

**United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**May 3, 2024**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Patricia Bell, Bob Beville, Noelle Branning, Gary Bryant, Cindy Carfore, David Fry, Chris Hansen, Matt Humphreys, Charles Idelson, Sally Jackson, John Joyce, Kevin Karnes, Andrea Kershaw, David Klein, Tony Lapi, Stephen Martus, Tracy McMillion, Charlotte Miller, Victoria Moreland, Bill Motzer, Landon Mullinax, Barbara Mundy, Stan Nelson, Scott Nygaard, Pat O'Donnell, April Phillips, Steve Pontius, Karen Ryan, Jay Santos, Bob Shearman, Bryan Simmering, Mary Snell, Tom Uhler, Corey Vertich, Scott White, Matthew Zwack

**Staff:** Barbara Alderson, Daniel Benzing, Lugeenya Blackstock, Dan Campbell, Fifi Carrillo, Edelyn Castellon, Nancy Cote, Jennifer Carolluzzi, Tina Corbett, Marissa Crawford, Patrice Cunningham, Stacey Devlin, Terri Erling, Angela Fischler, Greg Gunter, Brenda Hayes, Michelle Hidalgo, Gail Holton, Heather Housand, Angela Jackson, Jeannine Joy, David Lake, Christine LoConte, Mary Meador, Jennylyn Mitchell, Madison Mitchell, Craig Norling, Lissette Ortiz, Hannah Pelle, Darren Phillips, D. Soledad Quiñones, Toni Rozelle-Rosio, Jim Sanger, Tish Sargent, Barbara Thomas, Elena Trigony, Harriett Turner, Marcia Turner

**Guests:** Dan Lauer and John Martin - Fort Myers Mighty Mussels; Dr. Ken Savage – Lee County School District

1. United Way Board Chair Noelle Branning called the meeting to order at 8 a.m. with a quorum present.
2. The minutes of the March 15, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting were approved as presented.
3. The Living United award was presented by United Way staffer Barbara Alderson to Dan Lauer and John Martin of the Mighty Mussels Baseball Team for the collaboration of our “United for a Cause” event at Lee Health Stadium recently. This was an opportunity for raising friends, funds, and awareness in the community.
4. President and CEO Jeannine Joy introduced three new employees: Elena Trigony, who will be working as a Data Curator for 211, David Lake, who will be the new Mission United Coordinator, and Karen Turcotte, who will join the Executive Team as Chief Development Director starting on May 20. COO Hannah Pelle also made some announcements, including the promotion of Harriett Turner to the position of School Resource Coordinator and Barbara Thomas to the role of Team Lead. The new 211 building on Matthew Drive is currently going through the permitting stage again due to revisions. Additionally, United Way Worldwide is undergoing a brand refresh, and graphics were shown to illustrate the changes.
5. Finance Committee Chair Corey Vertich mentioned that the audit was currently being worked on. He reported that the Committee met for the annual review of the Endowment funds and had established new rules for the investment portfolio. Additionally, the Committee discussed the 401(k) annual plan update. The recommendation was a 3% discretionary profit-sharing contribution for 2023 eligible employees and proposed a transfer of \$127,013.80 or 5% from the Endowment Funds to the 2023-2024 Campaign. The motions were approved unanimously.

6. Campaign Co-Chair Kevin Karnes reported that we are at 95.36% of our goal or \$10,765,402. Campaign Co-Chair Jay Santos indicated that Alexis de Tocqueville members are currently at \$4,825,548 with 17 new members and a total of 185 members to date. Since its inception in 1991, they have given \$63.88 million. Our communities are still winding down events and fundraising and are currently at \$4.7 million. This includes Bonita Bay who has again surpassed the \$1.1 million mark for the 6th year and the Sanibel-Captiva campaign raising over \$600,000 for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row despite massive recovery efforts. Employee campaigns are wrapping up with special thanks to the Circle of Excellence organizations who have raised over \$100,000 towards our campaign efforts. The Mighty Mussels event last week was a huge success. A call list with contact information for a follow-up call will be provided with donors who have not yet confirmed gifts for this year. Revisions were made to the goal affirming that \$11 million will fully fund all United Way partner programs and initiatives due to a decrease in supplemental designations. A motion to restate the goal was unanimously passed.

