



Englewood Chamber Mission Statement:

“Dedicated to Leading Economic Growth with a Balanced Voice between Local Businesses, Residents, and Tourism that Creates Opportunities for our Community.”

Board Meeting ... Wednesday ... June 4, 2025

Minutes

Attending: Jessica Souza, Kris Hartley, Peter Jennings, Julie Beatty, Shane Whitmore, Janae Boyer, Kathleen Callahan, Francine Finucan, Chris Porter, and Chris Anders.

Staff: Doug Izzo - Executive Director

Absent: Erin Halstead, Joe Cataldo, Lori Wellbaum

1. **Call To Order:** 9:07 am
2. **Approval of the May minutes: Motion:** Hartley, 2nd Beatty
3. **President’s Report:** Souza, in proving she too is human, apologized for not recording a video for the last 2 Minute Tuesday. She’s looking for feedback, as she wants the video to be a “highlight reel”, and feels it breaks up the monotony of the written word. Stay tune for more video!
4. **Committee Reports:**

Leadership: Jennings reported that the class accomplished the task given. In an email to the class prior to their graduation for some feedback, Jennings received 5 replies out of the 19 sent. Two class members that did reply thought the class should have been given more of an outline, and a guideline of responsibilities. That’s not LEADERSHIP. The council members and chairs witnessed those that stepped up, and those that just sailed through. All in all, most agreed that they did a great job in being the first class to not solely focus on raising money. It was suggested by Callahan that we “poll” the non-profits involved and get their

feedback. This will give us guidance as to whether we do something like “Pour It Forward” again, or not.

Junior Leadership: Whitmore reported that we have the 20 applicants needed and are continuing to seek out sponsors. We still need:

- 7 child sponsors
- 3 breakfast sponsors
- 4 lunch sponsors
- 2 Hors D'oeuvre sponsors

If you know of any businesses or restaurants, please reach out to them with this amazing opportunity. Our panel-style interviews are scheduled for **July 23rd** in the **community room**. Interviews will run from **9 AM to 2 PM**, with **20 sessions at 15 minutes each**. See email from Doug Izzo.

5. **Ambassador Program:** Board members, as well as Ambassadors, now receive the emails for ribbon cuttings, etc. Thanks Doug. The next FAM DAY is Friday June 13th at 10am starting at Cape Haze Convenience Store. Members really enjoy talking about their businesses, and we enjoy learning more about them as well.
6. **Government/Advocacy:** In response to several members that have contacted the Chamber about the beach parking lot, and subsequent news articles etc. the Board met today instead of the normal second Wednesday; 6/11/25. Discussion covered in Old Business below.
7. **Fundraising/Events:** Our Annual Golf Par-Tee Tournament will be held at the Long Marsh Course in Rotonda West on the last Saturday in July (7/26/25). Souza mentioned there are still sponsorships available. Souza again requested that board members provide an auction item for the silent auction at the tournament. Next golf committee meeting date TBD.
8. **Leads Group:** No Report as Cataldo was absent. The group has added several new members who in turn joined the Chamber. They meet on the 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month.
9. **Financial Updates.** Cataldo was absent. Doug briefly updated the Board on our balance sheet and P&L. The Chamber’s finances remain strong. Money from dues is up.

10. **Executive Director's Report, Doug Izzo:**
 - a. **Facebook Post:** Izzo reminded everyone to share Chamber posts on Facebook.
 - b. **Member Dashboard:** May saw only 4 members drop off and we added 20 new members; Total membership to date is 841. Great job everyone !
 - c. **New Member Cards:** Signed by BOD attendees
 - d. **Upcoming Events:** Golf Par-Tee July 26th at Long Marsh in Rotonda

11. **Old Business:** Englewood Beach Parking Lot: Although the board made no formal motion, it was discussed at the May meeting that as a Board "we would not be an advocate either way regarding the speed and efficiency of the clean-up". Izzo had several local establishments, both on the Key and off, call or visit with dire need. They reiterated that the Key and surroundings are the "heartbeat" of our community and a big part of the engine that drives our economy. As to try to remain neutral, Izzo shared his thoughts via a newspaper article that quickly went viral on social media. The Board was not made aware of this article in advance. Although most feel the same about what's been taking place on our beachfronts, the decision to speak out was a deviation from the Boards' stance at the May meeting. Subsequently, other Community/Chamber members were working on a petition to obtain 1,000 signatures to open the parking lot and took it upon themselves to also organize a peaceful rally at the entrance to the parking lot on 5/30/25. News of the rally was communicated to several TV stations. Izzo was present as well at the rally and was interviewed by at least one news outlets. Of course, as is par for the course, they only showed 3 seconds of a 3-minute interview, leaving some to believe we had taken sides: which is not the case.

MOTION: Whitmore, 2nd Callahan To keep pushing and advocating for businesses in general who've felt the impact of the parking lot being closed, and to furnish as much information and direction to inquires all while remaining neutral.

It was also discussed, and decided (no motion necessary), for Doug to prepare another survey to the Chamber members, possibly with an embedded video for more pizzazz, to inquire as to the percentage of lost business compared to 2024, and the total of their 1% County Tax year over year. Without using names, we would gather that information to present facts on just how much the parking being closed has impacted not only businesses, but the county as a whole.

12. **New Business:** Coincidentally, Charlotte County is looking for a designate from the Chamber to sit on a panel regarding the County's 1% Sales Tax. This would require time from mid-summer to March of 2026 with mostly monthly meetings but could increase in frequency as they reach the end of their charge. Souza & Whitmore said they would be the designate depending on meeting days & times.

MOTION: Callahan, (TABLED) To dissolve the title of V.P. of Leadership and transfer that title/role to handle other duties as a Vice President/Historian/Secretary of the Board.

13. **Open Discussion:** Chamber Fashion Show, and LE22 Mural/LE23 Sculpture fund raising event or such to clear coat the mural (material cost only) and to repair & restore the Chadwick Park sculpture. Souza suggested possibly tying the two together. We're getting quotes on clear coat, and someone (when it's open) needs to inspect the sculpture to determine the needs there.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 am. Motion to Adjourn: Callahan. 2nd Boyer