

**LIFE TECH FLORIDA
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 23, 2011, 3:00 PM
Florida International University, Ronald Reagan Presidential House**

ATTENDANCE:

Ivan Baines, Andrew Duffell, Dennis Gallon, Andres Gil, Divina Grossman, Todd Holt (for Robert Swindell), Linda Howdyshell, Gary Margules, Ed Massey, Rolando Montoya, Frank Nero, Harry Orf, Marcelo Radice, Mark Rosenberg, Shawn Rowan (for Kelly Smallridge), Mary Jane Saunders, Ronald Toll.

ABSENT:

David Armstrong, Jonathan “Jack” Lord, Kelly Smallridge, Robert Swindell.

Meeting commenced at 3:00 p.m. on September 23, 2011.

Mark Rosenberg welcomed everyone saying that this group was intended to be an inclusive, collaborative partnership. He noted that collaboration was already happening between various group members, but one of the anticipated impacts of the initiative was to better utilize the group’s collective assets – whether human or material – for quality of life issues, in South Florida and the country. Another was that we become far more collaborative and intentional than we currently are, and knowing who is doing what and where our respective interests are can make that happen. Finally, we want to add to the stock of credibility for our State and justify the investments that the State has put into our institutions.

Divina Grossman referred everyone to the Strategic Priorities 2011-2013 worksheet and thanked all of the members for their input, expressing the hope that their ideas and words had been captured accurately. There were a number of shared ideas but there were two proposed items that she thought warranted further elaboration: the single communication portal and the shared technology platform.

Asked to discuss the single communication portal, **Harry Orf** shared that Scripps Florida had just established the BioFlorida Institute, an organization focused on the education components and resources for students, teachers and those working in life sciences, by leveraging the scientific membership of the partner organizations and bringing the existing resources together. Scripps recently held several organizational discussions and concluded that there is a wealth of assets that exist individually around the state but they are not collected in any single place that allows them to be useful to the audience that we are trying to reach. He said that the group members of Life Tech Florida likely know about each other generally, but he did not expect that anyone knew, for example, the 11 scientific cores of Scripps Florida. A single communication portal would allow us to showcase collectively what we all have for the benefit of ourselves and those outside our group.

Ivan Baines explained that the shared technology platform was similar in that it fostered collaboration and allowed the sharing of assets. We know that technology sharing cannot be forced though, and often, if you speak to receptors, they will say they know where to go for what they need because they know who their peers are in their respective fields. However, an alternative attitude is that the true

value of collaborations is in gaining access to the people behind the technology and the material. There is a geographic context to that, people are more likely to use a resource that is nearby, if they know about it.

An example of this can be seen in Dresden, Germany, where there was nothing before the wall came down in 1989, and now it is the number one recipient of federal funds in Germany and a strong biotech growth area. Max Planck and others implemented a technology platform communications portal where you can enter the model number of an instrument and learn where to find it and who has the expertise in it. It grows slowly but has proven to be extremely valuable. Initially, there was skepticism but typically, people use it to find an instrument but they also meet the person behind the instrument and establish a collaborative relationship.

The price of technology is unavoidable, but there is the possibility of increasing capacity. An example of increased capacity and cost savings is in human genome sequencing, which we can now do in 1-2 days for approximately \$1000. Across the country the average use on equipment is 25% because no single institution can feed them with enough projects. At 25% capacity, they are running at five-fold the cost. By sharing you can get higher quality and lower costs. It is valuable for fostering early-stage businesses in your area as you can offer them a unique advantage. With access to a piece of equipment that costs a million dollars early on, they may be able to produce preliminary results they can use to apply for grant funding. This is a huge competitive advantage. This is the ingredient that benefited Dresden: the building of the infrastructure.

Frank Nero added that from the perspective of economic development, it is hard to keep up with information and if a company is looking for collaboration or association, economic development agencies (EDOs) want to have the latest information in order to direct them. What companies are looking for may not be in Miami, it may be in Broward, but it is hard for us, with small staffs, to know. Clearly, from an economic perspective, shared technology and communications make perfect sense.

Harry Orf concurred, saying it is hard to know the resources within your own organization at times.

Andres Gil raised the idea of the value to faculty recruitment and retention that having access to this information, and the equipment, has. He said it would help him to be able to tell faculty that they will have access to certain equipment and he felt that sharing the technology, and the information, was really the first step in this initiative.

Ed Massey said the equipment was a big piece of it but a significant problem was in developing the pipeline of students interested in STEM courses, particularly at the secondary level. A pathway for these students needs to be developed as they often do not really know what the opportunities are once they go into STEM areas and what the specific jobs are in STEM careers. We need to find some way to get the eighth and ninth graders, and the older high school students, involved in the science courses and to move them through high school, into the state and community colleges, and into the universities. This is very important in terms of the pipeline. You may recruit scientists from all over the world, but in terms of the two-year and four-year level technicians necessary to help move the business forward and to attract new businesses in, we have to develop them.

Mark Rosenberg noted that developing STEM courses at some of the secondary schools was complicated by the fact that many of the instructional labs at these schools were not up to the standards that would allow for SACS accreditation. In Miami, the county is starting to retrofit some of

their labs and there has been a conversation with the Commissioner of Education, Jerome Robertson about involving us so we could try to get them up to the level that would allow for dual enrollment. It might be a future action agenda item for this group. This may be a conflict with the holistic approach, but before we get there, we may need to tackle pieces of the problem, that will help us get where we need to go. An assessment needs to be made and the retrofitting of these secondary school labs might be something for this group to address at some point.

Ed Massey agreed that an introduction at the earlier levels is important. He said they have found it beneficial to get the students to campus, to have them go through the college labs. Also, many of the college's instructors do not want to go and teach in the high school because it is not a college academic environment.

Divina Grossman asked the group to comment on the idea of Life Tech Florida as a talent retention tool.

Mary Jane Saunders remarked that there were a lot of advantages to the Life Tech Florida group and one of them was the regional aspect. She pointed out that she represented a university whose area spanned 150 miles with seven campuses and if she graduated a student and they got a job in Miami, she was happy. One of our over-arching goals should be to try and create a seamless corridor and be unrestrained by city or county boundaries. In talks with others from around the state, the feeling is that the bipartisan approach with the legislature and in projects like these is beneficial. It is to everyone's advantage if our graduates find jobs in this region.

Andrew Duffell agreed and congratulated the group leadership for having had the foresight to begin this initiative with conversations about content before getting to matters of branding and geography. He encouraged everyone to stay the course and keep the focus on content and regionalism, led by science.

Mark Rosenberg spoke of a recent meeting at Broward College with Senator Jeremy Ring saying that the Senator said the Life Tech Florida focus needed to be as student-centric as possible. There are multiple areas where our students can be involved. The pipeline is there but have we really given the labs the opportunity to exploit it, to discover our talent.

Frank Nero concurred, saying that for the EDOs, the number one issue is the recruitment and retention of talent.

Harry Orf added that the chance to exchange interns is a great opportunity and one that will have appeal in the legislature. Offering internships was not that expensive and for individual Principal Investigators (PIs) who are receiving grants, having interns can make a big difference. He added that he has senior faculty who are seeing the results of other researchers' projects done with interns and the faculty are expressing surprise at the quality of the results. The potential returns are obvious and it seems clear that the EDOs would be interested.

Andrew Duffell said he had started working with the Workforce Alliance in Palm Beach County and letting them be the sponsor of the internships he was offering. He thought it was a model others could follow as the Workforce Agency provides funds and the student gets the training and experience.

Harry Orf revealed a common internship application model that Scripps was using with Palm Beach High School. It allows students to apply one time and get looked at by Scripps, Max Planck and others. He said it was great for both the students and the researchers.

Mark Rosenberg added that it was also a great idea for the community. If we can keep the students local, they are more likely to come back here and maybe set up companies or spinoffs.

Rolando Montoya pointed out that it also increased the opportunity for STEM-related federal funding when you can show that the programs are regional.

Harry Orf reported that Scripps had a high school internship program that was now old enough to see its alumni going off to top colleges and universities around the country. Scripps keeps track of its former high school interns through Facebook and other social networks and when they come back home from college in the summer, Scripps offers them summer internships mentoring students in the high school internship program. This not only inspires the high school students to go to college, it has a lot of the undergraduate students talking about graduate school. The data shows that 96% of the interns are staying in the sciences and 88% are staying connected with the intern alumni group on their own through social media. It is a small, simple model but one that could become self-perpetuating.

Divina Grossman directed everyone to the strategic priority #12, the goal of proposing or creating a legislative package of incentives, particularly for early stage companies.

