Meeting Minutes
Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc.
NWFSC Building 400, Room 302
100 College Avenue
Niceville, Florida 32578
October 22, 2025
10:30 a.m. CT

Members Present:

Jay Trumbull, Sr., Chair
Bryan Corr, Sr.
David Humphreys, Vice-Chair
Charles Rigdon
Leslie Weiss, Treasurer

Chair Jay Trumbull, Sr. called the meeting to order at 10:30 PM CT. Ms. Susan Skelton, Executive Director, called roll and announced the presence of a quorum.

Chair Trumbull invited Mel Ponder, President of Northwest Florida State College, to present an update on the College Nursing Program and other major institutional initiatives.

President Ponder expressed gratitude to Triumph Gulf Coast for their pivotal role in funding a $21 million renovation of the nursing facilities at Northwest Florida State College, creating a premier learning environment equipped with advanced hands-on technology and virtual reality simulation. A new marketing campaign was showcased to attract prospective students, and testimonials from a current student and faculty member highlighted the transformative impact of these resources.

President Ponder also reported on the $2.8 million Walton Works workforce development grant, which supports programs in cybersecurity, welding, public safety, and construction trades. Achievements include a state-of-the-art cybersecurity lab and 100% job placement in welding. Public safety programs were recently ranked among the top five in the nation by the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs, with law enforcement and fire programs achieving a 98% job placement rate. The college graduated three EMT classes, two fire classes, and one medic class, hosted seven advanced specialized courses, and produced 79 new EMTs, 40 firefighters, 16 paramedics, while advancing the careers of 80 law enforcement officers. Since the Walton Works grant began there have been 797 certificates earned by 439 unique students.

He highlighted progress at the Aviation Center of Excellence (ACE) in Crestview, supported by a $7 million investment. The ACE program has completed 213 milestones in high-wage fields such as airframe and power plant maintenance and professional pilot technology. FAA inspections in September 2025 confirmed compliance and safety standards, and helicopters were added to the training fleet to enhance hands-on learning. Plans are underway for a VA-approved flight training provider to better serve veterans and boost enrollment. To date, ACE program completions include 38 airframe and 27 power plant graduates.

President Ponder closed by emphasizing the broader impact of these investments, noting that they not only deliver measurable returns but also empower students to pursue purposeful careers, transforming families, workplaces, and communities for generations to come.

Chair Trumbull noted that while the Board often focuses on grants and technical details, seeing the tangible return on investment (ROI) and how funds are being utilized is highly encouraging. He expressed appreciation for the efforts made to maximize the impact of the funding provided and emphasized that it is rewarding for both the Board and staff to hear about the progress and outcomes. Chair Trumbull concluded by stating that the Board looks forward to the upcoming tour and is honored to have President Ponder present.

On a motion by Mrs. Leslie Weiss and seconded by Mr. David Humphreys, the August 27, 2025, Meeting Minutes were approved without objection.

Treasurer's Report

Mrs. Jennifer Davidson, CPA, presented the August 2025 Financial Report. In August, assets totaled $676.3 million. During the month, $4.3 million was distributed to grantees, and approximately $2.5 million was earned in interest. Administrative costs were under budget by about $20,000. **Mrs. Weiss made a motion to approve the August Financial Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charles Rigdon and approved without objection.**

Mrs. Davidson then presented the September 2025 Financial Report. In September, assets were approximately $667 million. Activity for the month included $11.7 million distributed to grantees and about $2.4 million in interest income. Year-to-date figures for the nine months ended September 30 showed $38.7 million in funds distributed and $21.9 million in interest income. Administrative costs for September were $23,000 under budget, and year-to-date administrative costs were under budget by approximately $98,000. **Mrs. Weiss made a motion to approve the September Financial Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Humphreys and approved without objection.**

Staff Report

Ms. Skelton announced that the annual Auditor General audit is nearing completion, with only a few remaining items expected to be resolved. Once these details are finalized, the audit report will be issued. Triumph is decommissioning two original laptop computers, which must be certified as decommissioned by Digital Boardwalk. These steps will conclude the outstanding audit requirements.

