



Board of Directors meeting * March 8, 2023 – 9:00 am.

Call to Order: Scott Seay called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.

Attending were:

Dr. Melinda Bowers	April Branscome	Sam Burkett
Michelle Cook	Julie Cotton	Kevin Crystal
Louis Erickson	David Haines	Uriah Matthews
Cheryl Pedone	Scott Seay	Leslie Sheekley
Nathan Sparks	Pam Tedesco	Al Ward
Hon. Boots McCormick	Sheila Fitzgerald	Gail Sansbury
David Welch		

CSOW staff members present:

Michele Burns	Kelly Jordan	Shawn Knobel
Will Miles	Sue Berntsen	

Approval of Minutes: The December 7, 2022 minutes were presented – there were no questions or comments.

A motion by April Branscome, seconded by Kevin Crystal, to approve the December 7, 2022 minutes as presented. All Ayes.

Welcome new Board members Kevin Crystal and Uriah Matthews.

Mission Moment: Kelly Jordan reviewed two Success Stories, Celina Mendoza who completed Dental Assistant training through WorkforceNOW!, and Cuyle Cromer, a transitioning service member who is in the Building Maintenance Repair apprenticeship via Get There Faster. We are paying half of his salary for OJT.

Staff attended the Strategic Transition Symposium to target individuals separating from the military. It's a partnership with One Okaloosa, Eglin, Hurlburt, and UWF. There were 58 attendees.

The 2nd annual Walton County Community Resource and Job Fair was extremely successful with over 30 employers and community resources and SUMU there. Over 70 individuals attended.

Someone is still needed for the Secretary position.

Direct Service Provider Extension Request: Will Miles reviewed our request to extend our status as Direct Service Provider until June 30, 2026. We currently have an RFP for Youth

Services out as well. There is a firewall between the Board and day-to-day operations as the Board serves as oversight only.

A motion by Kevin Crystal, seconded by Pam Tedesco, to approve the request to extend our Direct Service Provider as presented. All Ayes.

LOP – Letter Grades: Will Miles reviewed the background and process for the REACH Act Letter Grades, which is an effort to make workforce more transparent and has created a “no wrong door” strategy for workforce, education, and public assistance programs. It focuses on performance, improvements and ROI. Our initial grade is 82.17 a B-, but that places us in the bottom quartile, showing Florida is high performing. The initial grades were based on parameters for past performance which were unknown at the time. Our area’s low unemployment also factors in. The new LOP will allow us to focus better on the now-known parameters.

A motion by Pam Tedesco, seconded by Leslie Sheekley, to approve new LOP for Letter Grades as presented. All Ayes.

Finance Committee: Shawn Knobel presented the budget vs actual ending Jan 31, 2023. It shows we are currently underspent, but that is partially due to timing issues and paying our rent for the year from discretionary and “paying ourselves back” from program funds monthly. DEO is still requesting audit information, and the James Moore audit is nearing its end.

Business & Education Committee: Kelly Jordan presented:

Action Item #1 – Add NWFSC CDL A & B training programs to the ETPL for 2022 – 2023.

A motion by Louis Erickson, seconded by Nathan Sparks, to add NWFSC CDL A & B training programs to the ETPL for 2022-23 as presented. All Ayes.
Julie Cotton, employed by NWFSC had left the meeting prior to the vote.

Action Item #2 – Approve Fortis Institute Continued Eligibility Application and Programs for 2022-2023.

A motion by April Branscome, seconded by Nathan Sparks, to approve adding Fortis Institute and their programs for 2022-23 as presented. All Ayes.

Executive Committee: Scott Seay said the Executive Committee met Feb. 1st for Michele Burns’ performance review and made a salary adjustment. Michele reviewed the Secretary position’s responsibility and time commitment, asking for someone to volunteer to fill the vacant position.

Executive Director’s Report: Michele Burns thanked the Board members for adjusting schedules to accommodate moving this meeting out of conflict with the FP&L Economic Symposium. Now that Ernst & Young has made a recommendation on realignment and CSF voted on an option, it appears we will not be affected. It still must go to the Governor and DoL. Thanks to all who participated in the meetings. Michele reviewed the recommended changes affecting 10 counties and reducing Regions from 24 to 21. There are regional committees recommended to look at sharing and combining functions when possible. Regions 1-4 are looking at data analysis and communications.

The Panhandle Job Fair is March 15th and TeCMEN Industry Day is May 17th. Last Saturday we participated in College & Career Day, administering 130 Traitify assessments. Michele also reviewed Calendar Year 2022 numbers for CSOW. Scott Seay again thanked the Board members who participated in the Ernst & Young meetings on realignment for their time and input supporting CSOW.

Partner Updates

Okaloosa Schools – April Branscome reiterated that the College & Career Fair was a great success. They are preparing for three summer camps and will partner with CSOW for our Summer Youth program again this year. They are hosting career signing day on April 25 for Seniors to sign letters of intent. Spring break is 1 ½ weeks out. She introduced David Welch, who is familiarizing himself with CSOW, our structure, and functions.

UWF – Melinda Bowers said they are settled into spring semester. They were happy to host the Strategic Transition Symposium on their campus. Founders' Week is upcoming, including a day of service, a day of giving, and a pantry drive April 17 – 20.

VR – Cheryl Pedone announced they are holding Job Palooza in Laurel Hill on Friday.

One Okaloosa – Nathan Sparks announced their new Project Manager Martin Pringle. During the current legislative session, there is a move to abolish Enterprise Florida again, and their remaining functions would go to DEO. He believes Enterprise Florida is a better front door for businesses and tourism. A prospect for Shoal River Ranch did a short-notice site visit. Over 10 years it would create 7000 manufacturing jobs. They have talked to governors in seven states. They also have two letters of intent that would create 400 manufacturing jobs. The quarterly roundtable is next week, and TeCMEN Industry Day is in April. Details are available on their website.

Walton EDA – Uriah Matthews is in his third month in his position. They are hosting strategic planning workshops next Tuesday. He shared a link in chat.

Walton BCC – Commissioner McCormick was recently assigned as our liaison. He will have more information at subsequent meetings.

Chair's Comments: Scott Seay again welcomed our new Board members and asked for a volunteer for the Secretary position.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:09 am.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for June 7, 2023, at 9:00 am.