



Agenda

Pinellas County Youth Advisory Committee

310 Court Street, 1st Floor Planning Conference Room

Clearwater, Florida 33756

March 16, 2016

- I. Call to order **3:00pm**
- II. Millennial Workforce Recruitment – Ralph Reid
- III. Review Completed Watershed Video – Libby Bolling and Bruno Rivera
- IV. Review and Approve December and February Minutes
- V. Recap on Animal Services Project
- VI. Mock BCC * we are unable to do this * Alternative option
- VII. Suggested Removal due to absences without excuse
- VIII. Other Business
- IX. Adjournment

Pinellas County Youth Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 16th, 2016

In Attendance:

Advisors: Ramona Madhosingh-Hector

Student Members: Brooke Jaffe, Chloe Johnson, Danielle LeVine, Dayita Wable, Heather Hare, Jackson Gillette, Jake Behler, Jay Shah, Justin Barlas, Katelyn Trujillo, Kortney Mattox, Madeleine Repka, Madison Blake, Marc LeVine

Agenda Outcomes:

I. Call to Order

II. Millennial Workforce Recruitment – Ralph Reid came to talk to the group about their potential interest in working for the government and what qualities in a first job group members are looking for. The group said for their first job they would like decent pay, a positive working environment, happy coworkers, and something valuable to put on a resume. Ralph asked the group for ideas on how to inform students about job openings in the Pinellas County government system. The group told Ralph that he should reach students through social media, schools, and job fairs at colleges. The group designed posters that could influence kids to work for Pinellas County to place in local schools.

III. Review Completed Watershed Video – Libby Bolling and Bruno Rivera showed the group the completed Watershed PSA. The group reviewed it and said that they really

liked it, particularly the length of the video. Libby and Bruno also showed the group two “I am Pinellas County” videos that the group advised they shorten the length of. Libby informed everyone that on May 3rd they will have an “open house” where citizens will be able to ask Pinellas County commissioner’s questions and get information.

- IV. *Review and Approve December and February Minutes* – approved
- V. *Recap on Animal Services Project* – Marc LeVine and chairwoman Maddie Blake were the only two group members who volunteered at the animal service project. The project was eye opening for them since they got to interact with animals who have been at the shelter for a long period of time and are less likely to get adopted.
- VI. *Mock BCC Alternative Option* – It was decided that the BCC meeting requires too much work and preparation. Instead of holding a Mock BCC meeting, the group could sit in on a real county commissioner meeting on April 26th. Or, the group could do a presentation on a subject that they want to give their opinion on to the commissioners.
- VII. *Suggested Removal due to absences without excuse* – The group reviewed attendance records. If a member hasn’t attended a lot of meetings, they won’t be removed but they will be ineligible for reappointment the following year. They will be considered an “inactive member”. A friendly reminder will be sent to everyone via email reminding them of their attendance and to become more active in YAC community service projects.
- VIII. *Other Business*
- IX. *Adjournment* – approved

MOVE-IN / MOVE-UP – Attracting Millennials into the Pinellas County Workforce

Summary

This report summarizes findings from a focus group consisting of 14 high school students involved in the Pinellas County Youth Advisory Committee (YAC). The YAC was solicited for feedback about the Pinellas County workforce during one of their regularly scheduled group meetings.

Method

The YAC students were asked for feedback as to what they, as millennials and potential future Pinellas County employees, expect from an employer when they enter the workforce. The conversation was guided to solicit answers to four questions:

- 1) What are millennials and young people looking for in an employer?
- 2) How does a career in the public sector fit into their expectations for employment?
- 3) How could Pinellas County best reach out to millennials and young people about careers with the County?
- 4) What should a visual advertisement for Pinellas County jobs look like?

The students engaged in a casual conversation over the course of one hour. Participants' comments, general themes, and ideas were noted throughout the facilitated discussion. The students were also asked to draw an advertisement for jobs with Pinellas County and to explain the elements that they incorporated into these drawings.

Results

Examination of the YAC's feedback in the focus group yielded results that show that while the YAC students are seeking many of the traditional perks in which we might expect our labor force to be interested (salary, leave, health insurance, etc.), they are also seeking additional characteristics in an employer and they bring a potentially restructured outlook on what the employee-employer relationship should entail.

What are millennials and young people looking for in an employer?

Generally, the YAC students indicated that they were looking for employment that offers the same remunerations for which most of the workforce is looking: competitive salaries, generous benefits, and good job security. Some of the more specific expectations that they identified as important were job flexibility and the ability to work from home or from various locations. There was a strongly expressed desire to not be "tied to a desk" or to work solely from a single space. The students indicated that they expect employers to offer physical office spaces that are flexible, personal, and conducive to their individual work styles. This includes integrating state-of-the-art technology into the office. They want a setting connected to the environment (eco-friendly with outdoor spaces), and are attracted to spaces that reflect a "startup" atmosphere or that mirror places to which they already go. They identified companies like Google, Publix, Facebook, Tesla, and Disney as models for these types of work environments.

