You Thrive Florida
Governing Board Meeting Minutes
July 9, 2025

Meeting Location: You Thrive Florida ("YTF") Administrative Offices
Senior Services Conference Room
820 Kennedy Boulevard
Brooksville, FL 34601

Board Members Present: Jennene Norman-Vacha, Board Chair; Tracy Ramirez, Interim Secretary/Treasurer; Donna Maas, James Morris, Vice Chair; Steve Champion

Board Members and Staff Present via Teleconference: Doug Childers; Evonne Jackson, Angelys Vega Gonzalez, Aaron Lyons, Cristy Labadie, Finance Controller

Board Members Not Present: Brenda Mobley, Secretary/Treasurer; Michelle Alford, Phil Lakin, Jasmine Sampson

Staff Members Present: Mat Kline, CEO; Kris Bates, CFO; Lisa Becker, CAO; Steve Homan, COO; Vanessa Qualiana, Human Resources Manager; Richard Sanvenero, House to Home Director; Melanie Harrison, Senior Services Director; Chad Johnston, IT Director; Janine Kell, Children's Advocacy Program Director; Tanya Stone (formerly Stanton), Director of Early Learning Programs; Anna Ventura, Senior Program Manager; and Melissa Mace, Executive Administrative Coordinator.

Best Academy: Jamie Young, Principal, Janella Cook, Marvin Gordon, Patricia Laird, Best Board Members

Attorney: Jennifer Rey and Jarrod Prater, The Hogan Law Firm

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Norman-Vacha, Board Chair, called the July 9, 2025 meeting of the You Thrive Florida ("YTF") Governing Board to order at 9:04 am. Ms. Norman-Vacha noted that a quorum was met as evidenced by the number of Board Members present in-person, and via conference call. Ms. Norman-Vacha led in the pledge of allegiance and group prayer. Ms. Norman-Vacha asked if the board had time to review the board packet including the consent agenda items; in which all board members agreed. Ms. Norman-Vacha asked if there were any questions regarding the items in the board packet. There were no questions presented by board members.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 8, 2025 MINUTES: Ms. Norman-Vacha requested a motion to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2025 minutes.

MOTION: Mr. Morris moved to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2025 meeting. Ms. Maas seconded the motion. The motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA: Ms. Norman-Vacha requested a motion to approve the consent agenda items.

MOTION: Ms. Ramirez moved to approve the consent agenda items. Ms. Jackson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mr. Champion introduced the board members of the Enrichment Center of Brooksville: John Druzbick, an Enrichment Center Board Member, and Paul Morana, the current Board Chair. Mr. Champion believes that a partnership aimed at serving both agencies could have significant potential.

The Enrichment Center of Brooksville has been providing senior services for nearly 40 years. In addition to hosting You Thrive's meal site, the center offers local seniors' food, games, crafts, and socialization activities. They also invite outside providers to educate members about taxes, hearing aids, and other services pertinent to this vulnerable population.

At one point, there were three enrichment centers in Hernando County. However, Mr. Druzbick explained that when COVID-19 struck, the program faced numerous challenges, including the loss of several key members. The program managed to survive thanks to grants from the State of Florida and Hernando County. They have partnered with Cemex for improvements, as well as the non-profit "Win the Day," to find better space to serve their members. Currently, their program is at full capacity; while it is surviving, it remains stagnant. Mr. Druzbick continues to see an overwhelming need in the community to support the senior population and wants to grow the program.

Mr. Druzbick is asking the board to consider a partnership and is seeking funding resources to maintain and expand their program. He would like the opportunity to meet with the board and/or the executive team to discuss the potential partnership.

In response, Mr. Champion informed Mr. Druzbick and Mr. Morana that the Enrichment Center would need to be incorporated into You Thrive Florida's organizational structure. He believes that You Thrive would be the ideal agency to undertake this, especially since the building is leased from the County for $1/year with nearly 70 years remaining on the lease. This location is also designated as a Special Needs Shelter for Emergency Management, and the building may be repurposed for State, County, or City needs as part of the lease terms. Previously, the Red Cross occupied the building for several weeks, and the center received FEMA reimbursements for using the space.

Mr. Kline agreed that the Enrichment Center shares the same mission as You Thrive Florida but clarified that You Thrive is not permitted to provide funding to other organizations. He compared the situation to the acquisition of Habitat for Humanity of Hernando County. Mr. Kline requested the board's approval to schedule a meeting between himself, Mr. Druzbick, Mr. Morana, Steve Homan, and Melanie Harrison to discuss the matter further and report back to the board.

