

Minutes  
CareerSource Northeast Florida Executive Committee Meeting  
August 25, 2021

A ZOOM meeting of the FCWD, Inc., Executive Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Wayne McClain on Wednesday, August 25, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. The following members participated, representing a quorum:

Elaine Johnson	Jake Schickel
Wayne McClain	Darryl Register
Eda Edgerton	Clay Lyons

Excused: Dr. Joe Pickens

Staff: Bruce Ferguson, Rebecca Livingston, Cheryl Taylor, Jay Loy, Steven Dionisio, Melissa Terbrueggen, Ivette Berrios, Brandy Buckingham, Ron Whittington, and Diane Nevison

Others: Dr. Anna Lebesch (JAXUSA), Tania Marler, and others

**Public Comment:** None.

**Consent Agenda**

**\*Approval of Minutes**

**Motion made by Elaine Johnson and seconded by Darryl Register to move approval the June 23, 2021, Executive Committee minutes as presented; motion unanimously carried.**

**\*Staffing Agency Contract Renewal**

A modification has been made to the Oasis staffing agency contract that should have been brought for board approval prior to execution because the total dollar amount exceeds our current policy threshold. This staffing services agreement was entered into during the pandemic to provide dislocated workers temporary jobs serving in local food banks across the region and as health and sanitation workers at our career centers. This procedure failure was discovered during recent monitoring by DEO. **Motion made by Jake Schickel and seconded by Elaine Johnson to move approval the modification increase to the Oasis staffing agency contract; motion unanimously carried.**

### **\*Policy Update – Occupational Skills Training Policy**

The Occupational Skills Training Policy needs updating to conform with current rules and requirements. The policy establishes the corporate strategy CSNEFL will use in creating local or regional policies to build a skilled workforce around targeted occupational and industry areas. During recent DEO monitoring, it was brought to our attention the policy included language stating the training provider process was a competitive process and it is not, it is an application process. That language has been removed and the correct language included. **Motion made by Darryl Register and seconded by Clay Lyons to move approval the recommended changes to the Occupational Skills Training Policy as presented; motion unanimously carried.**

### **Operations Update**

July 2021 Employment Statistics: The most recent employment stats indicate our region is in a robust recovery. July regional unemployment is 4.6% versus 5.1% in June versus 9.2% in July 2020. The state is at 5.1% and nationwide 5.7%. All our counties are down from the June numbers and there was an increase in the size of the workforce and the unemployment rate still went down. Our region continues to be well ahead of the state and nation.

Total employment is up 35,300 jobs from a year ago and we are above the pre-pandemic job number in every county in our region. That information is not on the PowerPoint slide. The information was provided by the Florida Chamber Foundation, who does an update by county. Forty Florida counties have more jobs today than pre-pandemic, and 27 counties are still under that number. Our region's six counties are ahead. Question: Why is that so? Reply: For our region it is the diversity in the economy, and the lacking counties either rural or more dependent on tourism. Our region's rural counties had job increases in the 300-400 job range. The Florida Foundation estimates the first quarter of 2023 when we get ahead of pre-pandemic numbers.

Florida Major Metro Regional Rates indicate Jacksonville is leading at 4.6%, Tampa at 4.7%, Ft. Lauderdale 5.1%, Orlando 5.3% and Miami 6.4% (mainly dependent on international travel, tourism and business conferences).

Career Center Update – Center Visitor Comparison (Year to Year) – Region 8: Our region saw a drop in the number of career center visits from June to July, not surprising with the resurgence of the Delta Variant.

Career Center Update – Region 8 Career Center Visits – January 2020 to Present: Our region saw a decrease in center visits from June to July 2021; June had 4,223 and July 2021 had 3,717. The August 2021 trend is following July and expect that 3,700 range.

Business Services Update - Job Order Trends by Month: New job orders continue to be strong. July had 3,538 new jobs in the system, and August is on pace for the same. It continues to be a very strong job market.

Job Order Trends by Month – July 2018 to Present: This chart gives a bolder look at the increase in job orders from July 2018 to present. And in 2021 it has gone through the roof.

Job Order Trends by Targeted Industry: Job orders are broadly spread over the targeted industries. Health Care and Social Assistance doubled from 381 in June to 778 in July. There are a many opportunities, and we encourage people to come in and get the help needed.

Question – Elaine Johnson: What are we hearing from our employer partners? From personal experience, we have the jobs but not the candidates. Reply – Bruce Ferguson: CSNEFL is experiencing the same. We have had to extend the end date on internal slots we have been trying to fill in hopes of getting a good pool of candidates to choose from. The Chair echoed the same. Rhetorical Question: Where did the people go that were previously working? Replies: No one knows...they are sitting at home. They have dropped out of the labor market. Bruce stated with school back in play we thought we would see an employment surge but instead got a Delta surge. Another area having trouble hiring is in early learning centers for childcare. Childcare centers could potentially take in more children, but they do not have the right staffing ratio. If you cannot find childcare it is hard to go to work. Luckily Florida is a migration state and is attracting 800-900 net new people each day which helps the state.

