



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 23, 2025

Children's Services Council of Martin County, 101 SE Central Pkwy, Stuart, FL 34994

- Present:** Susan Rabinowitz, Eric Kiehn, Dan Romence, Lauren Abbott, Brian Bauer, Patrick Gleason, Ransom "Reed" Hartman, Steve Hartz, David Powers, Ron Rose, William 'David' Snyder, Ed Weinberg, Commissioner Blake Capps, Mayor Carmine DiPaolo, Commissioner Laura Giobbi, Ken Norman (Counsel), George Stokus
- Excused:** Angela Browning, Marshall Critchfield, Tyson Water
- Staff:** William Corbin (Executive Director), Inez van Ravenzwaaij (Director, Programs & Partnerships), Troy McDonald (Director, Existing Industries & Business Development), Brittany Truong (Office Administrator)

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call: Susan Rabinowitz called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. A quorum was established by roll call.

2. Comments

- a. Public Comments:** Jill Marasa, Ashley Capital, provided updates on various projects and developments and thanked Commissioner Capps for the fire station vote.
- b. Partner Comments:**
 - I. Kevin Farrell, Martin County School District:** Kevin Farrell spoke and provided updates about the Career & Technical Education and the Work Base Learning with Martin County School District. Discussion ensued from the Board after the presentation.
 - II. Investor Presentations:** Inez van Ravenzwaaij thanked Evergreen Private Care and Manpower for their investment.
- c. Executive Director Report:**
 - **BDB Budget Presentation to BOCC**
 - I presented to the Board of County Commissioners at their April 22 meeting. Letters of support were submitted by Enrico Mattiazzi of IM Group and Stephanie Miele of Scuba Diving International; Nelson Levy of Grind Hard Ammo and Debbie Pease of Daher Aerospace gave their testimony via public comment; and public comment was also delivered by the following BDB board members: Susan Rabinowitz, Dan Romence, David Snyder, Steve Hartz, and Carmine DiPaolo. I'm



happy to report that we have the support of a majority of the commissioners towards our budget ask. However, we confirmed that the increased budget amount necessitates a contract amendment, so that the new amount is codified. Because we are opening up the contract, I recommend that, in order to avoid similar budget requests, we go ahead and negotiate an automatic inflationary increase of up to 3% annually, with a corresponding floor of 0%. Additionally, I recommend that, as part of the amendment, we extend the contract length to an additional 5 years.

- **IDA Project Due Diligence**

- The Martin County Industrial Development Authority board members desire to spur construction and economic activity, and are proactively seeking out and evaluating development opportunities where they could potentially facilitate the issuance of tax-exempt bond financing. BDB staff has been assisting the IDA by targeting and reaching out to companies or organizations that are planning an expansion or likely to plan an expansion via re-investment in their business operations. The IDA learned that refinancing of debt is also an opportunity that the IDA could play a role in facilitating. Examples of targeted companies include businesses like assisted living facilities; solid waste-related companies (e.g. Sedron or Green Carbon Solutions in Indiantown); and educational institutions (e.g. k-12 private schools or institutions like the Chapman School of Seamanship, which has a need to repair and redevelop the seawalls alongside the property where it's located).

- **CMMC Loan Fund**

- The BDB hosted a Cybersecurity Certification workshop last month, in partnership with Florida Makes, South Florida Manufacturers Association, and Cyber Florida. One of the major conclusions of that workshop was that certification (Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification, or CMMC) – and maintenance of the certification – is very costly. Many of our medium and smaller manufacturers are having challenges affording to pay for, and remain, compliant with the CMMC federal regulation. As a reminder, companies must remain certified in order to keep their contracts with the Federal Department of Defense. The BDB is working with FloridaMakes and SFMA to collaborate and



potentially partner with a CDFI lender to make funds available to Martin County manufacturers. The working group is in the due diligence phase right now, and we hope to be able to launch the loan program and offer it to Martin County manufacturers by the end of summer. Additional details, including eligibility and loan terms will be shared once the program is confirmed.