Ms. Norman-Vacha then asked if there were any additional citizen comments or questions. No further comments were received.

Ms. Norman- Vacha requested a motion to approve the meeting between all parties listed above to see if there is a potential for an agreement to benefit both sides.

MOTION: Ms. Ramirez moved to approve meeting. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. With no opposition, the motion carried.

BOARD SPOTLIGHT: There was not a Board Spotlight at the meeting, but Mr. Kline shared that the board will be welcoming Sumter County Commissioner, Donald Wiley, on to the Public Sector position vacated by Mr. Morris. He anticipates being able to introduce Mr. Wiley at our next meeting.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: At the last meeting, Mr. Kline discussed the ongoing funding issues that the agency has been facing. Currently, there are no further updates to provide. Uncertainties remain regarding the allocation of funds, state funding, and the possibility of funding elimination. However, Mr. Kline believes that with the recent federal budget approval, we will begin to receive more answers and direction. He is confident that most of our programs will remain safe, but he has concerns about the continuation of funding for LIHEAP, CSBG, and Weatherization programs. Lobbyists at the national level continue to advocate against any funding cuts to these programs. In response, the agency is shifting its focus toward diversifying resources in case other funding sources are lost. Ms. Becker will have more information to share during her presentation.

Mr. Kline also reminded the board that July is the time for the annual CEO evaluation. He has been in the role for four years. The CEO performance evaluation team will include three executive board members along with two other members selected randomly. Those chosen will be notified by email that includes a Survey Monkey link to complete. Mr. Kline requested that those selected provide honest feedback regarding his performance.

Lastly, Mr. Kline shared the sad news that our beloved Brenda Mobley has been very ill and has recently been moved home under hospice care. Given the uncertainty of her condition, Mr. Kline would like to nominate Ms. Ramirez to act as interim Secretary/Treasurer and is requesting board approval for this nomination.

> **MOTION:** Ms. Norman- Vacha requested a motion to approve Ms. Ramirez as the interim Secretary/Treasurer. Mr. Champion moved to approve. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. With no opposition, the motion carried.

The board asked for an address so that a card can be sent to Ms. Mobley and her family members to express their support.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER: Ms. Becker welcomed several members of Brooksville Engineering, Science, and Technology (BEST) Academy, including their principal, Jamie Young; Board Chair, Patricia Laird; Marvin Gordon, Board member; Janella Cook, Board member; and Jarrod Prater, the BEST Academy Attorney from Hogan Law. With a mindset focused on growth and diversification, this group recently discussed an exciting new opportunity that would benefit both agencies. BEST Academy has been operating for nearly 13 years at 835 School Street in Brooksville, a property owned by YTF. Since its opening, the school has made significant progress, improving from a "C" rating to achieving an "A" rating last school year.

Several months ago, Ms. Young met with Ms. Becker to discuss BEST Academy's need for more space and resources to better serve the community. Following their meeting, Ms. Becker took Ms. Young's concerns to the Executive Team. The team agreed that BEST Academy would complement their Early Learning Programs and decided to develop a plan to bridge the gap.

Jennifer Rey from Hogan Law was introduced to discuss the next steps. She emphasized the importance of full disclosure concerning the relationships among all parties involved. Her associate, Jarrod Prater, has served as legal counsel for BEST Academy for several years. She expressed their commitment to work collaboratively with both sides to determine the best way forward. Jennifer highlighted the differences between a partnership, merger, and acquisition, concluding it would be beneficial for all parties to have BEST Academy absorbed by YTF, resulting in a merger.

Ms. Becker directed the board to review the board packet, which included the Articles of Merger, Assignment of Charter Agreement, Plan of Merger, and the Amended and Restated Bylaws. She explained that, per charter requirements, all board members must attend a mandatory four-hour training session within the first 90 days and be recertified every two years. This training is completed online.

Ms. Becker and Ms. Young noted that BEST Academy currently serves grades 6 through 8, but they envision expanding the school to eventually include grades K through 8. In November, Ms. Young plans to begin the application process for this expansion for the November deadline; aiming to address the educational needs in Brooksville and Spring Hill.