Ms. Skelton reported that committee meetings for the legislative session are ongoing, with this week serving as a break due to legislative delegation meetings taking place across the state. Committees are scheduled to reconvene in November and early December, and the legislative session will officially begin on January 13. At this time, no issues of concern to Triumph have been identified.

Ms. Skelton noted that the Triumph team had been struggling with achieving 100% compliance due to the magnitude of data collection. Mrs. Davidson attended an FICPA government accounting meeting earlier this year where Gail Gray from Gray Lopez Solutions gave a presentation. Mrs. Davidson brought this information back, and our staff was intrigued by the work the company was doing to help large entities manage extensive paperwork using artificial intelligence.

After discussions with Mrs. Weiss, Mrs. Davidson and Ms. Skelton, Cori Henderson and Therese Baker met with the company to explore their solutions and assess whether they fit our needs. Once that was confirmed, a meeting was arranged with the Triumph team and the company to review the offerings. The company provided a demonstration, which was very encouraging. Ms. Skelton asked Mrs. Weiss and Mrs. Davidson to share their perspectives on how this could work within a Triumph compliance review plan.

Mrs. Weiss provided a high-level overview, explaining that the company uses AI tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot, or Gemini depending on automation needs. For approximately $5,000, they can automate a sample of up to five processes. For example, compliance reviews often involve thousands of documents—sometimes as many as 15,000 pieces of paper, including invoices, receipts, and payroll records. Instead of manually reviewing each sheet, AI can filter and identify relevant information. She emphasized that AI not only mechanizes the process but also learns from patterns, improving its ability to identify key details over time. While AI reduces errors and speeds up work, human oversight remains essential. Given the organization's investment in AI through Triumph grants, she believes it is logical to adopt these tools internally.

Mrs. Davidson highlighted that Gail Gray, a CPA with extensive accounting experience, partnered with an implementation expert to develop these solutions. She noted that many of Triumph's current processes could be simplified and made more efficient. For instance, AI can analyze Excel expense sheets, locate corresponding invoices, match document numbers, dates, and amounts, and verify bank clearances. It can also provide confidence scores (e.g., 75% or 100%) to help prioritize review efforts. This capability would significantly speed up document verification. Additionally, the system integrates with Smartsheet, ensuring traceability and reporting through dedicated logins.

Ms. Skelton added that beyond invoices, the team plans to explore using AI for federal employment documents and job creation verification. Ms. Skelton shared that, based on what she observed as a non-AI expert, the ability of this system to run in real time and perform matching, sorting, and data validation is impressive. The team saw demonstrations from a city and another entity in Hillsborough County, showing the system processing information live. She believes this technology will save significant time and money in the long run, allowing staff to focus on anomalies rather than routine tasks. She noted that, as Mrs. Weiss mentioned earlier, some invoices have included expenses that were likely not allowable. This solution would help flag such items quickly and facilitate timely conversations with grantees about disallowed costs. Importantly, the process still involves human interaction, enabling employees to concentrate on grantee engagement rather than manual document review.

Ms. Skelton explained the "five for five" concept: an initial $5,000 investment would fund an in-depth consultation with the company to identify five processes for improvement. After this assessment, the company would provide a detailed plan, including build-out costs and implementation estimates. One requirement would be additional Microsoft 365 licenses beyond current holdings to support the system's annual workspace functionality. When asked for a preliminary cost estimate, the vendor suggested approximately $75,000 for development, though this was not a firm number. Ms. Skelton emphasized that if this investment reduces manual workload for her team and Mrs. Davidson's team, it would be a strategic use of the $2 million annual administrative compliance budget to offset labor and operational costs.

Mrs. Weiss added that, beyond the estimated $75,000 build cost, there would be an annual fee for ongoing software updates.