Andrew Duffell said that the Research Park at Florida Atlantic University is very conscious that the legislature and the various governments around the state are short of cash. The Research Park has been working to come up with ways to encourage entrepreneurs to set up companies and work with our faculty, and ways to offset those companies' costs as much as possible. They have been trying to come up with new incentives as well as borrowing ideas being used in other states, such as tax credits for companies that sponsor basic research at a university or when they hire a graduate student. He said these are the kinds of things that will lighten the companies' loads without having a direct impact on general funds. He added that the Research Park is starting to get some traction working through the Government Affairs office at FAU, the Chamber of Commerce, and the county's legislative delegation. If measures like these are adopted through a group like Life Tech Florida, it will have more resonance with Tallahassee or with any group of policy makers here, and it is hoped, the end result is more sustainable jobs at higher wage levels. The more we can do in this way, without creating large funds that require cash, the more success we are going to have.

Shawn Rowan added that the reason this issue of incentives arises is that we are in competition with other states and regions for these companies. A lot of start-up companies will come because of what is here, but if we want to get the larger, more established ones, we have to have a pool of funds to draw from to entice them.

Frank Nero stated that existing incentive packages are inadequate and primarily based on 20th Century economic models. We need innovative new ways to try and structure incentive packages without the cash commitment of tax dollars, in ways that will show the ROI, but we also need to look at the process. If you have money, but you cannot get decisions without going through a cumbersome bureaucratic process that takes longer than the next discovery, it is not going to matter. We need to pay attention to the resources, the process and the need for flexibility. If we could ever harness the collective economic firepower of our four counties, we could get the legislative attention. The legislature has started to get some of this, but in this economy, we have run out of ideas. Yet, with this kind of firepower, we should be able to get their attention.

Mark Rosenberg said that as the State University System Chancellor, he was on the receiving end of some of the pass-through dynamics related to incentives. The end result was eight auditors in his office during a week in the legislative session. He said he wanted to make sure that if we were to get involved in this, there is no other group that could more ably and adroitly do it, because this could take up a lot of time. Also, one thing we know is that what killed the I-95 Corridor initiative was that it was almost maniacally centered on legislative action. More importantly, why would we try and burden this group with this, if the EDOs can get it done.

Todd Holt offered that he had worked with Enterprise Florida for six years, focused on Life Sciences. He said traditional models do not work well with the Life Sciences; we need to get the message out there on how to look at the life sciences and what mechanisms you use to measure success. The ROI model does not show the true benefit.

Harry Orf said that two groups – the Florida Research Consortium (FRC) and BioFlorida – and particularly the FRC, have spent an enormous amount of money and put out a lot of papers and written a lot of elevator speeches. In all of these efforts, in all of the lines of approach to educate the legislature on the importance of investing in education and research, and getting venture capital here, the FRC and BioFlorida are very involved in educating the legislature. If we want to get involved in this work, we can, but we do not need to. Also, it is a continual process; you have to re-educate the entire new class of legislators that comes in each time. If we want to get involved in supportive ways, that is fine, but we should not try to reinvent the wheel. BioFlorida and FRC are pretty well organized and it is just about trying to get traction.

Frank Nero replied that he thought that this is the problem. He said this he has over 20 years of experience, being intricately involved in the Senate chase, and he is convinced that some of the reasons that Enterprise Florida was not successful and what has been missing is that relationship with the legislature. He stated that he did not think Life Tech Florida is ever going to get initiated through the EDOs, as their voices have become static noise to the legislature. The only way to break through that is for the legislature to see that there is substantive objective analysis from those of us in Life Tech Florida. He said what is required are the kinds of things that Andrew Duffell spoke of and what the group had done today.

Harry Orf replied that the analyses are there and it is easy to make a case for what is needed, but there is a lot of white noise.

Andrew Duffell pointed to the expertise and the institutions of the people gathered and suggested that our efforts were better spent on developing the content and building the case; we should illustrate the case and support it, but not make it. We should be playing a supporting role to the EDOs, not the lead role.

Ivan Baines agreed that what is important is strategic funding. When budgets are tight, one needs to put money in the right places. If there are strategic priorities, those that are endorsed by broad consensus as represented with groups like us, then that is where strategic funding will be directed. It is all about making smart investments and if we can provide that strategic content, saying this is where we are getting critical mass of activities and where we will have a competitive edge, that is something the legislature will listen to.

Divina Grossman directed everyone's attention to the 15 strategic priorities culled from her meetings with the committee members. She requested everyone prioritize his or her top three choices, which would become the group's strategic goals for 2011-2013.

A discussion ensued, wherein various group members pointed out similarities or co-dependencies of some of the priorities and it was suggested that a number of them could be combined, particularly numbers 1-4 and 7-8.

After everyone identified his or her top three preferences, the results revealed that the primary preferences fell across the combined priorities of #1-4, related to establishing a shared communication portal and research technology platform, and creating an Asset Map.