- **Solar Energy Loan Fund (SELF)**

- Inez, Troy and I met with the Solar Energy Loan Fund (SELF) to learn more about their organization and how they may be able to assist Martin County businesses. SELF is headquartered in Fort Pierce and has a presence in 17 states. They've issued about \$10 million of loans in St. Lucie County and \$3 million in Martin County. The organization specializes in Green Banking (e.g. energy efficiency...solar installation and storm resilience – impact windows, updating roofs, etc.). They've been working mostly in the residential space, offering “green home loans”, which helps homeowners access low-cost financing for energy efficiency home improvements (Martin County has partnered with SELF to offer low-cost financing to homeowners for completion of septic-to-sewer conversion. The loans can be secured on ability to pay, rather than solely on credit scores. BDB staff is exploring commercial-focused opportunities with SELF, whereby existing business owners could retrofit their properties and benefit from a SELF-issued loan. We are also hoping to have a representative from SELF be a participant at our upcoming May 29th Resilience Workshop.

- **TCMA Board Meeting**

- Troy and I attended the April Treasure Coast Manufacturer's Association meeting at the invitation of TCMA Treasurer Mike England (owner of Express Employment Professionals, which is a BDB investor). The full board meets bi-monthly, and was established for the purpose of organizing and managing a local and regional manufacturers' trade association. We intend to remain involved and look forward to working with TCMA to continue improving the manufacturing landscape for Martin County and Treasure Coast companies in the industry.



- **Speaking Engagement (MC Realtors Association)**

- I had the opportunity to present to the Martin County Realtors Association of the Treasure Coast on April 3rd. I provided a refresher and overview of the BDB, and I spoke about the necessity for the business community to continue stepping up to the plate in a more proactive and engaged manner, with the goal of supporting Martin County economic development organizations like the BDB, the Economic Council, and our local chambers, as we collectively try to implement our respective visions and missions. The message was one of importance – and one that was well-received, thankfully – especially given that the BDB is in the process of going before the Board of County Commissioners to secure funding for its FY 2026 operating budget.

- **Speaking Engagement (Truist)**

- Last Wednesday, April 17th, I had the pleasure of speaking to the Truist Bank commercial real estate team that is responsible for servicing their six-county southeastern market that spans Miam-Dade to Indian River. The goal was to highlight all of the exciting commercial development and financing opportunities across the treasure coast, and particularly in Martin County.

- **Speaking Engagement (Seacoast)**

- Ted Astolfi and I conducted a joint presentation to Seacoast Bank's Community Board. The presentation focused on highlighting differences between the Business Development Board and the Economic Council, and how both organizations work together towards a common goal.

- **Speaking Engagement (Seacoast)**

- Inez and I had the pleasure of attending the Airport Administration Building ribbon cutting ceremony. The event was held on April 11th and featured commentary from county elected officials and airport management.

3. Executive Committee Meeting April 18th, 2025 Recap (No Quorum): Susan Rabinowitz provided the summary of the Executive Committee Meeting.

4. Approvals



- a. **Minutes - Board of Directors Meeting—Mar 26, 2025:** Steven Hartz moved to approve the Board of Directors Meeting minutes for February 21, 2025, which was seconded by Eric Kiehn. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. **Financials:** William Corbin, Executive Director, presented and summarized the financials. Lauren Abbott moved to approve of the Financials Reports and it was seconded by Eric Kiehn. The motion passed unanimously.
- c. **Executive Committee Open Position – Angela Browning, PhD.:** Eric Kiehn made a motion to accept Angela Browning, PhD, for the roll of secretary on the Executive Committee, and was seconded by Ransom ‘Reed’ Hartman. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Reports & Presentations

- a. **Employment Report** – Christina Coble, CareerSource, briefed the BDBMC Board on employment covering Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River Counties.
- b. **BRE Update** – Troy McDonald, Director of Existing Industry and Business Development, provided an update.
- c. **Programming Update** – Inez van Ravenzwaaij, Director of Programs and Partnerships, provided an update and went over the new category.