Ms. Skelton noted that the $5,000 covers the consultation to determine which processes to automate and the potential return on investment. Ms. Davidson elaborated that during this phase, the company will identify five areas for efficiency improvements, outline estimated costs for each, and provide projections on time savings and long-term value to the board.

Ms. Skelton concluded by acknowledging her own learning curve with AI, noting that Dr. Frank Fuller has advocated for its importance for years. She agreed that AI will be central to future business operations and recommended that the Board consider investing the $5,000 to explore whether these solutions could benefit the organization’s activities.

Mrs. Weiss made a motion to approve the recommendation to engage GrayLopez Strategic</>Solutions for an AI workflow study. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bryan Corr and approved without objection. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)

Mr. Rigdon expressed support for implementing AI but noted a concern about paying $5,000 upfront to determine feasibility, especially given the potential recurring costs of $75,000 to $100,000. He stated he would go along with the proposal but was not accustomed to paying a company that will ultimately work for the organization.

Mr. Corr clarified that the fee is essentially a consulting cost to identify suitable processes and shared his experience using similar AI systems for invoice processing and accounts payable in his business. He noted that while the system still has a 15% error rate, it is improving, and human oversight remains necessary.

Mr. Corr also raised a question about whether the organization has purchased cybersecurity insurance. Ms. Skelton responded that cybersecurity insurance has not yet been purchased but remains on the agenda for discussion at a future meeting when the full Board is seated.

Performance Review Committee Recommendation Report

Ms. Skelton reported that the Performance Review Committee met earlier in the day and developed a recommendation for the Board to consider. All members of the Board attended the meeting, including Mr. Rigdon, who participated in discussions but did not serve on the committee since he has not yet worked with Ms. Skelton for a year. The committee’s report will be documented and distributed in meeting minutes. Ms. Skelton recommended that the Board consider a motion to accept the committee’s report as presented.

Mr. Humphreys made a motion to accept the Performance Review Committee Recommendation Report as it was presented this morning. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Weiss. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)

Program Administrator’s Report

Ms. Henderson reported that a comprehensive update on all grants and their annual reports, due October 31, will be presented at the next meeting. She expressed appreciation to Chair Trumbull for attending the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Leonardo in Santa Rosa and thanked Mr. Corr in advance for his scheduled attendance at the Project Opal Williams groundbreaking next week. Ms. Henderson also reported attending the Florida's Great Northwest Site Selector Inbound Mission alongside regional economic developers. The event, held in Port St. Joe during the music festival, offered site selectors an opportunity to experience the Forgotten Coast and its unique attractions. Feedback indicated that the site selectors had a positive experience.

Ms. Henderson then presented the formal report, noting that as of October 20, the Board had received 363 pre-applications totaling over $3 billion. Staff recommended that Projects 364 and 365 are statutorily eligible, while Projects 361 and 366 are not recommended as statutorily eligible. Additional information is needed for Project 363, and a follow-up call is scheduled. As of October 13, the Board had received 160 applications totaling approximately $1.54 billion. Ms. Henderson reported that a new pre-application, Project Kilowatt from Bay County, was submitted along with its full application.

Ms. Henderson clarified that the summary mistakenly referenced "annual reports" instead of "quarterly reports," as annual reports are due in two weeks.

Ms. Henderson said staff is recommending de-obligation of funds for Projects 191, 143, and 319, noting that Project 319 (Warrington Prep Academy) submitted a letter requesting to sunset its project. No funds were requested for the project. Ms. Henderson commended Warrington Prep Academy for achieving a strong number of certifications despite the change in direction.

- De-obligation amounts:
- Franklin Airport Fuel Farm Project: approximately $180,000 remaining.
- Haney's HVAC Project: approximately $161,000 remaining.
- Warrington Prep Academy: $7.4 million remaining.

Mrs. Weiss made a motion to approve the Program Administrator's Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Humphreys and approved without objection.

