CALL TO ORDER

The Board was called to order at 3:09 p.m. in the conference room of the UCF Business Incubator on Friday, March 24, 2023.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jeff Badovick
Lou Paris
Edith Shelley
Kevin Manley
Ricardi Calixte

Members Absent:
Tom Daly
Stephanie Miller

STAFF PRESENT:
Connie Garzon, Director, Volusia County Business Incubator
Carol Ann Logue, Director of Programs & Operations, UCFBIP
Asianna Mashore, Program Assistant, Volusia County Business Incubator
Helga Van Eckert, Director, Volusia County Economic Development
Brad Harris, Business Manager, Volusia County Economic Development
Ricardi Calixte, Business Manager, Volusia County Economic Development

INTRODUCTION:
Connie Garzon welcomed the board members and everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

Presentations:
Ms. Carol Ann – UCFBIP, Director of programs & operations
5-yr strategic plan released last summer; want to make sure incubation strategic goals are in line with the University’s 5-yr plan
- Shared key goals; look for ways to improve what we do, who we serve, (client-the companies, and the stakeholders)
- 23rd year of UCF Business Incubation Program
- Incubator currently serving 16 clients and expect to serve 20 clients/yr by 2027, and this is expected to be exceeded this year.
- Increase clients
- diversify funding sources
- client satisfaction survey
Ms. Connie Garzon
- Quick background on Incubator history (est. 2010)
- What we do? Mentoring, business development, business operations, Training, connect with investors
- Incubator has process starting with pre-incubation; teach how to grow company, 16-hr training culminating in a business deck; next is developing a business plan used to attract investment
- Programs: Tech meet-up (almost 300 members) meet monthly on first Monday; meet with like-minded folks which can help attract clients to the incubator, Co-Working Space, Business Bootcamp (wow Fridays), Volusia Tech Group, Innovation Challenge
- Tenants such as AAEA, Hungarian Hub are growing
- Targeting industries: Aerospace, mechanical engineering, Service companies such as fast response disaster team

Mr. Jeff Badovick spoke about Marketing model called Story Brand for simplifying the message that puts potential client as the hero of the story. Instead of focusing on ‘look at us’, we’re here to help you and here is the path we’re going to take. Mr. Jeff Badovick, upon request from Ms. Carol Ann, agrees to plan short tutorial on Story brand for the whole incubator.

Ms. Connie Garzon – Incubator Goals
1) increase clients
2) increase # of educational events to support VBR mission
Mr. Brad Harris explains what VBR is and its significance; Ms. Helga Van Eckert elaborates VBR helps find the gaps in our business community, and take holistic approach to understanding what the issues are, and the VBR partners convenes bi-monthly to discuss how issues can be addressed.
3) find sponsorship for Innovation Challenge; United Way wants to support Innovation Challenge but want to include H.S students; Sonia from Hunter’s Foundation has committed $5K, Looking for $10K sponsor, Mr. Lou Parris suggests being open to smaller awards because participants are not just in it for the prize money but the great value of the connections and value of mentorship gained
4) Expansion of maker’s lab: Ms. Van Eckert says county can’t commit to a dollar amount but are looking at options.

Client Showcase - AeroSapien
- Been at incubator for 5 years; seeking property to expand into
- They’ve been able to fund their technology development by providing engineering services

Board Discussion:
What do you see as your biggest challenge to achieving goals that you laid out?
Engaging partners; Continuity and cooperation of other stakeholder entities; not as collaborative.

Mr. Kevin Manley suggests having too many entities involved can lead to mixed messaging and make it harder to focus on and connect with target market.

How does incubator determine which client is right?
Ms. Carol Ann Logue - Looking for companies that can sell at least on a national level, and aligned with an emerging industry.

Ms. Connie Garzon – if a company is not fit for the incubator, they are referred to a proper resource partner.

Mr. Kevin Manley suggests opening Innovation Challenge to College students and the public as a whole instead of just incubator clients. Think it can help get better engagement and more financial support.

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The next board meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2023, 3PM – 4:30PM. *(updated to June 29, 2023 post-meeting)*

**ADJOURN AT 5 P.M.**