The students also said that they want to work with others. They're incredibly socially-oriented and see work as an extension of their social lives. Despite wanting a personalized work space, they do not want to be isolated and want to work on teams and/or in contact with members of the community. Even among those that consider themselves introverts, there was a desire for a socially-constructed workplace where teams work together to build a final product, with each person being responsible for a contributing piece of that product, or an environment where social interactions take place electronically.

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If the work environment doesn't offer the opportunity for interaction with coworkers, then the students desired an environment where there is an opportunity to interact with the community, businesses, or other partners.

Another critical item was the availability of promotion opportunities or a career ladder. Specifically, they stated that this is something they would want to see prior to beginning employment. They want a clear expectation that with X, comes Y. This means that in order for them to want to persist with an employer after starting in a role, they want to visualize themselves there in the future, with clear goals, standards, and expectations as to what's needed in order to move up the ladder.

As the YAC contains high-achieving students who are all likely bound for college after high school, when the students were asked how they thought their expectations might differ from those of their peers that might not be headed to college or vocational training, they indicated that they felt their desires were fairly universal and that while there is an understanding that some jobs might not facilitate all of what they want in an employer, the culture in a work environment and the actions of an employer should try to reinforce and meet as many of these demands as possible.

Perhaps the most striking and prevalent item that the YAC students discussed is their strong desire to feel a connection to their employer. For them, work-life balance isn't as important as it may be for previous generations or the workforce because millennials consider work to be such an integral part of their lives and a part of their identity. Because of this, it's important for them to work in an environment that reflects their values, particularly their attitude towards community, both inside the organization and between the organization and the community-at-large. They want to see the importance in their work and to know and feel the impacts that their efforts have on where they live, work, and play.

How does a career in the public sector fit into their expectations for employment?

After a brief explanation on some of the constraints that bind public sector employers versus private sector employers (i.e. dependence on tax dollars, public perception, etc.), the students were asked how they felt about employment in the public sector, particularly with local government. One of the more compelling points to this discussion was that students were largely unaware of the opportunities that are available to them. With Pinellas County, for example, they did not know about the large variety of roles for which the County recruits. Intuitively they knew that the County has numerous employees in a variety of subject areas, but their perception of available jobs is informed by the public-facing roles that they often see (i.e. elected officials, top administrators, park rangers, highway crews, etc.). Once they heard about the myriad of subject areas that fall under a local government, they indicated that they viewed public sector employment very favorably, even given the constraints that may exist when compared with the private sector. The conversation again turned to how a public sector job would fit well with the substantial value that they all placed on community. If an employer like Pinellas County could demonstrate how its values matched theirs, and could simultaneously highlight the tangible benefits of employment (like salary and workplace benefits), the students would absolutely pursue careers with the organization.

How could Pinellas County best reach out to millennials and young people about careers with the County?

According to the YAC, the absolute best way that the County could recruit young people to its ranks would be to go to where they are, both physically and digitally. The students said the County should be actively recruiting in colleges and high schools, and should be informing them about the opportunities

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that the County has in its ranks. For recruitment in schools, they recommended holding information sessions, airing pieces on school morning shows, informing guidance counselors about job opportunities, and developing materials for parents (a big influence on them) about County jobs. They also recommended that the County host or participate in career/job fairs. One of the biggest “selling points” that all the students agreed was incredibly attractive to them was the County’s commitment to education and the ability to have their employer pay for tuition. They indicated that if they knew about the opportunity to get an education while working, they might start thinking sooner about a career with the County as part of their post-high school plans.

Digitally, the YAC said the County needed to do a much better job engaging with them online. For example, if they were to see a poster in their school about jobs in the County with a web address for more information, the students indicated that they would be unlikely to follow-up by going to the website for more information. However, if they saw a post shared on Twitter or Facebook and it simply required a click to get more information, they would be much more likely to follow through. They also indicated that the more the County actively engaged with them by responding and commenting on posts or tweets, the more likely they would be to engage back in order to learn more about the County and County jobs. For social media platforms, they recommended the County have a presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vine, Youtube, and Snapchat.

Another critical factor for the participants in this discussion was that the County approach them authentically and that people who actually perform the work being advertised do the recruitment. The idea of a universal “recruiter” who has just general information about a job within the County was less attractive than having somebody that actually performed that job talking about the job. If it wasn’t feasible to bring that person to them personally, then allowing them an opportunity to interact with that person on a job site would be beneficial. This could be possible through tours, work-study opportunities, and/or internships/externships. Digitally, the students also said productions like the “I am Pinellas County” videos could give them a view into the world of an employee, but they felt like the videos that the County already has are too long.