- 6. Board Member Items & Discussions** – The Board discussed the new manufacturing program at IRSC. Ransom “Reed” Hartman asked for a follow-up on the industrial property conversation from the last meeting. Ransom “Reed” Hartman made a motion for the Executive Director to write a letter to the economic ombudsman to update the county industrial land analysis, by business type and specific uses; also, update chapter 15 of the comp plan regarding economic element. The motion was seconded by Lauren Abbott and the motion passed unanimously. The Board also discussed two of the Ashley Capital projects and what will happen now with them.

7. Adjourn: 10:17 AM



Approved by:

DAN ROMENCE VICE CHAIR
~~Susan Rabinowitz, Chair~~

6/25/25

Date

Prepared by:

Brittany Truong, Office Administrator

06/25/2025

Date

Minutes Approved on 06/25/2025



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Children's Services Council of Martin County, 101 SE Central Pkwy, Stuart, FL 34994

Present: Susan Rabinowitz, Dan Romence, Eric Kiehn, Angela Browning, Patrick Gleason, Ransom "Reed" Hartman, Steve Hartz, David Powers, Ron Rose, William 'David' Snyder, Tyson Waters, Ed Weinberg, Mayor Carmine Dipaolo, Commissioner Laura Giobbi, Ken Norman (Counsel), George Stokus

Excused: Lauren Abbott, Brian Bauer, Commissioner Blake Capps

Absent: Marshall Critchfield

Staff: William Corbin (Executive Director), Inez van Ravenzwaaij (Director, Programs & Partnerships), Troy McDonald (Director, Business Retention and Expansion), Brittany Truong (Office Administrator)

1. **Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call:** Susan Rabinowitz called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM. A quorum was established by roll call.

2. Comments

- a. **Public Comments:** Parker Smith, Smith Marine Service and 2024 Youth Entrepreneur of the Year, and his mother Sharon spoke about his new business endeavor.
- b. **Partner Comments:** None
 - I. **Investor Presentation:** Inez van Ravenzwaaij thanked Truist Bank for their investment.
- c. **Executive Director Report:** William Corbin went over the Executive Director Report. The Board talked in depth about the Paris Air Show and the Proposed Budget and Contract Amendment.
 - **GrowFL Event Partnership**
 - On May 21 the BDB partnered with GrowFL to conduct an event geared towards local small businesses. GrowFL is an organization that supports second-stage businesses and their executive leadership in their efforts to grow and scale. The event featured a speakers panel of entrepreneurs (including one with a successful past appearance on Shark Tank) – who detailed their respective journeys toward success. The BDB coordinated with several other



sponsors to make the event happen, including Acquisition Experts, the St. Lucie EDC, South Florida Manufacturer's Association, Foundry Commercial, and The Research Park at FAU. More than 50 people from various local small businesses and entrepreneurs in the area attended.

- **Indiantown Chamber Industry Bus Tour Event**

- The BDB partnered with the Indiantown Chamber as a sponsor to host an Industry Appreciation Day on May 9th. This event was designed to celebrate and recognize the businesses that contribute to the growth and vibrancy of Indiantown. The event featured a bus tour where local businesses had the opportunity to showcase their facilities to fellow business owners, community leaders, commercial real estate professionals, and potential customers. The tour also featured stops at properties that still had available space or land to develop.

- **May Industrial Development Authority Meeting**

- The IDA conducted its regularly scheduled bi-monthly meeting on May 9. The board continues to accomplish a significant amount of business and tasks, as they have refocused and re-aligned around new strategies to identify development opportunities to partner with, from the angle of bond financing issuance. The IDA board would like to present an update to the BDB board at the June 25 BDB board meeting.

