



**CAREERSOURCE CITRUS LEVY MARION
Business and Economic Development Committee**

MINUTES

DATE: August 6, 2025
PLACE: CareerSource CLM
2703 NE 14th Street, Ocala, FL 34470
TIME: 9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ben Whitehouse
Edward Suor
Deb Stanley
Gary Smallridge
Jeff Chang
Kevin Cunningham
Mark Paugh
MJ Toscano
Phillip Geist
Tisha Whitehurst

MEMBERS ABSENT

Pete Beasley, Chair
Steven Baham

OTHER ATTENDEES

Rusty Skinner, CSCLM
Dale French, CSCLM
Cory Weaver, CSCLM
Melissa Saco, CSCLM

Chris Wilkinson, CSCLM
Sandra Crawford, CSCLM
Cira Schnettler, CSCLM
Heather Shubirg, Ocala CEP

CALL TO ORDER

In Pete Beasley's absence, the meeting was called to order by Jeff Chang, Committee Member, at 9:01 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Cira Schnettler called roll and a quorum was declared present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Phil Geist made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 7, 2025, meeting. Edward Suor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

State Update

Rusty Skinner updated the committee on the following items:

- CareerSource Florida will be holding their quarterly State meeting on August 20 and 21 at the World Equestrian Center. CLM management will be in attendance.

- The State is introducing detailed guidelines and policies to ensure consistency among the regions.

Workforce Issues that are Important to Our Community

No issues were presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ACTION ITEMS

None

PROJECT UPDATES

Economic Development Partner Reports

Citrus:

- Deb Stanley shared that Citrus County Schools will be submitting a request for a CAP grant to support upgrades to the Culinary Arts kitchens. Several community partners, including CareerSource CLM, have provided letters of support to strengthen the application. Cory Weaver stated that the State will be reviewing multiple culinary certifications for approval this week. If approved, the certifications would be added to the Master Credential List, which would enhance the competitiveness of the grant submission.

Levy:

- Tisha Whitehurst shared the below developments for Levy County:
 - The Florida Job Growth Grant will be providing support for improving infrastructure needs for a grocer project in Chiefland as well as an industrial project.
 - There are also discussions of positive activity that may enhance the Williston airport.

Marion

- Heather Shubirg shared that there are several projects in development:
 - There has been interest in larger vacant spaces that may see development within the next 6 months.
 - The CEP is partnering with MTC to kick off an aerial workforce program, which would complement the needs of the Williston airport.
 - The CEP is also partnering with Lake Weir on a construction academy.
 - The CEP will be hosting business workshops. Heather invited committee members to attend the workshops.

MRMA

MJ Toscano stated the fundraising Bowling Tournament was highly successful. Two new fundraisers will be added to support the scholarship program: 5K Walk/Run and Fishing Tournament. The Golf Tournament is scheduled for October 16. Joe Corley has retired from his employer and will now be an honorary member of MRMA. He will be providing support by serving on various boards and councils.

Talent Center

Chris Wilkinson reviewed the report provided in the packet. He also shared that the

Talent Connection virtual candidate showcases have been very successful. Talent Connection #4 and #5 are scheduled for August and September. The Talent Center team will also be holding a presentation on best practices for a developing a virtual fireside at the 2025 Workforce Summit.

Event Report

Melissa Saco highlighted items from the Event Report. She attributed much of the success of the job fairs to the ongoing partnerships with educational institutions. The next Paychecks for Patriots event has been scheduled for November 13. The Marion County Job Fair is scheduled for October 2.

Experiential Learning Contracts

Cory Weaver summarized each section of the report. Noting the successful completions that lead to employment. We are hopeful that healthcare and construction apprenticeships will be in development this year as well.

Metrix Users

Cory Weaver shared details from the report, noting the most popular pathways and courses. Program usage continues to grow. The link to the Metrix program can be found on the CLM website. Heather Shubirg asked if there were AI courses in the program. Cory Weaver responded that she would do further research in this area.

Contract Reports

Sandra Crawford reviewed the performance report for Citrus and Marion counties and the youth report. Overall, the partners did well. Levy County has an economic director in place. We will be collaborating with their representative on the 2025-2026 goals, which will be presented at the next meeting.

Grant Update

Sandra Crawford provided an overview of the grants. Both grants have had a high level of enrollments and engaged participants.

MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:29 a.m.

APPROVED:
