

## **AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order** **David Peaden**
- 2. Public Notice (March 3, 2025)** **Tabitha Lee**
- 3. Roll Call** **Tabitha Lee**
- 4. Public Comment** **David Peaden**
- 5. Approval of Agenda \*** **David Peaden**
- 6. Office Items**
  - a. Approval of February 2025 Financials \* **Allison Patton / Ryan Campbell**
  - b. Presentation of the Audit & Acceptance of Audit\* **Saltmarsh**
  - c. Approval of Board Minutes: \* **David Peaden**
    - *November 18, 2024*
    - *December 09, 2025*
    - *January 28, 2025 Joint PEDC / FWEDA Minutes*
- 7. Project & Staff Updates:**
  - a. Community Data **Chris Platé**
  - b. Product Development **Chris Platé**
    - *Pensacola Technology Campus Geotechnical Survey \**
  - c. BR&E / New Opportunity Development **Danita Andrews / Chris Platé**
  - d. CO:LAB **Patrick Rooney**
  - e. Community Partners Updates **David Peaden**
- 8. Other Business** **David Peaden**
- 9. Adjourn** **David Peaden**

*Potential Action Item \**

### **Fiscal Year 24-25 Meeting Schedule**

- April 22, 2025:
- May 27, 2025: FYE Budget Draft due
- June 24, 2025: FYE 25/26 Budget Due
- July 22, 2025: FYE 25/26 Budget Due to the PEDC approval per interlocal
- August 26, 2025: Board officer nominations
- September 23, 2025: Board Election



PEDC Board of Directors Meeting  
November 18, 2024 Time: 10:00 a.m.  
CO:LAB 418 W Garden St. Pensacola  
First Floor Conference Room

## Minutes

### 1. Call to Order

Chairman David Peaden called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

### 2. Public Notice

Staff confirmed public notice was published on October 24, 2024.

### 3. Attendance

Chairman David Peaden	Present
Commissioner Steven Barry	Present
City Councilwoman Allison Patton	Present
Commissioner Jeff Bergosh	Absent
Century Town Council member Appointee: Alicia Johnson	Absent
City Councilman Charles Bare	Absent
Dr. LuSharon Wiley	Present
Dave Hoxeng	Present
FloridaWest Appointee: Donnie McMahon	Absent
<u>Staff and support:</u>	
Rick Byars, Patrick Rooney, Annie Rose, Tabitha Lee, Danita Andrews, Troupe Brewer, Jessica Scholl	

### 4. Public Comment

Chairman Peaden recognized the public and requested public comment. Brian Wyer discussed a recent Empowering Black Business event with over 80 attendees. Wyer thanked Florida Power & Light for its support of this event.

### 5. Approval of the Agenda

Hoxeng moved to approve; Dr. Wiley seconded.  
Passed unanimously.

### 6. Approval of Minutes - September 24, 2024

Commissioner Barry moved to approve; Councilwoman Patton seconded.  
Passed unanimously.

### 7. October Financial Statements

Hoxeng moved to approve; Commissioner Barry seconded.  
Passed unanimously.

**8. 2024-2025 PEDC Budget**

Councilwoman Patton moved to approve; Commissioner Barry seconded.  
Passed unanimously.

**9. Approval of Tech Park Landscaping RFP**

Sunshine Landscaping was in attendance to respond to questions regarding their proposal. The board members described the proposal review process. The board reviewed and discussed the proposals received including the services offered and current budget.

Commissioner Barry moved to authorize staff to pursue contract negotiations with Executive Landscaping; Hoxeng seconded.  
Passed unanimously.

**10. Bluffs Right-of-Way and Development Agreement:**

Danita Andrews provided an update regarding the status of Ascend discussions. Materials were provided to the board regarding Escambia County's acceptance of the ROW, subject to County approval. Staff is awaiting signature by Ascend on the agreement.