Mary Jane Saunders reported that from her conversations with people around the State, and her Board, what they are excited about is the content, the Asset Map, about finding out what the region has in terms of talent and technology. Thus, she thought the Asset Map should remain a stand-alone goal as it needed to be generated early, as a tool that could be used in service of the other goals.

The group agreed to combine priorities #1-3 and make them into a new, more comprehensive priority of creating a shared communication portal and research and technology platform into Goal #1. The creation of the Asset Map was split off and made into Goal #2. It was decided to make the third goal talent recruitment and retention. Priority #8 was merged with #7 into the combined priority of increasing STEM student and workforce development and this was made the fourth goal.

Gary Margules pointed out that we wanted to fill the gaps others had left behind and to do things that are fundable. Those should be our guiding principles.

Mark Rosenberg stated that he and **Divina Grossman** wanted to propose an ongoing, dynamic interchange that would embody the spirit of collaboration. The High Tech Corridor group has a weekly phone call and while it may not be possible for us to manage a weekly call, we should aim for regular, short conference calls. Someone could take the lead each time and set the agenda. He said he thought this would be a way to keep the initiative moving and the topics could be wherever the interest and/or challenges were.

Gary Margules and **Todd Holt** agreed that it was a good idea for this group, for the reasons mentioned.

Mark Rosenberg added that it could be an open line with other people invited to listen in. He stressed that having an agenda for the calls was important.

Frank Nero pointed out that establishing the regular communication between the Executive Committee members was the start of achieving Goal #1.

Harry Orf suggested that some of the scheduled phone calls be webinars or teleconferences so there could be some show-and-tell.

Divina Grossman stated that she had already initiated conversations about funding with the Economic Development Agency (EDA).

Marcelo Radice proposed that there would be a subcommittee on each goal, with three or four people on each subcommittee. **Divina Grossman** asked members to state their preferences for subcommittees based on each of the four strategic goals. **Mark Rosenberg** suggested a fifth subcommittee be created and tasked with managing the schedule, logistics and topics of discussion for the group's regular communications. (For a complete list of the subcommittees and members, see Appendix A.)

Divina Grossman volunteered to organize the regular group meetings and the agendas for those meetings and said that the committee would consult with the rest of the group on the topics.

Mark Rosenberg asked for an update on the invitation to a representative from Merck to join the group. **Divina Grossman** responded that Ken Yamashita had replied saying that he was leaving Merck, but he suggested **Elvis Rojas**, the new plant manager as an excellent candidate to serve on the Life Tech Florida Executive Committee. An invitation was extended to Mr. Rojas but no reply had yet been received. She said she would follow up and report back to the group.

Divina Grossman reported that Maria Gomez at the Beacon Council had applied to trademark the name Life Tech Florida and FIU's External Relations Department was working on some possible logo designs.

Frank Nero responded that Maria Gomez had found several federal trademarks registrations for Life Tech and she was recommending that they not worry about trademarking the name.

Mark Rosenberg said that it would be looked into and if anyone had any thoughts, they should communicate them to **Divina Grossman**. He added that the most important thing was that the group was motivated and moving forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m. on September 23, 2011.

Action Items

1. Dr. Grossman will:
 - a. merge the selected strategic priorities into the four goals discussed and include the subcommittee membership for the five subcommittees formed, circulating the report to all of the group members
 - b. contact Elvis Rojas from Merck and follow up on the invitation for him to join the group
 - c. follow up with Maria Gomez and Roger Pynn on the Life Tech trademark issue
 - d. work with FIU's External Relations Department on possible designs for the brand logo that can be distributed for use with the posting of the Asset Map material.

2. Subcommittees will discuss their next steps and delegate responsibilities for those steps.

Appendix A

Life Tech Florida Executive Committee

Subcommittees and Members:

Executive Committee Subcommittees:

- 1 Meeting Logistics and Agendas
Divina Grossman
David Armstrong / Linda Howdysshell
Bob Swindell / Todd Holt

- 2 Shared Communication Portal, Technology Platform, Research Core Facilities & Institute of Commercialization
Harry Orf
Ivan Baines
Jack Lord
Elvis Rojas
Gary Margules

- 3 Asset Map and Cluster Analysis
Andrew Duffel
Ivan Baines
Kelly Smallridge

- 4 Talent Recruitment
Mary Jane Saunders
Ron Toll
Gary Margules

- 5 STEM K-20 Student and Workforce Development
Dennis Gallon
Rolando Montoya
Marcelo Radice
Ed Massey