Economic Advisor's Report

Dr. Rick Harper, Economic Advisor, introduced a **Recommendation on Proposal #365 - Project Kilowatt – Bay County Board of Commissioners – up to $12,825,000** to support the recruitment of Project Kilowatt, an advanced marine manufacturing company specializing in carbon-fiber hulls and electric propulsion boats. The company will establish its international headquarters, research and development operations, and manufacturing facilities in Bay County with a total capital investment of approximately $37,575,000. Triumph funds represent 34 percent of total project costs, with the company investing the remainder in building upgrades, new construction, manufacturing equipment, and research and development equipment. Bay County will use Triumph funds to acquire the proposed 11.55-acre site with three existing marine facilities, will retain title to the property, and will enter into a long-term lease with the company.

The company will use existing cash reserves and existing banking relationships for building renovations, construction of a new 100,000 square foot facility, and acquisition of manufacturing and research equipment. The project will create 285 high-wage jobs by 2030 with an average annual wage of $77,000, which exceeds 115 percent of the Bay County average wage. The company has already secured contracts with the U.S. Navy and Canadian Coast Guard, providing recurring revenue and financial sustainability.

For a job commitment of 285 positions and an award amount of $12,825,000, the cost to Triumph Gulf Coast per direct job is $45,000, and the return per dollar of Triumph spend in present money value (pmv) is $27.3 over a ten-year window. At $77,000 per job, the pmv of the increment to household incomes of the project is expected to be $350,341,138. For these reasons, staff scores this project as an “A.”

Dr. Harper noted that Triumph currently requires applicants seeking to purchase property to provide two commercial appraisals for the property and any existing structures. The Board’s established recommendation is that Triumph funds allocated for acquisition shall not exceed the average value of these two appraisals.

Chair Trumbull invited Becca Hardin, President of Bay County Economic Development Alliance, to speak. Ms. Hardin thanked Dr. Harper for addressing the appraisal requirement, noting that it aligns with Bay County Commission policy. She confirmed that two appraisals have already been completed and will be provided to staff to support the grant request. Hardin expressed enthusiasm for the project, emphasizing its alignment with previous Triumph-supported initiatives such as American Magic and the Wave program, and highlighted potential synergies with Eastern Shipbuilding. She explained that Project Kilowatt, an international company relocating its headquarters and R&D operations to the area, manufactures its own batteries and electric motors, positioning the region at the forefront of electric marine technology. The project promises high-paying jobs with an average wage of $77,000 and cutting-edge advancements in carbon fiber boats and electric propulsion. Hardin shared her firsthand experience with the company’s technology, noting its quiet, odorless, and environmentally friendly design, which has applications for organizations like the Coast Guard. She concluded by expressing strong support for the project and its transformative potential for the region.

Mrs. Weiss asked about the appraisal values and Ms. Hardin responded that one appraisal came in at $12.7 million and the other at $12.5 million.

Chair Trumbull noted the presence of a nearby marine company and suggested this adds value to the opportunity. Ms. Hardin agreed, recalling that about four years ago Bay County successfully recruited Suzuki Marine, which established a research and integration center on their bayways for engine testing. She added that the region also hosts a Mercury Marine testing facility and Mocama Marine, both recruited with Triumph’s support. She emphasized that while aviation has traditionally been a major target market, the region’s proximity to water makes marine manufacturing a logical focus. She stated that this strategic shift has attracted more marine-based manufacturing companies to the area.

Mr. Rigdon made a motion to direct staff to move to term sheet negotiations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Humphreys. Chair Trumbull asked if anyone from the public wished to be heard on the report. No one came forward to speak. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)**

Legal Report

Directors and Officers Insurance Policy Renewal

Megan Fry, Legal Counsel, presented the renewal of the Directors and Officers (D&O) insurance policy, noting that the premium typically increases annually as more grant awards are made. She recommended that the board authorize counsel to obtain quotes and allow the chair to bind coverage and pay the premium to prevent a lapse, provided the increase does not exceed 25%. Fry explained that the policy limit aligns with obligated funds and currently stands at $5 million, raised from $1 million at the board's request.

