

## MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Introductions. The May 7, 2026 meeting of the North County Community Council, Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County, was called to order by Chair Beth Hovind at 6:02 p.m. The Council convened at the Advent Health North Pinellas Training Center, 247 E. Curlew Place, in Tarpon Springs, Florida.

In attendance were: Council Members Beth Hovind, Carmen Lake, Michael Arendall, Maria Amado, Dawn Handley, Adriana Palacio, Thomas Payne; and Joanne Reich, JWB Community Engagement Advocate.

Guests: Nicco Locasio of Purpose Works Consulting Group, Adrian Murray of Advent Health North Pinellas, Dorothy Shipe of R'Club East Lemon St., and Jerome Kynard of JWB Fatherhood Initiative.

Absent were: Council Members Nadine Spring Nickeson, Mary Sharrow, Niko Stergiotis, and a deputy with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office.

A quorum of the Council was present.

Introductions: Council Members and guests introduced themselves briefly.

## II. Council Business

- A. **Workplan Discussion:** Beth distributed a summary of focus areas drawn from the discussion held at the February 2026 meeting. The Council discussed which focus areas it would like to include in its next Workplan. The initial preferred focus areas were: (1) Helping Facilities with Succession Planning, which could include linking estate planning resources to Grand Families or kinship care families; (2) Increasing Focus Groups and Listening Sessions, to help gain more insights from the community about its needs and to continue advocacy efforts; (3) Improving Resource Hubs and Fairs, including for mental health services and the concepts of private company appointed "navigators" links to service providers. Michael observed that all of the working focus areas shared a common theme "Connecting Voices" that the Council could use in terms of naming or promoting its Workplan. Beth announced that the Council will further refine its Workplan at its June meeting.
- B. **Data Committee Report:** Dawn reported that the Committee met in April and continues to await some data points requested from JWB. It is difficult to predict with any certainty when the data will be available. Beth shared that the Committee had hoped to utilize data from The United Way but the data is not organized by zip code. Joanne shared that work on JWB's new online Data Portal is ongoing towards a release to the public.

- C. Book Bus: Joanne announced that the full countywide Book Bus schedule will be available in the next few weeks. Council Members are invited to sign up electronically for any dates they are available to serve. The Book Bus will be in Tarpon Springs, and Council Members can serve alongside Joanne, on July 13 and 14 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- D. Minutes: Michael moved that the April 2026 minutes be approved. Dawn seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

### III. Open Agenda - Community Partner Updates

- A. Joanne shared that JWB and the City of Tarpon Springs recently had a literacy book festival, attended by over 3,000. JWB distributed early learning and literacy information to attendees.
- B. Beth mentioned that the news is reporting that potassium shots are down for newborns.
- C. Carmen announced that a Food and Nutrition Class, with a guest from Humana, will be held next Tuesday, May 12 at 1:30 p.m. at Mt. Moriah AME church in Tarpon Springs with a focus area on anti-inflammation.
- D. Maria shared that Empath Health has eliminated some roles from its community department. She now works for Empath's PACE department, serving Medicaid applicants, seniors, and others.
- E. Thomas announced that Evara Health will offer sports physicals and EKGs beginning in June.
- F. Adrian Murray shared that Advent Health is working to increase partnership with schools and is looking to extend requests with those needing sponsorships.
- G. Dorothy from R'Club mentioned that R'Club serves children from 2 months to age 4, and it has a Family Services Coordinator providing intake to new families in the first 30 days.
- H. Adriana announced that the upcoming Saturday is USPS's Stamp Out Hunger to restock food pantries.
- I. Dawn shared that Speak Up for Mental Health has a Community Resource Rally scheduled for July 18 at the Elks Lodge in Dunedin, offering back to school items. Speak Up is looking for a spot in Oldsmar for a similar event. Speak Up was awarded a grant for 988 in Color, a mental health crisis line. The 988 number is available for text, call or chat with a licensed mental health professional. The Love for Lawrence program is encouraging youth to design 988 marketing information and promotional materials to get the word out about 988.
- J. Jerome from JWB's Fatherhood Collaborative mentioned that the Fatherhood Collaborative section of JWB's website has an asset map where citizens can see all services available for fathers throughout the county. The Fatherhood Collaborative would like to see more resources in North County's region. There is also a central referral hub to help fathers who need service. On May 30, there will be a free event entitled "Brother Are You Good" bowling event. On June 13, there will be an event at Lake Vista Park in St. Petersburg with

Partnership with Keyshawn's Corner, a fatherhood mental health program examining the impact of firearms and gun violence on families.

K. Nicco announced work is underway on a 6 week summer program to help youth figure out their future plans, similar to Boley's Summer Boot Camp.

#### IV. JWB Updates

Joanne shared that the JWB Board may take a final vote on approving a new Chief Executive Officer at its May 21, 2026 meeting. Joanne also passed out JWB's promotional materials for the Parent Protect program, designed to help instruct families on safe internet practices. Finally, Joanne reminded the Council about funding opportunities through the Community Funding Program, along with some details about the application criteria and process. There are also shirts available to celebrate JWB's 80th anniversary.

There being no further business, on a motion by Maria that was seconded by Carmen, the Council adjourned without objection at 7:27 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 4, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the Advent Health North Pinellas Training Center, 247 E. Curlew Place, in Tarpon Springs, Florida.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Arendall  
Secretary