Overall, the students said the most compelling thing that Pinellas County could do to encourage them to want to work for the County would be to allow them a window into what the work is, who the people are that do the work, and what the County values as an organization. The lesson that can be taken away from this, in relation to how to best reach out to young people, is that the County needs to come to where these young people are (physically and digitally); they are not going to seek the County out. If Pinellas County is not actively engaged in the spaces that they already inhabit, the County will have a difficult time getting them interested.

What should a visual advertisement for Pinellas County jobs look like?

At the conclusion of the conversation addressing the first three questions, the students were divided into groups of three to four and were given a piece of paper on which they were instructed to draw an advertisement for County jobs that they would find interesting. After being given 10 minutes to create the poster, the students were asked to explain their drawings and detail why they made the decision to incorporate all the elements they chose to include into their posters/advertisements.

Some of the common elements that all the students identified in describing their advertisements were pictures that are clear, uncluttered, and concise. They wanted the advertisements to convey that there are more jobs than one might think in the County (as you can see in Fig. 2 they listed some jobs and in

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Fig. 4 they used symbols to convey various departments under the County). They also said it was important to capture elements of the Pinellas County community, using photos and imagery that would be unmistakable to someone familiar with Pinellas. They recommended the advertisements tell them where they could get more information, either through an information session schedule or through where they could interact with the County's social media platforms. Again, the students indicated that these advertisements would be most effective if in places they already go (in a Guidance Counselors office for example) or if they saw them while online. One group (Fig. 3) suggested incorporating emojis in the design, but choosing ones that again reflect Pinellas County (like a sun, palm tree, or wave).

Conclusion

The students that participated in this focus group indicated that what they are looking for in an employer is an authentic organization that reflects their values and provides them with an opportunity to shape the organization. They want good pay and benefits, but also expect that they will have an opportunity to grow with an organization. In order to make the case that careers in Pinellas County are just that, careers, instead of simply jobs, the County needs to be prepared to help potential employees visualize themselves as a part of the organization. The County needs to create an atmosphere where they feel like they are making a difference. They want to see that with hard work and dedication, there are opportunities to advance in the organization. In some sense, the motivating driver of young people to specific employers is the employer's answer to the question "what's in it for me?" which they ask not in a selfish way, but because they want to understand how they both personally benefit from an organization and how they can benefit the organization in return. The best way that the County can help answer this question is to go to places where it hopes to recruit employees and to tell the story of Pinellas County as an organization.