Ms. Skelton noted that last year's premium was lower than the previous year, which was interesting given the organization's unique position—a small entity managing a large amount of money. She acknowledged that Clark Partington has been effective in finding coverage in a challenging market. While she could not recall the exact premium amount, she estimated it was around $30,000.

Mr. Corr asked about coverage limits, and Ms. Skelton confirmed that the Board previously raised limits to $5 million, up from $1 million, to ensure adequate protection. Mrs. Fry added that the organization has the authority to pursue additional coverage if needed.

Mrs. Fry explained that she can procure quotes for the existing policy limit and request additional options for higher coverage. **Mr. Corr made a motion to authorize counsel to proceed with quotes for renewal of coverage of $5 million at current limits, approve binding with a premium not to exceed 25% higher than the current rate, while also obtaining quotes for higher coverage limits.**

When asked about the policy expiration date, Ms. Skelton stated it is likely December, as Chair Bear signed a binder last year around that time. With the next Board meeting scheduled for December 15, she emphasized the need to avoid a lapse in coverage, recommending authorization for the chair to bind coverage promptly if necessary.

Chair Trumbull suggested binding the $5 million coverage now and voting later on an increase to $10 million if desired. Ms. Skelton agreed, clarifying that the request is for permission to bind at $5 million immediately and then consider additional coverage later. Mr. Corr confirmed that the motion would direct counsel to obtain quotes for $5 million coverage, approve binding if the premium increase is within 25%, and return to the Board if it exceeds that threshold.

Mr. Humphreys recommended asking for quotes on excess coverage beyond the base limit, such as cumulative options for $10 million or $25 million, given the organization's exposure across multiple projects. Mrs. Fry agreed, noting that requesting excess quotes while renewing the base policy would be prudent.

Mrs. Davidson referenced a prior email indicating the policy's effective date is December 1. She recalled that last year's quote came back quickly, but the Chair Bear had not been authorized to bind coverage, creating a potential lapse that was avoided only because of the insurer's flexibility. She stressed that this should not happen again and supported Mr. Corr's motion to authorize binding at current limits while obtaining quotes for excess coverage.

Mr. Rigdon seconded Mr. Corr's earlier motion. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)**

Chair Trumbull noted that, at Legal Counsel Scott Remington's request, the cybersecurity insurance discussion had been postponed until the full Board is seated. Mrs. Fry clarified that Triumph primarily works with publicly available records, which presents minimal cybersecurity risk, but acknowledged concerns raised by Mr. Corr regarding systems linked to financial accounts. Mrs. Fry suggested adding the topic to the December agenda to address insurance coverage and related issues. The Board agreed to advance the discussion and ensure a subject matter expert is scheduled to participate.

Consent Agenda

Chair Trumbull asked if any member of the public wished to speak on the item listed on the Consent Agenda. He then asked Board members if anyone had any concerns or issues with the Consent Agenda item, and seeing none, Mrs. Fry proceeded to present the item.

She introduced the **Proposed Third Amendment to Grant Award Agreement # 200 – Franklin County School District – Career and Technical Training.** This amendment involves no additional funds and seeks to reallocate funds between categories; combine two categories for ease of use of remaining funds; and revise metric language to reflect a combined total of certifications attained. Ms. Skelton noted that the school system involved is rural and has faced challenges aligning certifications within required categories. She explained that the matter is primarily a realignment issue.

Chair Trumbull then invited David Hughes, representing Franklin School District Career and Technical Education (CTE), to speak and address any questions from the Board; however, none were raised.

Mrs. Weiss made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Mr. Rigdon seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)**

Regular Agenda

Mrs. Megan Fry introduced a **Proposed Term Sheet and Proposed Grant Award Agreement for Proposal #360 - Franklin Board of County Commissioners – Haney Aviation Academy – up to $250,000.** Ms. Fry noted that the Board previously authorized negotiations for both the term sheet and grant award agreement, which will be voted on separately. The first item was the proposed term sheet for Franklin County Board of County Commissioners regarding the Haney Aviation Academy renovation, with funding up to $250,000 for facility improvements to establish a satellite campus capable of delivering at least 25 A&P professional certifications.

