



**MINUTES OF
Annual Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday, February 21st 2017, 10:00 AM
Pinellas County EDC Conference Room

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Lisa Monnet- 10:03AM

WELCOME OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS / GUESTS –

ROLL CALL – Mr. Jim Sampey

PRESIDING – Lisa Monnet

ATTENDEES

Officers Present

Gen Chip Diehl
Lisa Monnet
Jim Sampey

Board Members Present & Advisors Present

Tina Fischer
Rich McClain
Maj Gen Mike Jones
Walter McCracken

Ambassadors Present

Darcy Foster
Jim Philpitt
Valerie Ellis

➤ **TBDA Presentation**

Rich McClain gave an update on the Tampa Bay Defense Alliance which highlighted the reasons for the formation of the TBDA, its mission and vision, and its current and future objectives. The PowerPoint presentation is available on our website at www.tampabaydefensealliance.com in the News and Updates section under TBDA in the news.

➤ **Veterans Florida Presentation by Jim Sampey**

Jim Sampey provided an overview for Mission United, a division of the United Way, which is a program designed for assistance for transitioning Veteran's from military to civilian life. This includes one on one assistance with such things as resume writing, assistance for college courses if needed, job placement assistance, and a host of other offerings. Suzanne McCormick also provided a slide presentation regarding the mission and objectives for Mission United Tampa Bay. This program has been very successful in Broward County and we expect the same level of success in the Tampa Bay region. There will be more information in the upcoming months. You may visit the website at www.unitedway.org/mission-united for more information.

➤ **Valerie Ellis on Florida Veterans Assistance (Hillsborough Community College and Operation Startup)**

Valerie Ellis talked at length about the programs offered by HCC and surrounding universities. Including in these are University of North Florida, University of West Florida, Florida Gulf Coast University, Hillsborough Community College, and Florida Atlantic University. These universities are working together to ensure that Veterans have one on one assistance to place them in a learning environment at possible reduced costs to receive a degree in their preferred field. She also briefed on Operation Startup which is an ideation and collaboration center for Veterans, active duty service members, their spouses, and business partners to work together on developing social impact businesses that help transform communities, and promote service through business enterprising. Please visit the website at www.Opeeration-Startup.com

➤ **James Cardoso on Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps (AFROTC)**

Jim Cardoso gave a presentation on the AFROTC recruitment program. Air Force ROTC is a college program offered at more than 1,100 colleges and universities across the U.S. It prepares you to become an Air Force Officer while earning a college degree. And it gives you the opportunity to get the tuition money you need. But more than that—it's a challenge, a head start on a lifetime of success, within the Air Force and in everything you choose to do. In Air Force ROTC, you'll make the most of your college experience. You'll hone your time-management skills, analytical skills and physical fitness. Here in the Tampa bay area the program is offered at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg and at the University of South Florida campuses. For more information, please visit www.afrotc.com

➤ **Maj. Gen. Mike Jones with a Washington DC Update**

Major General Mike Jones updated the group on the budget possibilities for 2017-2018 and Base Realignment and Closure. The budget is set to run out in April 2017 with a Continuing Resolution a possibility. The current budget is set to run out in April 2017. The new budget will begin on Oct.1 2017 if all the timelines remain as they are. The Budget formulation will be out in late May. Sequestration is set to begin again in 2018 and the defense budget estimate is in the 450-640 billion range with readiness being a category that more money will be asked for as well as infrastructure. Sen. John McCain has switched his position on BRAC and is now in favor of it. Gen Jones seemed to think that a BRAC will not occur in 2019 as first thought, but a 2021 BRAC seems likely. MacDill would not shut due to SOCOM and CENTCOM located there, however the flying missions may get looked at.

➤ **Dave Sobush from the Tampa Bay Partnership**

Dave Sobush gave a quick update on what the Tampa Bay Partnership is currently working on. The Tampa Bay Partnership galvanizes the region's most visionary, influential and engaged business leaders, along with a diverse group of community stakeholders, to identify and address the critical economic issues impacting Tampa Bay. We serve as thought leaders and change agents, advancing our shared priorities through collaboration, education and collective advocacy. Together, our efforts deliver results that positively affect the strength and vitality of the region and those who live here, now and in the future. The Partnership is currently engaged in improving transportation in the Tampa Bay region including the possibility of the Tampa Bay Express lanes on I275. The Partnership is currently engaged with Tampa delegates and City leadership to continue to improve the lives of those living in the Tampa Bay region. Please visit www.tampabay.org for more information.

➤ **Tom Burkett on Troop Rewards**

As an owner of a penthouse suite at the Sandpearl Resort and Spa in Clearwater, Florida, Founder Tom Burkett, received an overseas call from an Army private serving in the Iraqi desert from a remote satellite phone. He was with the 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team 1st Armored Division. He had been deployed since 2008 and was currently assisting the Iraqi Security Forces on daily patrols in the Baghdad. He had served all over Southern Baghdad and the Northern Provinces and his tour in Iraq had been a long and tough journey and he was ready to rejoin society with his new wife once his tour was completed in June 2009.

He was calling to ask what the cost would be for a stay at Mr. Burkett's suite for a belated honeymoon at the hotel and when the rate quoted was too high, Mr. Burkett had a change of heart and slashed the rate to \$0. Mr. Burkett replied" How can I charge you anything when you have spent the last year risking your life for my freedom." This pay-it-forward moment would go on to inspire Mr. Burkett to offer many free stays at his resort for soldiers coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan over the next couple of years.

In late 2012, he decided to create a 501(c)3 called Troop Rewards to provide a way for the community, businesses and luxury hotels to come together to offer Rest and Recovery to our deployed Armed Forces, and their families, to help them with their reintegration and resiliency, and to recognize their dedicated service to our country. By the end of 2017, Troop Rewards will have provided over 400 deployed Armed Forces, and their dependents, with Rest and Recovery after a deployment, which means our program services will have been delivered to over 1,600 military members including their dependents, and the number increases every year! For more information on this nonprofit, please visit www.trooprewards.org

➤ **ADJOURNED 10:54AM**

