
MEETING MINUTES

March 5, 2026

Council Members Present: Alicia Ponds, Caterina Tassara, Jeanne Lafler, Christine Britt, Deputy Anthony Borbonio, Angel Addison, Julianne Pérez, Brenda Carvalho

Council Members Absent: Carlos Mercado, Carol Weidman, Fidel Johnson, Keith Sabiel, Fred Green, Harold M. Paxton Jr., Cheko Carter,

Guests: Maya Goldstein – Community Tampa Bay, Olivia Pelham & Layla Tyler (Youth Leadership Committee members)

JWB Staff: Yaridis L. Garcia

I. Call to Order

- Julianne Pérez called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and welcomed all members and guests to the meeting.
- Approval of Council Minutes – Jeanne Lafler motioned to approve the minutes, and Jessica seconded. The Minutes were approved as submitted.

II. Open Agenda-Community Partners Updates

- Brenda Carvalho announced that 5 dogs are coming to the Mid-county Grand Families event this year.
- Learning Empowered is happy to announce that they are having their annual summer camp program that runs from June 1st to July 31st from 3-5 pm. A second site will hold camp from June 1st – Aug 6th. Children must be potty-trained to participate.
- LANFC is happy to announce that the organization was selected as Leadership St. Pete's class of 2026 project. The LSP class will be raising funds to repair the center's decking, playground for the children, paint a mural, and enhance the entrance of the center for the children, families, and neighbors who frequent the center. Caterina Tassara also communicated that the VITA tax assistance program, in partnership with United Way Suncoast, is also continuing strong. Appointments are available for late March – April 9th.
- Evara Health representative Angel Addison requested assistance from Council members regarding low-cost housing for students with families. If anyone has leads, please let her know. Members suggested Hope Villages and Volunteers of America in Florida. Evara

is also offering tours if anyone wants one. The Council discussed having the next meeting in April or May at Evara Health Institute.

- Community Tampa Bay will be accepting registrations for the Anytown program this summer at Eckerd College for 9th – 12th grade students. Flyers were handed out. Council member Julianne asked if there were any plans for future intergenerational conversations. There are none now, but it is a frequently requested topic. Maya Goldstein stated that the organization may be looking into this in the future.
- Deputy Anthony Borbonio reported that he has helped to start a partnership with the Toronto Blue Jays. He has coordinated a visit for kids from local high schools to get a backstage tour of the stadium. He suggested that different organizations may have kids attend on March 10th. More information to follow.
- Largo Public Library is also having AARP Tax Aid for free 10 am – 2 pm during the week. Contact the library for more information.
- Audrey Ables reported via Yaridis that Pinellas Co. Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) has a grant that is open until March 31st for up to \$25,000 for organizations providing services in unincorporated areas. Visit the Pinellas County website for more information.
- Pinellas County is also accepting Social Action proposals through Thurs. March 26th for funding in the range of \$10K - \$150K. Amanda Craft is the person to contact with questions. Feedback was provided that the turnaround time for this grant is quite short given the breadth of the application and given when the bidder's online seminar is.
- The City of Pinellas Park is hosting an event on March 13th, called Community Unity Night for nonprofits, local businesses, and families at England Brothers.

III. Youth Leadership Presentation

Layla Tyler & Olivia Perham, Youth Leadership Committee

- Mid-County Council members were updated on the progress and achievements of the Youth Leadership Committee. All YLP committee youth live and attend schools in Pinellas County. Youth attend regular monthly meetings and actively participate in group discussions, participate in activities throughout the program year, and maintain communication with the YLC leader, Kelly Santos. Every year, the committee designs its own T-shirt. They also volunteer at different events. They participated in Make-A-Difference Day in October in South and Mid-County events and participated in serving food to the families at the Mid-County Holiday event in December. YLC Projects include a Literacy Project at the North County Grand Families event and the West St. Pete CommUNITY Festival, and a Mental Health Project that includes a podcast-style video on YouTube. The podcast videos will be shared on JWB's YouTube channel and on the JWB social media account. Julianne suggested that the Largo Library may also be able to share, and that the Barbara Ponce Library may also be able to promote it. Yaridis communicated that all YLP projects will be presented to the JWB Board of Directors at their meeting in July. Dr. Alicia Ponds suggested that Bloom on Channel 8 has a new host, and they are looking for speakers, and Dennis Phillips or Paul Lagrone may also be able to help to get the word out. She also suggested that if the teens need books, she receives many emails regarding book distributors.

IV. Council Business

- Combined Bylaws – There are 3 Community Councils in Pinellas County under the umbrella of the Juvenile Welfare Board. All 3 should run under the same procedures and protocol. All Councils worked together to draft this updated version of the Bylaws. A Draft document was distributed for review, feedback, and approval. A question was asked regarding background checks. When applicants apply for the Community Council membership, a background check is completed on the Council Member. If a member leaves the Council, then they must redo the background check. Minor typos were conveyed to Yaridis. Motion to approve the Bylaws was made by Brenda Carvalho. Christine Britt seconded. Passed unanimously by the Council. Yaridis also communicated that she is updating the Community Council area of the JWB Website.
- Grand Families Event - Saturday, May 30th called the “Celebrating the Heroes of Caregiving”. The form for vendors will go out tomorrow. The contracts for the DJ, Kona Ice, Face Painting, and food are all in place. Each family will receive an umbrella, food, a bag, books, and each provider will be asked to bring an item related to hurricane preparedness. A parent ProTech representative will sign families up and families will be encouraged to watch a video clip. There will be health screenings. A balloon guy will be available for the children. The flyer will be in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. All Council members should be promoting the event. It was suggested that advertising be done at the Derby Lane Market Place.
- Ridgecrest Community – This will be discussed in future meetings.
- Work Plan – Yaridis will email it out for Council Members to review to ensure that we are completing the goals we established. We will need to be working on the next work plan and elections. Yaridis will be working closely with Jomar on outcome measurement. Caterina asked if the JWB Board asks that the Council work on any priorities. Yaridis communicated that strategic planning focus groups is a part of that process.
- Country in the Park Event – Yaridis will have a table at the England Bros. Park on March 21st from 10-4 pm. If anyone wants to volunteer, let Yaridis know.

V. JWB Updates

- Summer Book Bus visits will be in July this year for 3 weeks. Community Council members volunteer to distribute books at different community sites. This year, Yaridis is looking to have a specific Pinellas Park day to highlight the City adopting the Book Bus for a day. For locations open to the public Julianne suggested that we market those locations more. Yaridis will invite Brianna to the next Council meeting to get feedback on the Book Bus.
 - Next meeting may be April 2nd at Evara Health Institute headquarters.
-

A motion to adjourn the meeting was called at 7:33 pm by Chair Julianne Pérez.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Council Secretary, Caterina Tassara

Future Meetings/Notices

- JWB Board Meeting: Friday March 13th, 9-11:00 AM

JWB 14155 58th Street N, Clearwater, FL 33760 & YouTube

- Mid-County Council Meeting: Thursday April 2, 6:00-7:30 PM

Evara Health Institute, 14106 58th St N, Clearwater, FL 33760