Chair Trumbull invited Steve Kirshenbaum, Apalachicola Port Manager, to provide an update. Mr. Kirshenbaum noted that, after 80 years, Franklin County finally has a County Commission that recognizes the airport’s value for disaster relief, economic development, and tourism. When he first became involved eight or nine years ago, the airport was in poor condition—broken gravel on runways and waist-high grass. Today, the facility resembles major airports like ECP and TLH, with new grant-supported equipment and a full-time maintenance manager.

Mr. Kirshenbaum shared that several grants are pending and highlighted the Haney project, which he believes will serve as the nucleus for future development. In partnership with David Hughes at the high school, the airport launched Tango Flights, a program where students build an airplane that will be test-flown at the airport. Students earn 30% credit toward their A&P license, creating a direct pathway to employment at the Haney facility. Steve expressed excitement about showcasing this workforce development initiative at MRO America later this year. He also mentioned plans to request spec buildings at the airport site to attract companies. Mr. Kirshenbaum thanked the Board for its support, particularly for the Haney project, which took two years to reach its current stage.

Mrs. Weiss asked about the upcoming air show and Mr. Kirshenbaum explained that last year he organized an air show in just 90 days at the request of a county commissioner, which was highly successful. This year, the event will expand into a full-scale air show featuring approximately two hours of aerial performances, military aircraft displays, a bike show, and a car show, with an anticipated attendance of 10,000 people. Kirshenbaum emphasized that the air show serves to showcase the airport to the community, noting that many residents were previously unaware of its existence. He added that this year's event will include direct mail invitations to all county residents and will serve as a fundraiser for the Haney Aviation Academy project and the Tango Flights program at the local high school through the Education Foundation.

Chair Trumbull thanked Mr. Kirshenbaum for his enthusiasm and invited questions. Mrs. Weiss remarked that last year's air show was excellent. Mr. Humphreys asked about the runway length for the planned high-speed ride-and-drive event, and Kirshenbaum confirmed it is 5,000 feet. He explained that participants will ride in high-end sports cars, accompanied by a pilot who will communicate with air traffic control as if the car were an aircraft, offering a unique experience. Ms. Skelton noted the runway is a "heavy runway" dating back to World War II, capable of accommodating full-sized aircraft. Kirshenbaum added that Clark Gable trained at the Apalachicola airport during the war and shared his long-term vision to extend Runway 14 to 8,000 feet, as outlined in the FAA master plan, to attract military contractors and support training operations in coordination with nearby bases.

Mrs. Weiss made a motion to approve the Term Sheet and Mr. Humphreys seconded the motion. Chair Trumbull asked if anyone from the public wished to be heard on the proposal. No one came forward to speak. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)**

Megan Fry then presented the **Proposed Grant Award Agreement for Proposal #360**, Franklin County Board of County Commissioners, consistent with the previously approved term sheet. The agreement provides a grant of $250,000 to support the Haney Aviation Academy renovation and facility improvements. **Mrs. Weiss made a motion to approve the Grant Award Agreement and Mr. Humphreys seconded the motion.** Chair Trumbull asked if anyone from the public wished to be heard on the proposal. No one came forward to speak. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)**

Mrs. Fry introduced a **Proposed Term Sheet for Proposal #323 – University of West Florida – Institute for Industry Advancement and Analytics (IA)2 – up to $32,515,120** for capital improvements and research infrastructure for the existing sciences annex and a new sciences and engineering building.

Chair Trumbull introduced Dr. Jaromy Kuhl, Provost at the University of West Florida (UWF), to speak. Dr. Kuhl noted that with Triumph's investment, the University of West Florida (UWF) aims to significantly expand its research capacity and commercialization efforts. The Center for Computational Intelligence will be developed into a world-class research hub focused on creating and applying advanced mathematical and computational models. These models will have direct applications in robotics, environmental systems, biological systems, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. Additionally, the Center for Cybersecurity and AI, already recognized as a regional leader, will expand its capabilities to meet growing demand for cutting-edge research at the intersection of cybersecurity and AI, as well as to support national security initiatives. The total cost of the project is just over $130 million, with UWF requesting $32.5 million from Triumph. Planned activities include hiring data analysts, software engineers, and research scientists; building out lab space for both centers in a new research facility; renovating existing space for computational research; and purchasing advanced computing infrastructure. UWF has committed to securing a minimum of $73 million in grants and contracts over the 10-year project period and will contribute more than $24 million from non-grant sources in direct support. On behalf of the university, Dr. Kuhl expressed gratitude for the opportunity to enhance its research capacity and respectfully requested the board's approval of the term sheet.

Mrs. Weiss asked whether UWF currently has an ABET-accredited engineering program. Dr. Kuhl confirmed that UWF offers mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and computer engineering programs, all of which are ABET accredited. Additionally, UWF recently launched a civil engineering program, which is not yet accredited but will be seeking ABET accreditation. Cybersecurity and computer science programs have also received accreditation. Mrs. Weiss noted her interest in the topic, mentioning her service on the FSU family board and the USF board for civil engineering.

Mr. Rigdon made a motion to approve the term sheet and advance to grant award negotiations, and Mr. Corr seconded the motion. Chair Trumbull asked if anyone from the public wished to be heard on the proposal. No one came forward to speak. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)**

Mrs. Fry then introduced a **Proposed Term Sheet for Proposal #327 – Gulf County School District – Digital Technology Training – up to $6,886,150** for investment in grantee's elementary and secondary schools' technology education catalyst grant that will result in at least 6,000 net new CTE credentials.

Chair Trumbull invited Melissa Hancock, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Curriculum at Gulf County Schools, to speak. Ms. Hancock provided an update on Gulf County's efforts to expand technology training and certifications for all students in grades 3 through 12, as well as for every teacher in the district. She noted that the district has already hired a Career and Technical Education (CTE) director and a CTE teacher at each school using district funds. In October, students in grades 5 through 9 earned 70 certifications, and plans are in place to train all teachers in artificial intelligence. Additionally, 24 technology teachers will receive specialized training on integrating technology into core curriculum classes. Hancock emphasized that these initiatives represent foundational work in preparation for the grant.

Mrs. Weiss made a motion to approve the term sheet and advance to grant award negotiations, and Mr. Rigdon seconded the motion. Chair Trumbull asked if anyone from the public wished to be heard on the proposal. No one came forward to speak. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)**

Mrs. Fry then introduced a **Proposed Term Sheet for Proposal #353 – Pensacola State College – Workforce Training Center – up to $3,250,000** for renovation of existing Building 21 on the Grantee's main campus and to support creation of non-credit and credit workforce training programs that will allow it to deliver at least 970 net new industry recognized certifications.

Chair Trumbull then invited Dr. Debbie Douma, Dean of Grants and Federal Programs at Pensacola State College, to speak. Dr. Douma stated that she had no new updates to share but expressed appreciation for staff support throughout the process and noted that she looks forward to finalizing the project. She invited any questions from attendees and mentioned the need to identify an AI certification to include.

Mr. Rigdon made a motion to approve the term sheet and advance to grant award negotiations, and Mr. Humphreys seconded the motion. Chair Trumbull asked if anyone from the public wished to be heard on the proposal. No one came forward to speak. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)**

Mrs. Fry finally introduced a **Proposed Term Sheet for Proposal #339 – Tallahassee State College – Wakulla Workforce Development – up to $10,007,946** for the construction of the new Wakulla Workforce Development facility at the Wakulla Environment Institute to support its Healthcare and Teacher Preparation Expansion initiative that will allow it to deliver at least 3,695 net new CTE credentials and training in health sciences.

Chair Trumbull invited Ms. Brendie Hawkins, Grants and Special Projects Director at Tallahassee State College, to speak. Hawkins expressed appreciation for staff support and extended special thanks to Cori Henderson for assistance in advancing the college's efforts. When asked by Mr. Corr about the $16 million grant and matching funds, Ms. Hawkins explained that the team is applying for a grant through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) under the 2025 Disaster Supplemental Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). She has been working closely with Greg Vaday, the EDA representative in Atlanta, and noted that the application is approximately 97% complete. The remaining requirement is three letters of commitment, which she expects to receive by the end of next week. Once those letters are secured, the application will be submitted for approval. She emphasized that the approach has been strategic, securing support from the Wakulla County Board of Commissioners, the Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Commerce, and the Appalachee Regional Planning Council. Ms. Hawkins expressed confidence in the likelihood of obtaining the grant.

Ms. Skelton added that the Triumph funding is contingent on receiving the EDA grant, and conversely, the EDA funding is contingent on the Triumph grant. She explained that Ms. Henderson is working closely with Mr. Vaday in Atlanta, along with Dr. Harper, to ensure that the language in the commitment letter does not exceed the Board's authority. The EDA requires a full guarantee that the organization's funding will always be available, which is challenging because Triumph funding depends on continued legislative support. Similarly, EDA funding is subject to federal budget uncertainties, including potential government shutdowns. Ms. Skelton noted that these factors have made discussions with the federal government particularly complex.

Mrs. Weiss made a motion to approve the term sheet and advance to grant award negotiations, and Mr. Corr seconded the motion. Chair Trumbull asked if anyone from the public wished to be heard on the proposal. No one came forward to speak. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote (5-0.)**

Public Comment

Chair Trumbull asked if anyone from the public would like to speak about any items related to Triumph process, policies, and practices. Seeing none, the Board proceeded to closing remarks.

Closing Remarks

Mrs. Weiss expressed excitement about seeing Wakulla, Gulf, and Franklin counties represented at the meeting, noting the importance of including smaller counties and

Tallahassee State College. She emphasized that the college plays a significant role in the Wakulla community and could greatly benefit from Triumph assistance. She also praised the staff for their excellent work and the quality of the reviews conducted prior to the meeting.

Mr. Rigdon thanked President Ponder for hosting and shared enthusiasm about touring the nursing facility. He echoed earlier comments about the importance of directing funds to rural counties, stating that this aligns with the Board's mission to support areas in need. Rigdon recalled advice from his predecessor to prioritize smaller counties and expressed appreciation that the Board has done so. He also thanked Becca Hardin from Bay County for her efforts and noted that the marine-related project will complement existing work in the area. He concluded by expressing gratitude for the opportunity to help distribute funds and see the resulting benefits.

Mr. Corr reflected on how projects evolve over time and shared his anticipation for future developments. He envisioned electric boats being built in Panama City, operated by autonomous software developed at IHMC, and controlled by Navy operators, with design input from American Magic and the Wave Lab in Pensacola. He remarked on the exciting possibilities for the next decade and humorously noted his continued interest in technology, referencing his habit of reading Popular Mechanics.

Mr. Humphreys echoed previous remarks about the positive impact on smaller counties and expressed enthusiasm for the innovative boat project in Bay County, describing it as cutting-edge and unique. He highlighted the potential for attracting technology companies to the region and expressed curiosity about the AI recommendation. Mr. Humphreys thanked the hosts and looked forward to visiting the nursing department and learning more about upcoming projects.

Chair Trumbull closed by thanking attendees and expressing optimism about the future impact of the funded projects. He noted that it will be exciting to see the progress over the next decade and referenced a recent Florida Trend article that highlighted the Board's work. Trumbull praised the staff for their outstanding performance, citing the employee review process as evidence of their excellence. He concluded by thanking everyone for attending and expressed anticipation for the next meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:01 p.m.