



*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 ... September 10, 2025

## **Minutes**

Attending: Jessica Souza, Kris Hartley, Peter Jennings, Julie Beatty, Shane Whitmore, Janae Boyer, Chris Porter, Chris Anders, Joe Cataldo, Lori Wellbaum, Kathleen Callahan, Francine Finucan, and Erin Halstead

Staff: Doug Izzo - Executive Director

Absent: No one. YEAH!

August 13<sup>th</sup> meeting **Motion to Adjourn**; Beatty, 2<sup>nd</sup> Hartley. (longest EC BOD meeting ever!)

1. **Call To Order:** 8:02 am
2. **Approval of August minutes: Motion:** Cataldo 2<sup>nd</sup> Anders. Motion Carried.
3. **President’s Report:** Souza noted she had some feedback from Commissioner Tiseo regarding the progress at Englewood Beach. The playground repair and reconstruction began Monday 9/8/25. Other notations were more geared towards fundraising. See paragraph 7.

4. **Committee Reports:**

**Leadership:** Jennings reported “tonight’s the night” The Leadership Class of 2026 will be introduced at the Fun After 5 held at Heritage Oaks in Grove City on San Casa.

**Junior Leadership:** Izzo reported that Junior Leadership is also having their orientation today, September 10<sup>th</sup> starting at 3:30 at the Chamber.

5. **Ambassador Program:** DITTO from last month... Board members, as well as Ambassadors, now receive the emails for ribbon cuttings, etc. Thanks Doug. The next FAM DAY is this Friday September 12<sup>th</sup>. Members really enjoy talking about their businesses, and we enjoy learning more about them as well.
6. **Government/Advocacy:** Izzo stated there will again be a 9/11 Ceremony at Veteran's Park at the end of Dearborn St. Beatty brought up the young lady who passed out last year from the heat and said she, via HCA Englewood, would provide a water station at the event.
7. **Fundraising/Events:** Let's Eat Englewood begins tomorrow 9/11/25 through the 25<sup>th</sup>. Souza thanked those members for sponsoring meals at certain participants and urged board members to be more involved next year sponsoring a meal. Manasota Mystique tickets are now on sale. The deadline for the discount ended 9/6/25. Souza mentioned a website that will create custom baseball shirts. That website is [www.fansidea.com](http://www.fansidea.com)
8. **Leads Group:** Cataldo updated the Board that the Power Partners Group has generated 53 referrals, resulting in 22 closed sales with a value of \$757,000. Great progress for a program still in its infancy. They meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month.
9. **Financial Updates.** Cataldo gave his financial report. YTD net income is pretty much in line with 2024. He added that we may see an increase in net income as we move further into season, Leadership events, etc.
10. **Executive Director's Report, Doug Izzo:**
  - a. **Facebook Post:** Izzo reminded everyone to share Chamber posts on Facebook.
  - b. **Member Dashboard:** August saw a more normal month of new members and drops; 11 added, and 4 dropped. Total active members 845. (is that a new record?)
  - c. **New Member Cards:** Signed by BOD attendees
  - d. **Upcoming Events:** Let's Eat Englewood 9/11/25 – 9/24/25, Biz@Noon Past Presidents Luncheon 9/17/25 at the Hills. Manasota Mystique Saturday 10/4/25
11. **Old Business:**

**MOTION:** Wellbaum, 2<sup>nd</sup> Whitmore. Motion to support the Manasota Key Legacy Foundation in their pursuit of the old Michael Saunders & Company property at the entrance to Beach Rd. MOTION CARRIED. Their intent is to create more parking, a

park, and a fishing area, etc. Motion passed. It was addressed that in speaking with the foundation's founders the Chamber would appreciate the opportunity to have one of our Board Members sit on their BOD. Doug will communicate.

There was also feedback from the SUP Englewood presentation where a speaker from Captains for Clean Water and Izzo had an exchange with regards to the sugar industry and their opposing views. Both were anonymous, and both were negative with regards to any stance made by a representative of the Chamber. Souza did speak with the owner of SUP and it was deemed much ado about nothing; noting it was simply two people who didn't necessarily agree. There was an email that we all received to which Doug replied sighting his source supporting his comments. Doug has promised to tone it down a bit when it comes to what he personally is passionate about when representing the Chamber.

12.

**New Business:** The Hermitage. A letter was drafted by the organization, and edited by Izzo, from the Chamber to the Sarasota County Commissioners. The Hermitage Artist Retreat's "offer to assume ownership and relieve Sarasota County taxpayers of this responsibility" comes after The Hermitage was prevented from doing their own repairs, at their own expense, after last year's hurricanes.

**MOTION:** Callahan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Anders. A motion to support The Heritage in their endeavor to assume ownership of the property currently owned by the county. Motion carried.

13. Kim Parks, Membership Director, and all-around Chamber Cheerleader gave her quarterly report with regards to membership, and how we stack up against national numbers for member retention. She also resurrected the program of Milestone Members, being recognized for the years of patronage, along with welcoming new members. 121 New Members YTD. 834 members ( as of August meeting). 145 are non-profits.

**Open Discussion:**

Whitmore brought up Charlotte County's recent Real Estate tax bills, asking if everyone else's taxes went up? He suggested, and we agreed, that maybe we have a County Assessor come and speak to the Board about how they arrive at their decisions, so we can be more informed to answer questions from the public.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Callahan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Hartley Meeting adjourned at 8.59 am.