

**Tri-County Community Partnership Initiative Advisory Board Meeting
Northwest Florida State College, Student Services Building**

October 12, 2023

Nathan Sparks, One Okaloosa EDC Executive Director provided opening comments. John Schuliger was introduced as the new TCPI facilitator. Mr. Schuliger welcomed attendees and highlighted his facilitator role as an independent contractor for his personal business; not as a government employee. New Advisory Board member introductions provided; Rich Pruitt, Niceville-Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce and Tina Rushing, CHELCO.

The mission of the Advisory Board and the agenda were overviewed.

Program Updates

Firing Range

- SMSgt Select Tarah Champion provided an overview. A comprehensive asset map was developed last year further identifying the deficit. An MOA between the 96th Test Wing Security Forces Squadron and the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office was executed to allow for utilization of the Sheriff's Public Safety Training Complex in Crestview. Usage details are being finalized. A follow-up report will be provided in approximately six months on the range utilization.

Work Group Stand Down

- The process for standing down a TCPI Work Group was provided. All three work group co-chairs must be in agreement and have concurrence from the LOE Champion.
- The Cellphone and Firing Range work groups were discussed for stand down at the April Eglin Community Partnership Program meeting and the June TCPI AB meeting. The Cellphone Services Work Group activities have been absorbed by the 96TW Range Group as an internal issue. LOE Champion Col Hammill recommends standing down the work group with the option to re-engage if necessary. The Firing Range Work Group has resolved the identified challenge and is also recommended for stand-down.
- While a STEM workforce is needed, LOE Champion Col Davis recommends standing down the Trade Skills work group due to a lack of validated trade skills training needs. A new work group may be developed with a different focus on the needed technical pipeline.

Lynn Dominique moved to stand down the three work groups as discussed; Uriah Matthews seconded; motion passed unanimously as presented.

Line of Effort Updates

Infrastructure; Colonel Hammill, 96 CEG/CC

Traffic/Road Capacity Spotlight

- New co-chair Matt Vera reported and overviewed slides. Lt General Bauernfeind hosted a transportation roundtable on September 25 focusing on Highway 98 congestion and the negative impact to Hurlburt's mission.
- Four lines of effort were discussed; 1) Okaloosa County collector road, 2) FDOT widening Hwy 98, 3) Santa Rosa County connector road to Hwy 87, and 4) a new Hurlburt West Gate.
- The Okaloosa collector road would move neighborhood traffic off of Hwy 98 for the Florosa Elementary School and provide one lighted intersection.

- A conceptual design is underway by Okaloosa County. An environmental study RFP is anticipated in December 2023. Eglin AFB/96TW approves the conceptual idea and will need to grant an easement and move the fence line; requires AFCEC approval.
- Hwy 98 is included in the Florida Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and is ranked as a high priority. Widening 98 is planned in six segments from the Alabama line to Hurlburt Field. The desire is to increase priority and secure funding to accelerate the timeline.
- Santa Rosa County is considering a connector road to join the Okaloosa collector road to Hwy 87 across Eglin land reservation. Environmental study required. This could be a military only access road.
- Improving an existing range road with gate access would be the last option considered.
- The next AFSOC Traffic Roundtable will be in April to report tangible progress and evaluate next steps.
- The next TCPI AB update will address the new I-10 interchange and the Westside Expansion.

Education/Training; Col Davis, 96 MSG/CC

Career Readiness

- Kelly Jordon, co-chair reported. Job Fairs and hiring events held since the last meeting were highlighted. Event dates up through November also provided.
- At the Lunch & Learn event, 39 TSM gained employment.
- The Hiring Our Heroes event provided 104 job offers.
- The Panhandle Job Fair resulted in 25 job offers.
- English as a second language classes are needed for military spouses.
- Additional information previously gained from the volunteer TAP surveys was requested. In particular, % staying in the area and the cost avoidance of unemployment. This data is critical to measuring the success of this work group and is utilized by economic development partners to demonstrate the workforce pipeline.

Quality of Life; Colonel Wood, 1 SOMSG/CC

Childcare

- Brian Wiggins, Co-Chair briefed. Childcare is one of AFSOC's top priorities
- New guidance states childcare fees cannot exceed 7% of the total family income.
- New Florida law supports FCC and provides 6 months to obtain state licensure.
- Last year, the UWF SBDC partnered with The Business and Leadership Institute for Early Learning to provide training in Okaloosa County. This year the training will expand into Santa Rosa County.
- Eglin is at 100% design on a new CDC which will provide approximately 120 slots. An RFP was released and the bid received was high.
- Hurlburt will be expanding their CDC and did not receive any RFP responses.
- Waitlist continues to be a challenge. Hurlburt has 151, mostly infants, on their waitlist. NAS Whiting Field has 100 on their wait list. The Navy families do not receive a stipend like the AF families do.
- Higher Ground Education is in discussions with a developer they previously partnered with for the two CDCs bordering the Eglin range.

Housing

- Randall Rowland, co-chair reported. A new agreement with a developer will provide 91 townhome rental units in Crestview for military families.

- Okaloosa County has submitted a letter of intent to lease Eglin's North 9 acreage for a mixed use development.
- Eglin Housing Privatization will be renovating 126 duplexes previously planned for demolition.
- The Poquito Bayou parcel is being considered for a EUL.
- Industry Day pending for West Side EUL.
- Freedom Beacon Park will provide 112 luxury apartments.

Oversight; Nathan Sparks, One Okaloosa EDC

Grant Funding

- Work Group member, Kay Rasmussen provided an overview on the Florida Defense Infrastructure Grant program. The state has re-opened the DIG application process with a November 27 due date.
- The grant program provides funds to military installation communities that are investing in shared infrastructure improvements for operational readiness; encroachment, transportation, utilities, communications, housing, and security.
- Qualified activities include studies, analyses, plans, modeling, easements, and construction.
- Projects require a 30% Match and the program provides a 36 month timeline; up to June 30, 2026.
- Work Group co-chairs are requested to evaluate their respective challenges for potential application.

Santa Rosa County DCIP Award Highlighted

- Shannon Ogletree, Executive Director SRC Economic Development Department and Commissioner Colten Wright presented and overviewed slides.
- The County entered into an agreement with NAS Whiting Field for runway and air space utilization at the Whiting Aviation Park; a 269 acre site.
- The OLDCC DCIP funds, \$6.4M, will provide for a taxiway and apron/helo pad at the Park.
- Leonardo Helicopters is the anchor tenant providing MRO services.
- A Triumph Gulf Coast grant, \$8.4M, was also secured.
- Construction is anticipated to begin by the end of the year.

Going Forward/Closing Comments

Upcoming Dates

- Mike Edwards, Doolittle Institute, shared that the new PIA process does not allow for facility lease. Therefore, the Doolittle Institute facility, with two SCIF areas, in Niceville will be available.
- Gordy Fornell, Lt Gen USAF retired, encouraged the utilization of IGSA.
- Eglin AFB has a new innovation officer, Steve Bailey.
- A future spot light may overview TCPI success stories.
- The Eglin CPP meeting is tentatively rescheduled for December 7.
- Due to the CPP being rescheduled, the next TCPI Advisory Board meeting will also be rescheduled. A spot light on the Housing Work Group will be planned.
- The ADC Installation Innovation Forum will be held in Orlando November 6-8. Kay Rasmussen and Dale Marks will be in attendance.

Meeting adjourned.