Ms. Becker is seeking board approval for the merger so that she can present it to the HCSB for approval at their next meeting. The next school board workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, July 29th at 2 PM, with a vote to take place during the school board meeting at 6 PM the same day. She invited staff and members from YTF and BEST Academy Boards to attend if possible. Once the HCSB approves the merger, YTF branding will be incorporated into the BEST Academy name to help retain the school's "A" rating, and the 15-year charter will be assigned to YTF. The merger is not expected to disrupt BEST Academy's operations, and Ms. Becker anticipates a smooth transition if approved. She then opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Champion noted that public school enrollment is declining and believes that BEST Academy would be a good complement to the agency.

Mr. Morris inquired about the school's financial standing and whether there are any outstanding claims that might expose YTF to liabilities. Mr. Prater revealed that BEST Academy faced financial challenges in 2020. However, since Ms. Young became the principal and Patricia Laird took on the role of Board Chair, the school has achieved good financial standing with no outstanding debts or claims. Ms. Rey cautioned that a claim could still arise depending on the statute of limitations.

Mr. Bates added that during the Executive Team's review of the school's finances, they discovered that the only debt carried by the school is related to payroll.

Mr. Champion asked if school receives school choice funds. No, the structure of a charter school is better because the charter receives direct funding from the DOE through the HCSD School District following the DOE FEFP funding formula.

Mr. Champion also asked what the enrollment process is. Enrollment is by application.

With no further questions, Ms. Norman-Vacha requested a motion to approve the entirely of the merger packet.

MOTION: Mr. Morris moved to approve the merger packet. Mr. Champion seconded the motion. The motion carried.

FINANCE: Mr. Bates referred the Board to the board packet containing the financial statements as of April 30, 2025. Mr. Bates stated that the credit card statements for administrative staff were provided in the packet. He also reviewed the figures of the balance sheet and total assets. Mr. Bates explained the agency received the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) totaling nearly $2.2M, reflected in the line item for deferred revenue. The IRS states ERC should be considered grant income; however, Mr. Bates is waiting for further direction from HHS on how the funds should be disbursed. His intention is to reimburse to each program with unrestricted funds. He anticipates being able to move this revenue to the balance sheet by 09/30/2025. Mr. Bates asked if there were any questions on any of the financial information provided. There being none, Mr. Bates requested approval of the finance budget in the amount of $43,544,375.32.

Ms. Norman-Vacha requested a motion to approve the finance budget in the amount of $43,544,375.32.

MOTION: Ms. Maas moved to approve the budget. Ms. Ramirez seconded the motion. The motion carried.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER: Mr. Homan discussed the 2024 Agency Risk Assessment[1] found within the board packet and uploaded to the board portal. He explained there was language added to bridge any gaps. Compared to last year's risk assessment, there have been improvements that the agency has been able to make based on recommendations from the assessment. There are a few items that are still being addressed, many of those items will be addressed once the Development and Communications Manager position is filled.

Ms. Norman-Vacha asked what steps are being done to address agency risks. Mr. Homan said that the assessment has a checklist with suggestions that he uses to enrich agency protections.

Mr. Homan reported the Strategic Plan[2] found within the board packet and uploaded to the board portal. CSBG Organizational Standards require an annual board update, however, the Strategic Plan is shared with the board quarterly as best practice. Each program director has added data to show each program's progress in achieving desired goals.

Continued focus on expansion and driving revenue, the executive team has restructured the Public Relations Manager position to be better in line with the agency's needs. This new position will have a heavy focus on bringing in donations, applying for grants, and building community relationships. The executive team plans on running a job advertisement in the Public Relations Tampa Bay Chapter, and have reached out to RSA to promote the position in the hope of driving a diverse pool of applicants. The executive team will also be looking to farm out social media marketing to RSA.

HOUSE TO HOME: Mr. Sanvenero shared that his program was recently recognized as a Top Home Builder in Hernando County, and was awarded with the bronze medal by the Hernando Sun. The 10th Annual Men's Bake was on June 14th and made front page of the Hernando Sun. Mr. Sanvenero thanked board members Ms. Ramirez and Mr. Champion for their attendance and participation in this year's event. Mr. Champion felt that the bids were a little underwhelming this year and factored that to the event date being the weekend of Father's Day and therefore many of the big doners did not attend.

House to Home will be hosting a "Swing Fore Affordable Homes" golf tournament at Southern Hills on September 30th and is currently looking for sponsors. Discounted tickets are also currently available through the month of July.

