

Meeting Minutes



Meeting: Members and Prospective Members Meeting Event
Date: December 1, 2009
Location: UCF Office of Research & Commercialization, University Tower
Attendees: 19 FPC members; 6 others including two from Workforce Brevard

Minutes

1. FPC President Alex Fong opened the meeting at 4:10pm with a welcome to all attendees and a brief presentation on the goals of the FPC and the benefits of membership. FPC membership applications were provided for those interested.
2. Seminar by Tom O'Neal, Assoc. VP, UCF Office of Research & Commercialization, entitled "Starting a New Business" – things to consider, resources at UCF and other organizations. Some of the points in his presentation (full presentation on the FPC website via link at www.floridaphotonicscluster.com/EventsShows.html):
 - UCF is working to emphasize "prosperity", not just economic growth
 - Some valuable web information resources are:
 - a. <http://growfl.com/> – Florida Economic Gardening Institute, funded at UCF by the Florida legislature to help "second stage" companies achieve their potential. All the resources are available at no charge to the companies.
 - b. www.research.ucf.edu – UCF Office of Research & commercialization, providing a wide range of information on sponsored programs, UCF incubator, tech transfer, UCF research centers, etc.
 - c. www.venturelab.ucf.edu – The UCF Venture Lab is a joint initiative between the UCF Office of Research and Commercialization, the UCF College of Business, and Orange County, Florida. It provides early-stage entrepreneurs with access to experienced business coaches that can assist them in the pre-business steps that are critical for the successful launch of technology firms. The expertise and resources are provided at not cost to technology entrepreneurs in a variety of areas including business plan creation and pitching, licensing and patent advice, market research guidance, incorporation and corporate structure advice, product validation, and financing guidance.
3. Presentation by Lisa Rice, President of Brevard Workforce Development Board – status of Regional Aerospace Workforce Initiative (RAWI) to help retain in Florida as much of the KSC workforce as possible as the Space Shuttle program winds down. Some of the points in her presentation (full presentation on the FPC website via link at www.floridaphotonicscluster.com/EventsShows.html):
 - a. Brevard Workforce has established with NASA an Aerospace Workforce Transition (AWT) office. Over 600 people trained for new careers to date and another 125 are in the pipeline.

The FPC is a 501c(6) nonprofit corporation whose mission is to support the growth and profitability of the Florida photonics industry through the strength of a unified voice, and to make Florida the place to go for photonics solutions.

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- b. Between 3500 and 7000 workers will lose their jobs when the Shuttle program ends
- c. RAWI is a 7-county partnership to promote a collaboration between industry, workforce, education and economic development leadership to leverage resources to assist in the regional transition effort, and specifically to engage businesses to assist in transferring workers to existing and emerging industry skill needs.
- d. For RAWI, photonics is one of the focus industry clusters. The others are clean technology, nano-technology, advanced manufacturing, digital media, MST, biotechnology, and aviation.
- e. The next meeting of the AWI core regional strategic group will likely be in late January or early February. All companies interested in having input to the education curriculum and other programs are urged to attend (the information will be forwarded to all FPC members when the meeting date is set).
- f. Brevard state senator Altman has proposed a tax break for businesses that hire displaced aerospace/KSC workers.
- g. An initial survey was done by RAWI in July 2009 involving 31 companies. Volunteers from companies are needed to take a follow-up survey to develop a broader perspective of industry needs. Those interested should contact Sue Carlson (321-427-1508; scarlson@job-link.net) or Tyler Sirois (tsirois@job-link.net).

NOTE: The FPC will be establishing a connection from the FPC website to the RAWI website on job openings at companies, which can be posted at no charge for FPC members.

4. Alex Fong and FPC Executive Director Jim Pearson closed the formal part of the meeting by urging non-member companies to join the FPC and member companies to promote FPC membership to their customers and suppliers.
5. The meeting concluded with a reception and networking hour, hosted by the UCF Office of Research & Commercialization. Following the reception, at 7:00pm a no-host dinner was held at Louie & Maria's Italian restaurant, where some great food and further networking were enjoyed.

Minutes by Jim Pearson