- **FEDC Annual Conference**

- BDB Vice Chair Dan Romence joined Executive Director William Corbin and Director of Business Retention & Expansion Troy McDonald, at the Florida Economic Development Council's Annual Conference from May 14-16 in Port Charlotte. The conference, held was an opportunity for continuing education as well as peer-to-peer connections and relationship-building within the economic development ecosystem. Highlights included sessions on best practice strategies for site selection and workforce/talent development as well as new trends in technology and economic development marketing.

- **Speaking Engagement (Bank of America Treasure Coast)**



- On May 1st I had the pleasure of speaking to Bank of America commercial and wealth management associates at the Treasure Coast Market virtual town hall meeting. I gave a summary and overview of the BDB's vision, mission, goals and activity, and discussed how Bank of America and their staff can play a role in local economic development.
- **Paris Air Show**
 - Past conversations with Daher Aerospace revealed that they would benefit from having more of their suppliers and other related corporate partners closer to their Stuart-based operation, and they are amenable to having the BDB as their guest at the Paris Air Show in June. The show, held bi-annually at Le Bourget Airport in the northeast suburbs of Paris, is the premier conference for the aviation and aerospace industry, and represents an excellent opportunity for the BDB to identify potential companies to attract and recruit to Martin County. Most importantly, Daher is willing to assist the BDB with making warm introductions to companies that it does business with, with the intention of recruiting them to expand and invest in the local aviation sector in Martin County. The floor of the trade show/exhibit hall will be open from June 16-June 19. BDB Director of Business Retention & Expansion Troy McDonald will be representing the BDB at the conference.
- **BDB Proposed Budget & Contract Amendment**
 - BDB staff continues to speak with individual Commissioners from the BOCC about the political feasibility of its FY 2026 budget request and proposed contract amendment (escalator clause). These conversations will inform the viability of a path forward, from a policy perspective. Staff will have a clearer idea on where things stand by week's end.

3. Executive Committee Meeting May 23, 2025, Recap: Susan Rabinowitz provided the recap of the Executive Committee Meeting on Friday May 23, 2025.

4. Approvals



- a. **Minutes - Board of Directors Meeting—March 26, 2025:** Steven Hartz moved to approve the Board of Directors Meeting minutes for March 25, 2025, which was seconded by Tyson Waters. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. **Financials:** William Corbin, Executive Director, presented and summarized the financials. Eric Kiehn moved to approve of the Financials, and it was seconded by Angela Browning, PhD. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Reports & Presentations

- b. **Business Attraction Update** – William Corbin, Executive Director, provided an update on attraction projects and leads for Martin County.
- c. **BRE Update** – Troy McDonald, Director of Business Retention and Expansion, provided an update.
- d. **Pulse Update** – Troy McDonald, Director of Business Retention and Expansion, provided an update. Critiques and discussion occurred among the Board.
- e. **Programming Update** – Inez van Ravenzwaaij, Director of Programs and Partnerships, provided an update.
- f. **Marketing Update** – Inez van Ravenzwaaij, Director of Programs and Partnerships, provided an update.
- g. **Investor Update** – Inez van Ravenzwaaij, Director of Programs and Partnerships, provided an update. The Board thanked Inez for progress with investors.
- h. **Legislative Round-Up** – Ike Crumpler, Consultant, provided a summary of the recent Florida session.

- 6. **Board Member Items & Discussions** – Steve Hartz stated that staff reach out more to smaller businesses, as they are the ones that have more obstacles. Those small businesses do not know about the BDBMC and how they help businesses. Eric Kiehn agreed and suggested that the BDBMC tells their story and what they have to offer more online and through social media. Dan Romence thanked staff for the opportunity to attend the FEDC conference earlier in the month.

7. Adjourn: 09:51 AM



Approved by:



DAN RABINOWITZ, VICE CHAIR
Susan Rabinowitz, Chair

6/25/25

Date

Prepared by:



Brittany Truong, Office Administrator

06/25/2025

Date

Minutes Approved on 06/25/2025