within the Latino community there sometimes is not as much support. There is also a need for community building. Many families are turning away from services. Participants in the focus group of 15 also stated that some felt an increase in discrimination from law enforcement and community neighbors/people. Many also expressed concerns for the safety of women/mothers who may experience domestic abuse or need mental health support and not seek assistance due to a fear of asking for help. The city will also be hosting a Hurricane Preparedness event for Spanish speakers on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **IV. Council Business**

- Grand Families Event: Celebrating the Heroes of Caregiving 2025

This event is for grandparents and extended families caring for children in North, Mid and South County. The Mid-County event is on May 10<sup>th</sup> at the Pinellas Park Performing Arts Center. Every family will leave with a food box from the St. Pete Free Clinic along with cereal and milk. Families in need will also receive diapers, baby wipes, toothpaste, and hand sanitizer and everyone will receive a folder with emergency preparedness information and a JWB bag. There will also be free haircuts for kids. There are resource table opportunities available, a DJ, and 41 community resource partners such as Call First, Clothes to Kids, Learning Empowered, Pinellas County Emergency Management, Family Center on Deafness, the Early Learning Coalition, Lutheran Services, BayCare Community Health, Gulf Coast Legal Services, Lealman & Asian Neighborhood Family Center and others have signed up to participate! Flyers are available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. We anticipate about 250+ families who will all receive a folder with emergency documents, a flashlight, first aid kit, a poncho, and hygiene items along with maps and hurricane guides. The Youth Leadership Committee will also be present, and the

first 40 youth will receive a teen bag with food recipe, a measuring cup, and all the ingredients to make the recipe.

- The first Kids First Cooperman Bogue award winner was chosen from the first round of applications received. The winner will be announced at the luncheon to be held in October on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

## **V. JWB Updates**

- JWB Children's Summit – Yaridis will send the link to the video.
- Community Events Funding – Funding is still available for any non-profit organization coordinating a small grassroots event. Grant amounts vary between \$500 - \$3,000 per applicant and more information can be found on the JWB website under the Community Council's informational page. Questions can also be answered by Yaridis Garcia.
- Future JWB Board meeting: Thursday April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2-4:00 p.m. @ JWB 14155 58<sup>th</sup> Street N, Clearwater, FL 33760 and on YouTube. The Finance meeting of the Board will be held on that same day at 1 pm.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was called at 7:29 pm. Harold Paxton Jr. motioned, and Carol Wiedeman seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm by Chair Julianne Pérez.

*Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Council Secretary, Caterina Tassara*