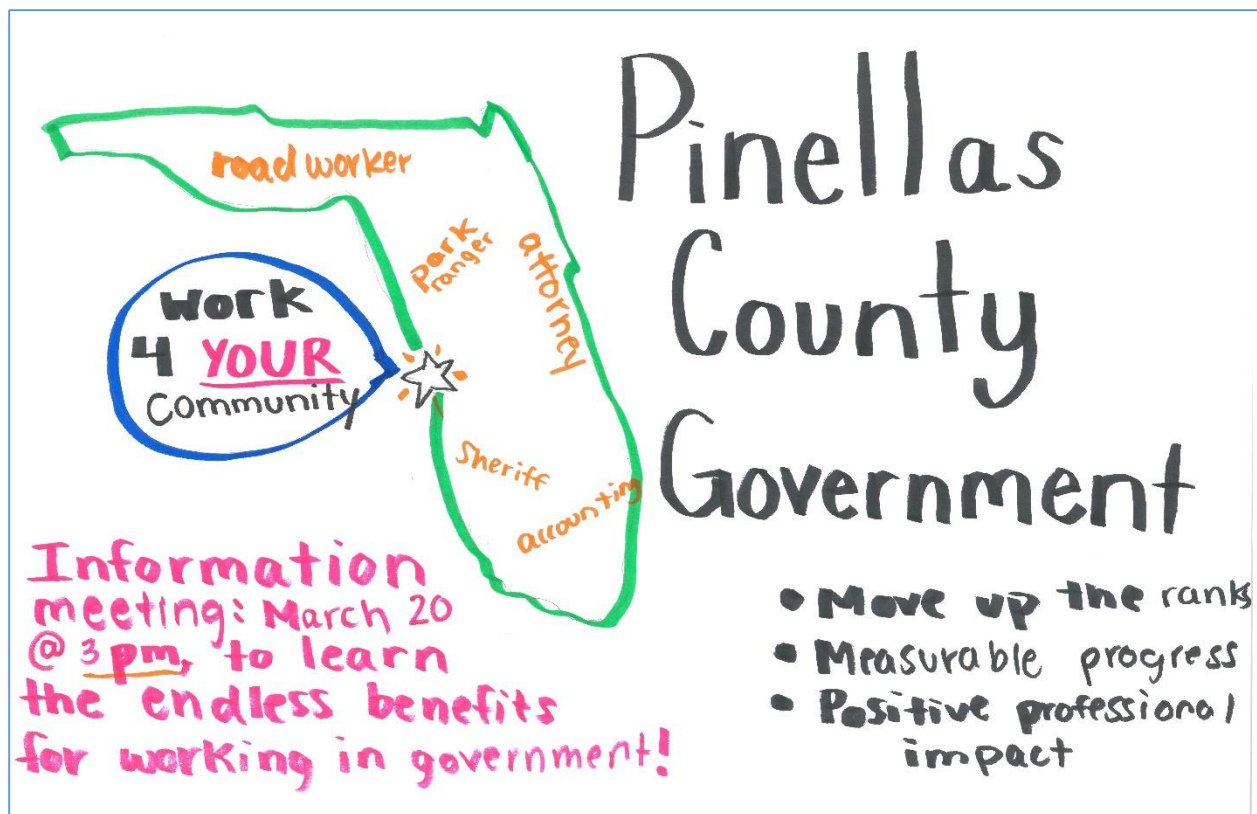


Fig 1.

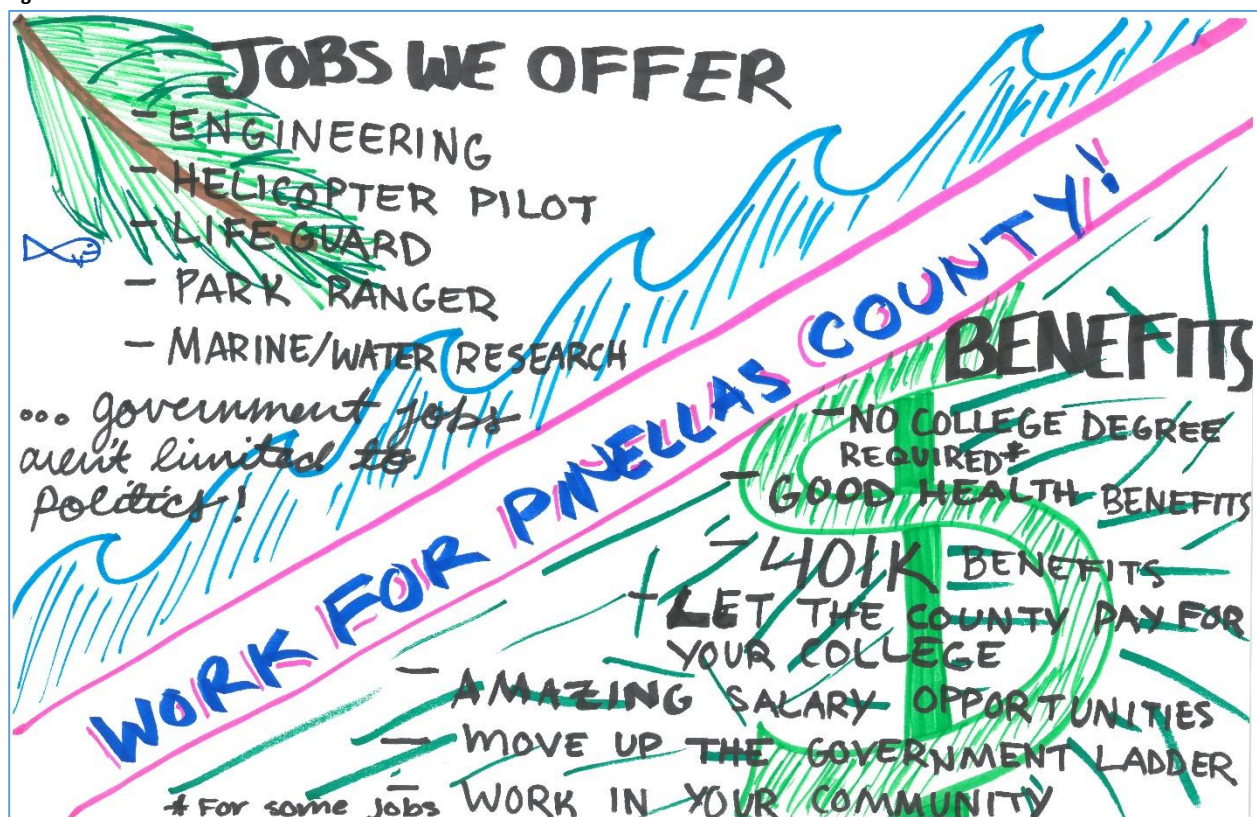


Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4