7. Fund Distribution Chair Tom Uhler provided an update on Project Dentists Care stating that they had re-opened in their new facility and resumed services. Earlier in the year the funding was put on hold during the transition period. A motion to approve the adjusted total of \$86,166 passed as presented. Tom acknowledged the United Way staff for their support throughout the process, and also mentioned that the participation in fund distribution this year was terrific.

8. Gifts in Kind Chair David Fry indicated that over the last several weeks upgrades to our InFlow ordering software have been added which will allow for enhanced tracking of inventory and reporting. Nine security cameras have been added to the warehouse site to ensure product integrity and improve staff safety. The team facilitated Days of Caring events for a group of 15 high school students from the Belmont Hill School in Boston, and a group of 30 executives with Gartner. Both groups bundled and inventoried clothing used for our School Resource Program. Since Hurricane Ian, the Gifts in Kind program brought in over \$30 million in donations, and since January 1, 2024, it has distributed 28,649 items valued at over \$2.2 million. The program has also obtained new donations of \$1.65 million in the same time period. The School Resource Center has distributed 94,574 items valued at over \$1.8 million so far this school year.

9. Volunteer Center Chair Steve Pontius announced that our 234 VITA volunteers and staff members have exceeded our IRS program goal by completing over 8,100 tax returns this season and \$8.4 million in refunds back. Our Beesley's Paw Prints Pet therapy program has had a successful 1<sup>st</sup> quarter logging over 575 visitation hours. New partnerships were established with the Goodwill Pathways program, FISH of Sanibel-Captiva, and Faith United Methodist Church which is starting a new pet therapy ministry group with hopes to offer home visits. The United Way Volunteer Appreciation breakfast was held last week to recognize all our program volunteers. This year we introduced the United Way Champion Award in honor of B. Pat O'Rourke. Bob Beville was this year's inaugural award recipient for his dedication and generosity in volunteering for several local agencies. Steve reminded everyone that next Saturday, May 11, is Stamp Out Hunger Day and encouraged everyone to place non-perishable items out by your mailbox to be collected for the local food banks and redistributed to the community.

10. Community Partnership Schools Chair Tracy McMillion reported that in November of last year, our United Way hosted a group of educators from Wales who were chosen to visit our Community Partnership Schools. This visit was made possible through the Taith Grant, a funding initiative that supports educational visits and exchanges, fostering global connections

and enriching educational practices. As a result of this Grant, four members of our CPS Team, along with representatives from UCF and North Carolina, were invited to visit the Welsh Government and community-focused schools, at no expense to our United Way. They got an opportunity to share best practices and lessons learned. President and CEO Jeannine Joy mentioned that Dr. Ken Savage was on the call and that there will be a Lee Health pediatric clinic at Franklin Park Elementary School in partnership with the Community Partnership School. We are thrilled that this clinic will not only provide medical services but also mental health services.

11. United Way 211 Chair Gary Bryant declared that during April, over 3,900 people reached out to 211 seeking help. Our Mission United efforts connected with 118 individuals providing resources for rent, utilities, housing related expenses, and automotive repairs. Our clinic staff is embedded in the Lee Health System and not only helped on the phones but also assisted over 100 patients with complex challenges. Our VITA program was extremely successful this year, receiving 797 calls from people seeking assistance.

12. Board Chair Noelle Branning acknowledged President and CEO Jeannine Joy as a finalist for the Apex Awards, which is organized by the Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce. This recognition is a testament to Jeannine's exceptional leadership in our community. Additionally, Noelle mentioned that our United Way will receive the 2024 Public/Private Achievement Award from the Governor's Hurricane Conference on May 16th. This award acknowledges our significant contribution to hurricane preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation in the State of Florida. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m. Next month will be our Annual Meeting of the Membership and Board Meeting, which will be held in person on June 7, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Jeannine Joy