

**FINAL MINUTES
CAREERSOURCE PALM BEACH COUNTY, INC.
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, April 11, 2025**

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, WELCOME

The meeting was audio and video recorded with a written transcript. Dave Markarian welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. Committee members present, Dave Markarian, Christopher Cothran, George Elmore, Alyssa Freeman, David Talley, and Jay Boggess. Committee members absent, David Gobeo. Staff present, Julia Dattolo, Steven Gustafson, Erica Scarpati, Melanie Rebottini, Charles Duval, Michael Corbit, Gerard Melville, and Mary Mullen-Butler.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

a. Proposed Amendments: Dave Markarian asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. There were none.

b. Approval of Agenda: Dave Markarian called for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion: George Elmore

Second: Alyssa Freeman

The motion was approved unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Dave Markarian asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

IV. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

a. Minutes from February 7, 2025: Dave Markarian asked the committee to review the February 7th minutes and after reviewing them, asked if there were any amendments, deletions, or edits. Hearing none, he called for a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion: David Talley

Second: George Elmore

The motion was approved unanimously.

b. New Board of Director Submission, i. Matthew Rocco, President, South Florida Manufactures Association (SFMA): Julia Dattolo addressed the nomination of Matthew Rocco, President of the South Florida Manufacturing Association. His appointment was praised for bringing valuable manufacturing industry representation to the board, reflecting the sector's rapid growth in Palm Beach County. Mr. Rocco's experience and the board's existing relationship with his organization made his addition a natural fit.

Dave Markarian asked the committee if they had any questions. Hearing none, he called for a motion to approve the submission of Matthew Rocco to the Board of Directors.

Motion: Alyssa Freeman

Second: George Elmore

The motion was approved unanimously.

c. Programmatic Monitoring Report – CareerSource Palm Beach County, LWDB – 21 Program Year 2023-2024, as of February 5, 2025, by FloridaCommerce: Dave Markarian directed the committee members to the Executive Summary on page 7 in the meeting packet. He asked the committee if they had any questions. Hearing none, he called for a motion to approve the Programmatic Monitoring Report.

Motion: David Talley

Second: Christopher Cothran

The motion was approved unanimously.

V. INFORMATIONAL

a. Board Orientation and Annual Training Requirements (Julia Dattolo): Julia Dattolo emphasized that board members must complete their annual board orientation. An email with details will be sent at the beginning of June, and the deadline for completion will be set for June 30th.

- b. President & CEO Update (Julia Dattolo): Julia Dattolo began her update reflecting on the fifth anniversary of COVID-19 which underscores the profound impact the pandemic has had on workforce dynamics. During its peak, unemployment soared to 14.7%, causing widespread disruption, not only in employment but within families as well. Many women left the workforce to manage homeschooling and caregiving responsibilities, a shift that redefined family roles across the country. The move to remote work forced organizations like CareerSource to embrace new technologies such as Zoom and Teams, tools that have now become integral to daily operations. These adjustments also reshaped how teams function, and today CareerSource supports hybrid, in-house, and fully remote teams to better meet the diverse needs of the workforce.

In Palm Beach County, the local economy has undergone significant changes post-COVID. Once heavily reliant on agriculture and hospitality, the region has welcomed new residents and corporate headquarters, leading to a diversification of industries. This growth has fueled economic activity while presenting challenges like housing affordability. Currently, the unemployment rate in Palm Beach County stands at 3.7%, consistent with the state's rate and below the national average. Key sectors, including education and health services, have shown remarkable growth, with 5,000 new jobs created over the past year.

Ms. Dattolo also spotlighted the manufacturing sector's growth both locally and across Florida. Palm Beach County boasts more than 1,500 manufacturers, while the regional count exceeds 6,000. The sector's GDP surged from \$43 billion to \$73 billion within a year a staggering 67% growth rate. Florida now ranks as the tenth largest state for manufacturing, with aspirations to climb higher. One particularly compelling insight shared was that every 100 durable goods jobs create 744 additional indirect jobs, illustrating the industry's expansive economic influence. Higher wages and robust apprenticeship programs make manufacturing an attractive pathway for students and job seekers alike.

To bolster growth in this sector, Ms. Dattolo unveiled a learner pathway outlining educational opportunities from high school programs to advanced degrees at Palm Beach State College and FAU. A collaborative meeting is planned for May to bring together educators and manufacturers to ensure training aligns with industry needs. Additionally, CareerSource is launching a new internship website, internpalmbeach.com, before the next school year. This initiative, backed by private funding and the Business Development Board, aims to connect local students and graduates with internships to retain talent in the region.

In tandem, CareerSource is undergoing a complete website redesign to simplify navigation and improve accessibility. The new site is slated for launch by August or September 2025. On the financial front, we are actively pursuing funding opportunities, with over \$1.2 million in grant applications pending across various government entities. To enhance revenue streams, we have also subleased part of our West Career Center to Families First, which officially moved in on April 1st.

Finally, as we recognize April as Second Chance Month, CareerSource reaffirms its dedication to supporting individuals reentering the workforce after incarceration. Although our reentry team has been scaled down, we have helped over 1,000 formerly incarcerated individuals secure employment since January 2024. Among the many success stories shared, standout examples include a veteran now working as an HR recruiter and a young man employed by GEO Group who has already earned a promotion. One particularly inspiring story is that of Mr. Freeman, a man with a long history of incarceration who transformed his life to become the CEO of People for Purpose, a reentry support organization. His journey exemplifies hope, redemption, and the vital role CareerSource plays in empowering individuals to overcome barriers and thrive.

- IV. ADJOURNMENT:** Dave Markarian asked the committee if there was any further business to discuss. There was none. The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 a.m. The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on June 13, 2025, at 8:00 a.m.