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[1] **CSBG Organizational Standard 4.6** - An organization-wide, comprehensive risk assessment has been completed within the past 2 years and reported to the governing board.
[2] **CSBG Organizational Standard 9.3** - The organization has presented to the governing board for review or action, at least within the past 12 months, an analysis of the agency's outcomes and any operational or strategic program adjustments and improvements identified as necessary.

Mr. Sanvenero provided updates on the 4 active job sites. He is currently looking for land for "workforce housing" development in northern Ridge Manor and working with Coastal Engineering for site analysis and feasability.

He has also been working to expand into Citrus County with a targeted property located in Homosassa. Mr. Sanvenero is excited to be partnering with board member, Michelle Alford, to build relationships in Citrus. Mr. Sanvenero has joined the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce. He will be speaking at their upcoming meeting, and hopes to develop an entire team to serve this county.

SENIOR SERVICES: Ms. Harrison advised that she now has the general revenue grant amount for consent agenda item #2. She requested a vote by the board to approve the Elder Option grant amount in the amount of $4,682,815.96.

> Ms. Norman-Vacha requested a motion to approve the Elder Options grant in the amount of $4,682,815.96.
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> > **MOTION:** Mr. Champion moved to approve the grant amount. Ms. Maas seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Ms. Harrison shared a testimonial video from Mr. Appel. In the video, Mr. Appel of Leesburg talks about how much he has benefited from the program. He enjoys coming to the center for socialization, fun, and food. Ms. Harrison also shared that her employee, Jean Garcon, was recognized by an investigator with the Department of Children and Families. At a recent visit to his client, Jean became concerned when his client was not answering the door. Jean wanted to ensure his clients safety, so he contacted the landlord, who met him with a spare key. When they opened the door, they located the client on the floor and in need of help. Jean's actions very well may have saved this person's life. His actions show the sincere concern for the most vulnerable population.

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE: Mr. Homan spoke on behalf of Community Assistance Director, Karen Schulz, since she was on vacation. The only item for the board is to approve consent agenda item #4, the subgrant amount is $850,183. He requested a vote by the board to approve the Community Assistance subgrant amount in the amount of $850,183.

> Ms. Norman-Vacha requested a motion to approve the Community Assistance subgrant in the amount of $850,183.
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> > **MOTION:** Mr. Champion moved to approve the subgrant amount. Ms. Maas seconded the motion. The motion carried.

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER: Ms. Kell shared the record-breaking donations that her program has brought in this year. Since October 2024, she has collected $98,053 and plans to break $100k by July. She will be attending the 100 Men Who Care group seeking donations and sponsorships. Purse Bingo sponsorships topped out at $42,500 this year and the event sold out the same day.

Ms. Kell will be kicking off her building capital campaign at the Purse Bingo event. She is seeking room sponsorships for the new CAC building. She will also be asking for another appropriation in the amount of $1M as the construction cost of the building is $1M more than the original appropriation.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS: Ms. Stone (formerly known as Stanton) shared the incredible journey the ELP team has been on to enhance the services they provide. She reported that the staff will not receive a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) this year. To address the budget shortfall, Ms. Stone is in the final stages of preparing a Change in Scope and revised budget to submit to the DOHS. Student slots are being eliminated and a total of 11 administrative and operational positions were eliminated; with some of their duties and responsibilities being redirected. She is requesting approval to submit the finalized changes and budget, once completed by the program specialists, to the Executive Team for final approval, rather than waiting until the October Governing Board Meeting.

> Ms. Norman-Vacha requested a motion to approve the ELP Change in Scope once it is approved by the Executive Team.
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> > **MOTION:** Mr. Morris moved to approve the ELP Change In Scope once approved by the Executive Team. Mr. Champion seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Ms. Stone's goal for the upcoming year is to strengthen partnerships and support staff growth while providing quality services to families and students. She is also focused on increasing revenue streams to help offset rising operational costs. Excitingly, she announced the launch of a tuition-based program at the Brooksville Early Head Start and Head Start site. This program will bridge the gap for families that exceed poverty guidelines, offering them a one-stop shop. The curriculum, standards, and oversight will remain consistent with current program standards. The program will be available year-round, operating from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with discounts offered to YTF and HCSB employees.

Another partnership Ms. Stone has been pursuing is with 1Place App, a cloud-based compliance management software. The CEO of 1Place noted that YTF's templates were robust and requested permission to share them with other Head Start and Early Head Start programs in exchange for a financial benefit.