**11. Program & Staff Updates:**

- a. Business Development: Andrews provided an update on Project Laser, including a recent meeting with the company and Space Florida to address initial agreements and outline a path to compliance with the grant process. Counsel will revise the funding agreement and work with Space Florida to finalize, pending approval at its upcoming board meeting. Facility design is anticipated in Q1 2025. Space Florida will be required to fulfill all Triumph grant reporting requirements and is outsourcing a portion of the grant reporting. The board members discussed opportunities for PEDC to offer administrative staff, as well as prior projects of Space Florida. Andrews provided an update on Project Sable, including site utility discussions and cost estimates to expand infrastructure to the site.

Byars discussed a recent meeting with a company regarding relocation to Tech Park. The company performs research and development and may qualify for public assistance grants. Board members discussed potential financing structures, infrastructure costs and challenges, and availability of grant funds. The board appointed Commissioner Barry to assist staff on this project.

Andrews discussed local expansion for Project Spark, and an upcoming anticipated application to bring before the Board of County Commissioners. The project is affiliated with life sciences and includes over \$50m in capital investment, with over 65 jobs.

- b. CO:LAB: Rooney provided a CO:LAB operations update. Two new applicants are scheduled to present to the policy board selection committee in December. Rooney introduced Annie Rose, who was recently hired as Office Manager of CO:LAB. Revenue is positive, with 21 companies with over 56 employees currently

participating in the program. Rooney provided updates regarding recent entrepreneur events.

- c. Partner Updates (Century/Pensacola/Escambia): No partner updates were provided.

**12. New/Old Business:**

Byars announced that FloridaWest has retained a new CEO, Chris Platé. Byars and the FloridaWest staff look forward to his leadership and will work closely to brief him on ongoing projects.

Chairman Peaden reminded the board members to complete information cards, confidentiality agreements, and conflict of interest renewal forms.

**13. Adjournment:**

Chairman Peaden adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.



PEDC Board of Directors Meeting  
December 09, 2024 Time: 10:00 a.m.  
CO:LAB 418 W Garden St. Pensacola, FL  
First Floor Conference Room

## Minutes

1. **Call to Order:** David Peaden called the meeting to order and Welcomed Everyone at 10:08 a.m.
2. **Public Notice:** Tabitha Lee confirmed public notice was made on December 3, 2024.
3. **Roll Call:**

Chairman David Peaden:	Present
Commissioner Steven Barry:	Present
City Councilwoman Allison Patton:	Present
Commissioner Jeff Bergosh:	Absent
Century Town Council member Appointee: Alicia Johnson	Absent
City Councilman Charles Bare:	Present
Dr. LuSharon Wiley:	Present
Dave Hoxeng:	Present
Staff and support: Tabitha Lee, Danita Andrews, Patrick Rooney, Troupe Brewer, Rick Byars, Chris Platé	
Public: Steve Moorhead, Todd Thomson, Bob Foster, Bruce Vredenburg, Ashton Hayward, Steve Stroberger, Theresa Blackwell, Peter Bolton,	
4. **Introduction of New CEO:** David Peaden introduced Chris Platé as the new CEO of FloridaWest. Chris Platé briefly addressed the group and expressed his excitement about taking on the new role.
5. **Acknowledgement of Interim CEO:** Rick Byars, the Interim CEO, thanked the CEO Search Committee for their diligent work in selecting the new CEO. He expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Interim CEO. Danita Andrews, on behalf of the staff, extended her gratitude to Rick Byars for his leadership and work during the interim period.
6. **Approval of the Agenda:** David Peaden requested public comment be moved to the end of the agenda.
  - a. Motion: Charles Bare moved to approve the agenda with the change as proposed.
  - b. Second: Commissioner Barry seconded the motion.
  - c. Vote: The motion passed unanimously.
7. **Discussion about OLF8 Property:** **Bruce Vredenburg** provided an update on the formation of the Business Alliance and the community concerns regarding the potential sale of the OLF8 property to private developers. The primary concern raised by the community was the potential loss of the light industrial commerce portion of OLF8 to private ownership, which would impact local economic development and job creation.

