

# **Business Competitiveness Council Teleconference Meeting**

## **January 12, 2009**

### **Summary**

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Council Chair Dwayne Ingram called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. EST and welcomed all. In addition to the Chair, Council members in attendance included: Randy Berridge, Mary Lou Brunell, Kay Cowling, George Hauer, Lila Jaber, Jennifer Grove, Linda Sparks, and Al Stimac. Chair Ingram briefly reviewed the agenda.

#### **Information Item 1 – Reports from Committee Chairmen**

New & Emerging Markets – Chair Berridge reported on his committee's two conference calls. The committee has developed six areas of interest for project proposals: entrepreneurial boot camp training; optics, laser and photonics technician training and certification; nurses training for aerospace transition; agricultural and technician training; and air marshal training and certification. A potential demonstration project may be proposed on how Banner Centers can have profit centers or revenue sources. Chair Ingram asked if a proposal for certification in several areas could be merged into one request to include all.

Sustainability/Infrastructure – Chair Jaber reported on the committee's two conference calls. The committee listened to a presentation by Daniel Grove, Executive Director of the Construction Workforce Development Center. The committee expects a project proposal from Mr. Grove. Subject matter experts have been recruited to serve on the committee, most recently, Mr. Larry Bishop, PE in the water industry. The convening of joint committee teleconferences has been suggested due to the potential for overlap and educational opportunities.

Growth Markets – Chair Hauer reported the committee has added one new member, Russ Allen and are requesting additional members for statewide diversity. The committee solicited regional workforce boards for project proposals.

Targeted Occupations – Chair Hauer reported the committee would hold its first meeting on January 16 at 9:00 a.m., during which time they will adopt the occupational wage criteria and approve the final list for 2009-10 TOL. The list will then be submitted to the regional boards for their input and consideration. The list will be reviewed by AWI and WFI staff for compliance.

Entrepreneurship & Small Business – In Chair Rosario's absence, committee member Linda Sparks gave this report. The committee plans to work in conjunction with the Governor's Economic Stimulus Plan that targets small businesses. Their goal is to establish a contact from the Governor's office. Andra Cornelius provided additional information on the Governor's plan.

#### **Information Item 2 – Employ Florida Healthcare Workforce Initiative Status Report**

Andra Cornelius reported on the need for the workforce system to develop a statewide proposal in response to transitioning unemployed individuals into jobs, and referenced a previous statewide initiative, Operation Paycheck. A cross-agency team was assembled to discuss this issue. After study, it was determined that the one sector of statewide reach and need was healthcare. The initiative continues to be refined. However, funds for the initiative will need to be approved by the WFI Executive Committee at the January 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. The initiative may be partially funded by

sweeping funds previously allocated to the Councils, including the Business Competitiveness Council, toward this priority need.

### **Information Item 3 – "Move Back" Opportunity – Return Previously Off-shored Companies**

Chair Ingram has developed a two-page paper on this issue and provided a brief review for Council members. He apologized for not having the paper ready for distribution to the members for today's call, but he continues to refine it. The goal of his initiative will be to develop a stimulus package that will place Florida at the center of economic development initiatives focused on inducing previously offshored companies to consider relocation in Florida. Since workforce issues may be one of myriad concerns to these companies, the initiative would be structured as a partnership effort.

### **Information Item 4 – Senate Select Committee on Florida's Economy**

Andra Cornelius briefed members on this issue. A background paper was included with the meeting materials. The Senate committee is asking for responses to the following three questions:

1. What are the barriers to economic recovery and growth?
2. What are the most redundant, overlapping or non-essential regulatory activities which increase costs and inhibit economic growth?
3. Which incentives will best encourage business development and make Florida competitive?

Chairman Ingram suggested that input be opened to the entire board. Peggy Dransfield will send out an email to the entire board and ask that responses from members be forward to Andra Cornelius' attention by a date certain. Any responses received will be forwarded to the Senate Select Committee.

### **Overview of Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Act**

Jayne Burgess provided background information on this issue and referred to the handouts included with the meeting materials. She reminded members that the industry certification list must be approved by the WFI Board of Directors at the February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. The action will first be considered by the Business Competitiveness Council at its February teleconference meeting (now scheduled for February 10<sup>th</sup>) before taken to the full Board for action.

### **West Bay Airport MOU Update**

Andra Cornelius provided the update on this landmark agreement. The MOU and press release are available on the WFI website. Next steps include the formation of an implementation team that can work on the key items within the MOU and bring it to fruition.

### **Banner Center for Water Resources RFP Update**

Tom Shiner stated that the RFP was broadly distributed on January 7th to approximately 260 entities. The RFP can be found on the WFI website. March 6th is the due date for submission of proposals. An industry review team has been identified to complete independent reviews of the RFPs the following two weeks. The goal is to have an award by March 27th. Committee funding proposals should be received no later than COB, Monday, February 2, 2009.

There being no further comments, the meeting adjourned.

**NEXT TELECONFERENCE MEETING: Wednesday, February 10th, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. EST**