#### Strategic Visioning: Initial Priorities (Rebecca Livingston)

The point referenced by Elaine Johnson is very important when we are looking at strategic visioning is how can we better connect with populations we have not connected well with by creating a talent pipeline and looking at work-based learning and other training to increase that pipeline. We hear consistently in meetings that the talent to fill positions is not there, and we are focusing on that as we move forward with our strategic visioning. After reviewing Fairman's report and getting board feedback, we took that information and honed in on initial priorities to start with

as a vision moving forward. We will share our initial priorities and action steps as we move forward and get board feedback on how we are moving forward. Larry Fairman's report is below listing long and short-term goals with our tweaks, emphasis, and additions with our comments below it.

Priority Focus areas for the long-term and short-term.

Long Term:

- Increase in-school youth focus and services
- Expand customer toolkit
- Expand awareness of services
- Influence implementation of the REACH Act, especially Technology Integration and Improvement of State Systems
- Influence Future State and Federal Workforce Policy
- Conduct ROI Study on Organizational Services
- Make CSNEFL and Employer of Choice

Short Term:

- Should we shift to a two-customer focus?
- Implement Client-Centered design to Inform Center Hours, Accessibility and Services
- Emphasize First/Better Jobs
- Add Internal Measures of Success
- Expand reach to small/local employers in rural areas
- Greater emphasis on Technical Training/Work-Based Learning

Changes made to Long-Term priorities:

1. Added bullet 5: "Influence Future State and Federal Workforce Policy". There is opportunity to look at this as it relates to the REACH Act, in particular what we are experiencing now with our workforce and will keep that on our radar.
2. Bullet 6: We will conduct an ROI Study on organizational Services. It is important to do this. The REACH ACT wants this done and is creating a grading card which is to our benefit so we can talk to our customers to find out what we can do for them.

Changes made to Short-Term priorities:

1. Added Bullet 6: “Greater Emphasis on Technical Training/Work-Based Learning”. This relates to creating that pipeline to ensure we are looking at work-based opportunities, technical training opportunities, apprenticeship opportunities, to give individuals the opportunity to get into the workforce but provide employers with the workforce they need.
2. Bullet 2: “Implement Client-Centered design to Inform Center Hours, Accessibility and Services”. We are going to do this. This is a change management technique focused on the client to help us inform what the center hours, accessibility and services should be based on what we are hearing from our clients.
3. Bullet 1: A recommendation from the study is to shift to a two-customer focus. The board has always said the employer is our customer and the job seeker is our product developed to meet that customer need. Does the board agree shifting to a two-customer focus or keeping the employer as our customer? Comment – Elaine Johnson: Our focus has always been to connect job seekers to our business partners, and we have to do that. At our last meeting we talked about where jobs are going to be and how people are going to be sourced for jobs. The bottom line is shift to a two-customer focus. The Chair agreed also voting for a two-customer focus.

The Chair stated since there are no other comments, Rebecca has heard the direction of the board. Rebecca stated okay. With Elaine’s comment about job seekers, she has looked at the definitions of customers versus clients, and customers are usually a product of clients who have something that can help in the development of them. She feels there is still some work the board can do on exactly how we talk about each of them, particularly in this current market and focus on both to make sure we are meeting our needs. This is something we will continue to do.

Below are the action items for the next 6 months that we would like to start working on as we move forward with priorities.

1. In-School Youth Committee
  - CareerSource NEFL Youth Team and Industry Managers
  - CTE Directors
  - High Schools
  - Youth Partners
2. Client-Centered Design

- Team Enrolled in On-line Course
  - Implement within Programs: Welfare Transition and Career Center Services
3. Community and Stakeholder Awareness
    - Expand Communications Team
    - Annual Report
    - Update Marketing Plan and Priorities
  4. Work-Based Learning, Apprenticeship and Work-Experience
    - Pursue Opportunities with Employers to Implement Work-Based Learning
    - Focus on the Underserved Populations, Diversity and Youth

In-School Youth Committee: CSNEFL would like to build upon the youth work we are doing and create an in-school youth committee, focusing on connecting with youth so they better understand career opportunities, two- or four-year institution opportunities, work-based learning and other opportunities with employers. Committee members would consist of CSNEFL youth staff, CSNEFL industry managers, area partners (CTE Directors, High Schools, and youth partners), and the list will continue to grow. We will continue to partner with our current partners who serve youth and are doing it successfully.

Client-Centered Design: Staff will be trained and infuse client-centered design which is focusing on our clients and putting them at the center of everything we do. We need to research and identify customer needs, i.e., being empathetic, walk-in customer's shoes, observe and develop key innovative ideas that can be done as a quick prototype as we move forward. This is a good teach management perspective based on the customers and clients we have especially when we start looking at service accessibility to those we are trying to reach.

This week 7 CSNEFL members enrolled as a team in a 10-week online course that gives us an opportunity to move forward with one of 7 team strategies. Our team chose, "how might we be more collaborative in how our organization works together". Going through this course, we are utilizing techniques and learning the client-centered design with the plan to train other staff and then take on other challenges that are most relevant to what we are trying to do moving forward, such as welfare transition services. It is an exciting class with people from all over the world with different backgrounds enrolled in it giving us opportunity to interact via ZOOM with others

worldwide who are also working on how to improve services in their organizations. It is a great innovative experience in opening our minds on some of the things that we can do.

Community and Stakeholder Awareness: We are moving forward in this area and expanded our communication team with a new hire to help us build the capacity to do this. We are working on our annual report telling our story and that will be shared virtually next month. We will meet with our marketing team to ensure we are moving forward with our long- and short-term priorities.

Work-Based Learning, Apprenticeship and Work-Experience: We are expanding this area and have hired a full-time Navigator to pursue opportunities with employers to implement work-based learning. We are focusing on the underserved populations, diversity, youth and building talent pipelines to do that. Money has been put into the budget to support this effort.

Are there any board comments or suggestions on these 4 areas that we are working on the next 6 months or are there other areas we should focus on that are not on this list?

Comment – Chair: All the bullets are important but feels community and stakeholder awareness is the most important. We need to get our story out there better than we have done in the past.

Comment – Darryl Register: He agrees with the Chair to keep our focus on community and stakeholder awareness, but feels we need to do more with in-school youth and addressing problems before we have high school drop outs with no jobs.

Comment – Elaine Johnson: She echoed the Chair and Darryl's support of the community and stakeholder awareness and linking it back to what Rebecca said earlier...while we are actively getting the message out hopefully reaching untapped talent pipelines that will know that they can circle up to us as that connector between that employment that they would choose to seek.

Comment – Clay Lyons: A major issue for CSNEFL is getting the word out on what we do and believes we need to start in the schools to get the word out about what we do especially in rural communities. We need to emphasize and get it into the schools, in the communities, guidance counselors, Ag Teachers (people who are intricately involved in young people's lives at a time when they need it). Yesterday he observed young men doing volunteer work with welders from

FFA, the Ag classes in high school, and felt these young men could potentially benefit from our services and if we can connect with them at an opportune time.

Comment – Jake Schickel: Several years ago, the Jax Chamber had a Florida college and university outreach program letting them know the benefits of working in Jacksonville. The purpose was twofold...to help employers who had a need for college graduates, and to increase the percentage of people in North Florida with degrees. Is that still being done or is it something we might do? Reply from Dr. Anna Lebesch: She can speak to that and the in-school youth committee. The Chamber is still working with colleges outside the region especially when working with targeted industries, but COVID has significantly changed the ability to do some of that work. Regarding the in-school youth committee (she will email Rebecca after the meeting to connect on this), JAXUSA has a standing committee called “Talent Advancement Partnership”. Members include the CareerSource team, and all the CTE Directors in the 7 counties in the region the Chamber works with. There is an opportunity to collaborate and serve those needs as well.

Comment – Kevin Doyle: He agrees with all members comments and really liked the idea of getting into the schools and teaching them when they are young that there are other options. When he was in high school, the only option was to go to college, but there are many paths available that pay more than a job you can get with a 2- or 4-year degree. Also, the communication part has always been a big challenge and we need to make noise and bring attention to ourselves and continue to move the needle in the right direction.

Rebecca thanked members for their helpful input. These are the conversations we want to have around these priorities. We do not want to recreate the wheel and know many board members, partners, and JAXUSA have connections with organizations that are already working in this arena. We just want to fill the capacity of how NEFL is addressing these areas and encourages everyone to help make sure we are connected to the right partners. Regarding the community stakeholder awareness piece, she would like to hear more directly from the board and partners on what the message is that we need to get out and who do we need to get it out to to ensure we are meeting that goal. We look forward to continuing conversations as we move forward with these action items and meeting our goals.

### **Next Meeting Dates**

Full Board Meeting: October 28, 2021, 9:30-11:00 a.m., University of North Florida (University Center), 12000 Alumni Drive, Room 1058-1, Jacksonville, FL. (This format can be adjusted if need be due to the Delta Variant).

Executive Committee Meeting: September 22, 2021, 9-10:30 a.m., Location/Format: TBD.

Adjournment: 9:37 a.m.