Florida's Great Northwest, a regional economic development group, recently brought national site selectors to OLF8, emphasizing the importance of protecting and retaining light industrial property for economic recruitment. The region risks being left out of future recruitment opportunities and the ability to assist local companies that need to expand.

The Business Alliance has expressed strong support for keeping the light industrial portions of OLF8 in public ownership. They proposed that the Public Economic Development Corporation (PEDC), established by the legislature to represent Escambia County, would be the ideal entity to manage the property. Public ownership would allow access to Triumph grants, which could fund

infrastructure development on the site. A \$14 million infrastructure grant application was previously submitted but has not advanced.

While the original purpose of the OLF8 property was to protect the Navy flight training mission—an objective that has been achieved—the focus now shifts to utilizing the land for job creation and economic growth.

The Henderson-Wilson Group has met with the Business Alliance several times to discuss concerns regarding OLF8. After hearing the alliance's position, the Henderson-Wilson Group expressed a willingness to collaborate and ensure the property is developed in a way that benefits the community.

Keeping the property in public hands offers the opportunity to generate a revenue stream through land leases. Once tenants occupy the property, the PEDC could leverage this revenue to fund further development, stimulating continued growth. There was widespread support for the PEDC to take responsibility for managing the property, ensuring that development aligns with the region's economic goals and community needs.

**Ashton Hayward** congratulated Commissioner Steven Stroberg and the team for their service in this important capacity. As a former mayor, he emphasized the critical importance of economic development. He noted that Escambia County and the MSA, with a population of over 1/2 million people and situated west of Tallahassee, is a regional hub. The county drives key sectors, including finance, law, education, healthcare, and the military. Hayward stressed that this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get economic development right.

He referenced past discussions with the Henderson-Wilson Group, who had explored this issue a few years ago, but at the time, the region lacked the capacity to move forward. Hayward mentioned the challenges in working through county deals, acknowledging that such efforts take time and require constant engagement with the community.

Turning to OLF8, Hayward echoed Bruce's point about the potential for creating an ecosystem that fosters job growth. He observed that Pensacola was once at risk of being left behind in the regional economy, but now the area is positioned to accelerate growth in the right way. He cited the success of Navy Federal's billion-dollar infrastructure project, which has already created 10,000 jobs and led to significant housing development. Hayward is also involved in the "Inspire" project, an investment opportunity across the street from Navy Federal's campus.

Hayward concluded by reiterating the commitment of the Henderson-Wilson Group's Catalyst Team to economic development, ensuring it is done thoughtfully and effectively. He noted that they will be attending the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting the following day and stressed that Escambia County cannot afford to fall behind as competition for growth intensifies. He expressed confidence that the relationships they have built will help attract the right companies to the area.

**Commissioner Steven Barry** asked, "What is the hope for this meeting?" He inquired about the desired outcomes and the vision for moving forward.

**David Peaden** responded, expressing his desire to understand what the path forward would look like.

**Bruce Vrendenberg** shared that Triumph funds require public ownership to be received. We already have approval for \$14 million for the project, which is currently available and can be revised depending on the development's progress. Additionally, we receive a match for the property. Commissioner Barry mentioned there is a due diligence period, where the property will be publicly owned and usable. If a project comes forward during this time, the county will still own the property and can include clauses in the contract allowing portions to be pulled out for PEDC or county development purposes. However, Mr. Vrendenburg raised concerns about the speculative nature of purchasing 640 acres, even though a master plan has been developed and the neighbourhood is supportive. The key questions are whether job creation will align with the current master plan and who will manage the development. Public ownership is crucial to avoid losing the opportunity, given the 25 years of efforts, dollars, and opportunity costs invested. Public ownership will allow the property to become a recurring revenue model, funding economic development models and bond issues for other projects. Commissioner Barry noted that job creation on the property is the board's responsibility, and there are significant carrying costs. Our board, however, cannot act at this time.

**Dave Hoxeng** moves to recommend that the County give the land to PEDC .....no one seconded motion denied (don't have verbiage).