Ms. Stone was pleased to report to the board that after a long search for site opportunities in the Deland area, progress is being made! The administrative offices in Deland will be converted into three additional classrooms, and the administrative staff will move to a new location about 15 minutes north, still within Deland. She expects the move to be completed by August 1st. The expenses for the remodel and the relocation of the administrative offices will be covered by rollover funds. She also plans to close the Deland Early Head Start site by August.

As for the Disaster Relief Funds, they have not yet been disbursed. The Holly Hill building has been completely demolished, and a special permit exception was granted by the City Manager. The Holly Hill project is currently on hold until the Disaster Relief funds are received.

After being closed for nearly a year due to storm damage, Keech Street is nearing completion! Ms. Stone shared a video tour of the site and noted that the final task to be completed is the playgrounds, which should be ready by next week. She is happy to report that the school is fully enrolled, with a waiting list in place. Ms. Stone hopes to present the complete video for Keech's reopening and provide further updates on Holly Hill at the next meeting.

There being no further business, Ms. Norman-Vacha requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. She also reminded the group that the next meeting will be on October 8th beginning at 9:00 am.

MOTION: Mr. Morris moved to adjourn and Mr. Champion seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 11:07 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennene Norman-Vacha, Board Chair	10/09/25 Date
Tracy Ramirez (Oct 8, 2025 16:09:02 EDT) Tracy Ramirez, Interim Secretary/Treasurer	10/08/25 Date
Prepared by: Melissa Mace, Executive Administrative Coordinator	10/08/25 Date

Date Submitted to the Department of Economic Opportunity	10/08/25
Final Submitted to the Department of Economic Opportunity	10/13/25

CORRECTED 07.09.25 Draft GB Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report 2025-10-09

Created:	2025-10-08
By:	Melissa Mace (mmace@youthrivefl.org)
Status:	Canceled / Declined
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAANTYtFfrOxygckENuNG_hE49zd8JcLZml

"CORRECTED 07.09.25 Draft GB Meeting Minutes" History

Document created by Melissa Mace (mmace@youthrivefl.org)
2025-10-08 - 7:58:40 PM GMT

Document emailed to Jennene Norman-Vacha (jnvacha@myhrpartners.com) for signature
2025-10-08 - 7:58:44 PM GMT

Document emailed to Tracy Ramirez (tracy@tonerramirez.com) for signature
2025-10-08 - 7:58:44 PM GMT

Document emailed to Melissa Mace (mmace@youthrivefl.org) for signature
2025-10-08 - 7:58:44 PM GMT

Email viewed by Melissa Mace (mmace@youthrivefl.org)
2025-10-08 - 8:01:09 PM GMT

Document e-signed by Melissa Mace (mmace@youthrivefl.org)
Signature Date: 2025-10-08 - 8:01:39 PM GMT - Time Source: server

Email viewed by Tracy Ramirez (tracy@tonerramirez.com)
2025-10-08 - 8:07:52 PM GMT

Document e-signed by Tracy Ramirez (tracy@tonerramirez.com)
Signature Date: 2025-10-08 - 8:09:03 PM GMT - Time Source: server

Email viewed by Jennene Norman-Vacha (jnvacha@myhrpartners.com)
2025-10-09 - 2:01:38 PM GMT

Document canceled by Melissa Mace (mmace@youthrivefl.org)
2025-10-09 - 2:14:24 PM GMT

Resend of July 2025 Board Minutes

Final Audit Report 2025-10-09

Created:	2025-10-09
By:	Melissa Mace (mmace@youthrivefl.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAiR3xzQKM0ni7I4p7RV59ItT3zPdo-WMo

"Resend of July 2025 Board Minutes" History

Document created by Melissa Mace (mmace@youthrivefl.org)
2025-10-09 - 2:17:05 PM GMT

Document emailed to Jennene Norman-Vacha (jnvacha@myhrpartners.com) for signature
2025-10-09 - 2:17:09 PM GMT

Email viewed by Jennene Norman-Vacha (jnvacha@myhrpartners.com)
2025-10-09 - 2:54:04 PM GMT

Document e-signed by Jennene Norman-Vacha (jnvacha@myhrpartners.com)
Signature Date: 2025-10-09 - 9:29:22 PM GMT - Time Source: server

Agreement completed.
2025-10-09 - 9:29:22 PM GMT