

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
OF THE
OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

NOVEMBER 19, 2025

**WEDNESDAY
8:30 A.M.**

**50 S. MILITARY TRAIL
WEST PALM BEACH, FL**

MEMBERS:

Juan Pagan, Chair
Christine Roberts-Kelly, Vice Chair
Lorna Anderson
Angela Barnard
Kati Cassiani
Clementine Fleuranvil
Ilan Kottler
Robert Lesko
Jacqueline Ramirez
Melanie Roger
Deeawn T. Roundtree
Bob Schafer
Seabron Smith
Thais Sullivan
Javin Walker

COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Robin Arguello, Small Business Development Specialist II, Office of Small Business Development (OSBD)
Brooke Cook, Administrative Assistant II, OSBD
Maria Duenas, Contract Analyst, OSBD
Allen Gray, Small Business Development Manager, OSBD
Axel Miranda, Director, OSBD
Terry Newton, Small Business Development Specialist III, OSBD
Angela Smith, Small Business Compliance Manager, OSBD
Antonia Smith, Outreach and Public Information Coordinator, OSBD

WEBEX ATTENDEES:

Delano Allen, Small Business Development Specialist I, OSBD
Joseph Castor, Financial Analyst II, OSBD
Tammy Fields, Deputy County Administrator, County Administration
Wendy Fils-Aime, Small Business Development Specialist II, OSBD
Deirdre Kyle, Small Business Development Specialist III, OSBD
Richard Sena, Assistant County Attorney I, County Attorney

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE STAFF PRESENT:

Danielle Freeman, Deputy Clerk
Karla Perez, Board Meetings Specialist

ALSO PRESENT

Sabrina Valbrun, Cert Restoration

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

a. Roll Call and Introduction of Guests

Ms. Cook called the roll.

Present: Juan Pagan, Christine Roberts-Kelly, Lorna Anderson, Angela Bernard, Kati Cassiani, Ilan Kottler, Robert Lesko, Jacqueline Ramirez, Melanie Roger, Bob Schafer, and Javin Walker

Absent: Clementine Fleuranvil, Deeawn T. Roundtree, Seabron Smith, and Thais Sullivan

b. Adoption of Agenda for November 19, 2025

MOTION to approve the agenda. Motion by Lorna Anderson, seconded by Christine Roberts-Kelly, and carried 11-0.

c. Approval of September 17, 2025, Minutes

MOTION to approve the minutes. Motion by Robert Lesko, seconded by Melanie Roger, and carried 11-0.

II. OSBD Ordinance and Reorganization of Committee Members

Mr. Miranda presented the committee with a summary of the discussion from the BCC meeting held yesterday. He stated that he presented the proposal for the new ordinance along with a request for permission to advertise for a public hearing.

Mr. Miranda further stated that the office transitioned from a race and gender-based program to a race and gender-neutral program subsequent to the enactment of the emergency ordinance.

In addition, Mr. Miranda stated that after a complete revision of the ordinance, it was decided that the best approach was to redraft the ordinance to eliminate redundancies.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Thais Sullivan and Antonia Smith joined the meeting.)

Ms. Angela Smith provided an overview of the steps involved in the bid application process for applicants.

Mr. Sena explained the current process of requesting a waiver and offered historical context of the previous application process. He stated that waivers now must accompany the bid application.

Mr. Miranda clarified that the new process required that all information was to be collected at the initial application stage.

Mr. Walker stated that the new process outlined in the ordinance was implemented to enhance management efficiency.

Discussion ensued regarding the new process for receiving waiver requests.

Ms. Fields announced the initiation of a micro business loan program that involved an educational component, where course fees for small businesses would be paid by the County.

Ms. Sullivan discussed prioritizing engagement with small businesses to facilitate access to resources for their success.

Ms. Bernard emphasized the role of technology in the County's communication and operations department. She recommended that small businesses be informed of the type of technology software being utilized by the County.

Mr. Miranda announced that the BCC would nominate seven individuals on the committee, while the remaining four would be an at-large decision. He also suggested

including individuals from the four sectors: construction, incubators, small business development world, and the financial industry.

Ms. Sullivan inquired about the process for a current committee member to seek reappointment. In response, Mr. Miranda stated that he would speak to the district commissioner and provide insights of the current member who wished to continue serving on the committee.

Mr. Miranda announced that the program along with the committee would sunset on December 31st, 2025, unless the new ordinance was approved by the BCC.

Ms. Fields provided clarification on the nomination process following the ordinance's approval by the BCC. She indicated that each commissioner would be asked to nominate a representative for their district.

In addition, Ms. Fields requested that any member interested in being reappointed Mr. Miranda so that the information could be forwarded to the commissioner along with any recommendations for the remaining four seats.

Discussion ensued about the County guidelines for submissions and applications for serving on a committee.

III. Committee Member Update

a. Chair & Vice Chair Vote

Chair Pagan expressed his support for small business initiatives and addressed the evolution of the population in Palm Beach County.

He further stated that a 20 percent membership discount would be offered as an incentive for a collaboration between the Hispanic Chambers' committee members and Palm Beach County, subject to all members being certified by the County.

Vice Chair Roberts-Kelly expressed her support for small businesses and encouraged committee members to be aware of new programs available in the County. She noted that there were 20 chambers currently.

IV. Old Business

a. Outreach Activity Report

Ms. Antonia Smith expressed gratitude for the committee's support during the outreach events and noted that the Hispanic Heritage event was successful.

In addition, Ms. Antonia Smith shared upcoming workshops in January that would be hosted by Mr. Gray within the City of Riviera Beach. She also requested that any newsletter highlights be submitted to Ms. Angela Smith for consideration.

Chair Pagan announced that an Annual Multicultural Business Expo would be held on January 10th at John Prince Park from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

b. Small Business Certification Report

(CLERK'S NOTE: Bob Schafer left the meeting.)

Mr. Miranda introduced Maria Duenas as the new contract analyst for the Office of Small Business Development.

Ms. Duenas provided an overview of the current SBE Certifications and vendor status reports. She stated that there was a total of 738 Certified Vendors; 59 Active Applications; and 43 businesses that were certified and/or had recertified.

Ms. Angela Smith reminded committee members to track expiration dates and renew their Sunbiz accounts accordingly.

V. New Business

a. Recertification Sub-Committee Report

Vice Chair Roberts-Kelly noted a concern with the recertification from last quarter and inquired about the current point of contact for the distribution list. Mr. Miranda clarified that the point of contact was Ms. Cook.

VI. Committee Member Comments

Mr. Lesko announced the continuation of the outreach program and the ongoing partnership with the League of Cities. He also welcomed participation from all committee members.

In addition, Mr. Lesko inquired about the Outreach Program scores, and whether the rewards given by the commissioners would be included in future reports. In response, Mr. Miranda confirmed it would be included in the reports.

Ms. Roger requested that a future strategic plan be provided to the committee addressing operational and technological standpoints.

Ms. Ramirez inquired about streamlining the certification process.

Mr. Miranda stated that they had soft-launched the system and were still making improvements.

Ms. Anderson expressed gratitude for being a part of the committee and hoped that they could stay connected.

VII. Director's Comments

Mr. Miranda encouraged committee members to remain involved and thanked them for their service.

Chair Pagan thanked everyone for their service and wished everyone happy holidays.

VIII. Assistant County Attorney's Comments

Mr. Sena was not present.

IX. Public Comments

No comments were made.

X. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Christine Roberts-Kelly, seconded by Melanie Roger, and carried 11-0.

At 10:17 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.