**David Peaden** passed the gavel to Vice President Commissioner Barry. Peaden then made a motion stating that if the County Commission requires PEDC to foster economic development or job creation, our board is committed to assisting in any way possible and fostering engagement. Dave Hoxeng seconded the motion. Commissioner Barry called for any discussion. Allison Patton noted that the only discussion would be a possible amendment to ensure collaboration with the private developer, including an agreement with the private developer. The motion was put to a vote, and all were in favor. The motion, stating that if the County Commission asks PEDC to foster economic development and job creation, we will welcome and support it, was passed unanimously.

8. **Comments and Announcements:** Steve Moorhead reiterated Bruce and Ashton's support for public ownership. During the October meeting, Todd Thomason also aligned with Mr. Moorhead and Mr. Hoxeng's stance. He shared insights from the Hoss Center study, which assessed the potential and impact of public ownership. All parties emphasized the importance of staying true to the master plan.
9. **Other Business:** None
10. **Public Notice:** During the public comments section, Theresa Blackwell emphasized the need for a town center in Beulah, highlighting the many years of work and a world-class master plan dedicated to this vision. She questioned the heavy reliance on Triumph money. The commercial spaces should be high-end and compatible with Navy Federal Credit Union to attract residents and investors. Blackwell criticized FloridaWest's track record on certain projects. She argued against funding from LOST dollars for infrastructure, stressing that these funds should be reserved for essential needs like roads and bridges.
11. **Adjournment:** Chairman David Peaden adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.



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**Pensacola-Escambia County Promotion and Development Commission &  
FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance  
Joint Meeting of the Boards**

*January 28, 2025 • 10:00 a.m.*

*The Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition (IHMC)  
Levan Center • 420 E. Romano Street, Pensacola, Florida 32503 • Room 1214*

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**MINUTES**

- 1. Call to Order – PEDC Board:** Chairman David Peaden called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**Call to Order – FWEDA Board:** President David Bear called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

- 2. Public Notice** – Staff confirmed this meeting was publicly noticed on January 14, 2025.

**3. Roll Call – PEDC**

**Attendance:**

Chairman David Peaden:	Present
Commissioner Steven Barry:	Present
City Councilwoman Allison Patton:	Present
Commissioner Steve Stroberger:	Present
Century Town Council member Appointee-Alicia Johnson:	Present
City Councilman Casey Jones:	Absent
Dr. LuSharon Wiley:	Present
Dave Hoxeng:	Present
FloridaWest Appointee-Donnie McMahon:	Present

**Roll Call – FWEDA**

**Attendance:**

President David Bear:	Present
Vice President Ryan Tilley:	Present
Secretary Dr. Charletha Powell:	Present
Treasurer Olevia McNally:	Absent
City of Pensacola Appointee-Donnie McMahon:	Present
City of Pensacola Appointee-Matt Davis:	Present
Don Palmer:	Present
Jim Waite:	Present
Rick Byars:	Present
Chris Plaeger:	Present
KC Gartman:	Present



Kelvin Enfinger:	Present
Justin Beck:	Present
Charlie Sherrill:	Present
Mike Morette:	Present
Mark Roy:	Absent
Dr. Meadows:	Absent
Dr. Marcus McBride:	Present

**4. Public Comment:** Chris Platé recognized the public and requested public comment.

Gulf Coast Minority Chamber of Commerce CEO, Brian Wyer, announced upcoming Chamber events, and encouraged the members to attend and support GCMCC events, including the Entrepreneurial Resource Expo hosted by Startup Source on February 18, 2025, at the Brownsville Community Center.

**5. Approval of Agenda – PEDC \***

Commissioner Steven Barry moved to approve; Dave Hoxeng seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Agenda – FWEDA \***

Justin Beck moved to approve; Mike Morette seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**6. IHMC Overview**

Ryan Tilley provided an overview of the work performed by the Institute for Human and Machine Cognition, including a video presentation of the history of IHMC's development and research focus areas. IHMC's research includes the areas of AI and computational intelligence, robotics, and human health, performance, and cognitive capacity. IHMC community outreach includes Science Saturdays, Evening Lecture Series, and the STEM Talk podcast.

**7. Organizational History: 10 Years of Growth**

CEO Chris Platé provided a presentation on historical local economic development efforts by FloridaWest and PEDC, including recruitment and retention of business and industry, marketing, product development, business incubation. He emphasized the importance of focus on existing industries as well as new businesses. He provided an overview of PEDC and FloridaWest's development contributions in the community. FloridaWest has been responsible for over 65 successful projects, creating over 9,000 jobs with \$0.5 billion in wages, and bringing capital investment of over \$845,000,000 to the area.

He presented regional unemployment numbers, and labor force to unemployment comparative rate data over the past two years.

**8. Looking Ahead: Charting New Horizons**

Platé provided a summary of 2025 priorities, including data auditing, software optimization, financial review, and prospect material review. Existing industry will be a priority in the strategic growth plan, including a dedicated existing industry manager, creating a seminar series for the industry, a local manufacturing wage survey, and participating in the National Manufacturing Appreciation Week (October 3-10).

For new industry, FloridaWest is establishing a targeted recruitment workplan, targeting industries in precision manufacturing, cyber and information technology, commercial headquarters, and marine services. FloridaWest will engage in targeted recruitment trips to develop the clusters of aerospace, cyber and marine.

Current product development emphasis includes Pensacola Technology Campus, local industrial park design, and future industrial park site evaluations and masterplans, including utilities and infrastructure.

Platé provided an update on the Bluffs project. Documentation has been executed by Ascend and PEDC and funding is available; however, the County has reviewed and identified necessary clarifications that must be completed, prior to their the execution of the Right-Of-Way acceptance agreement. The group discussed funding requirements and status. Byars urged the group to move promptly to secure the final documentation and funding. McMahon requested staff circulate to the FloridaWest and PEDC boards a report that was developed previously demonstrating the potential economic impact of the The Bluffs. He also urged both boards to prioritize this project.

Danita Andrews and David Bear provided updates on recent large projects, including Pegasus' \$17 million expansion grant to add new product lines and over fifty new jobs; LIFT financing and its 37,000 square foot facility on Pensacola State College campus, and conduit for influx of research funding into the community.

The board members discussion regarding Tech Park. David Bear provided background on the restrictions, timing of the project, and recent discussions with prospective tenants. Allison Patton provided an update with recent prospects and emphasized the importance of this asset.

#### **9. Defense Reinvestment Grant (DRG) Contract Approval\***

Byars provided a summary of the DRG Grant, including the First Place Partners cyber sub team working on a public private partnership at Corry Station to develop estimates and designs for expanding secured SCIF facilities.

Hoxeng moved to approve the proposed contract between the State of Florida and PEDC to perform a feasibility study for a SCIF adjacent to NAS Corry related to Cyber and other DoD support services; McMahon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **10. Open Forum**

Todd Thompson of the Chamber of Commerce provided an update on collaboration priorities between FloridaWest and the Chamber. Thompson announced the upcoming Legislative Luncheon on Friday February 21, 2025, at the Hilton on Airport Boulevard.

Rick Byars discussed the Northwest Florida Defense Coalition efforts, including an upcoming conference in Washington DC, and current infrastructure development priorities.

Chris Platé provided an update on the FOIL week upcoming, and Florida Power and Light Economic Symposium on February 25-26, 2025.

Dr. McBride announced that a career fair date will be circulated shortly.

Dave Murzin of First Place Partners invited the group to tour Velocity Restorations on February 4, 2025.

Kelvin Enfinger recommended the two Boards meet in this forum again with additional community industry in Q2 to discuss the labor market and constraints with the area work force.

**11. Adjourn – PEDC** Chairman Peaden adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

**Adjourn – FWEDA** President Bear adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

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Dr. Charletha Powell, Secretary  
FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance

Respectfully Submitted By:

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Allison Patton, Secretary  
PEDC