FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
APPROVED MINUTES

Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 3:00 pm
Hybrid Meeting
6302 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Suite 100
Tampa, FL 33619

MEETING ATTENDANCE
Facilitator: Dr. Jacquelyn Jenkins, Chair

Committee Members Present:
Dr. Jacquelyn Jenkins*, Wynton Geary*, Noelle Wostal*, Dr. Daira Barakat*, and Felicia Thomas*

Committee Members Absent:
None.

ELCH Board Members Present:
None.

ELCHC Staff:
Dr. Fred Hicks, Gary Meyer, Lissette Godwin, Sabrina Ruiz, Abigail Perez and Nancy Will

Other Attendees:
Alex Ochoa, and Katie MacFarlan

**Indicates attendance via Zoom meeting platform.*

CALL TO ORDER

Quorum Verification
Noting a quorum had been established, Chair Dr. Jenkins called the meeting to order at 3:01 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No, public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes for October 8, 2025, Finance Committee Regular Meeting

Noelle Wostal called for a motion to approve the October 8, 2025, Regular Finance Committee meeting minutes. Dr. Daira Barakat made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution for Approval of CLASS Assessor Contractor
Gary Meyer, Chief Financial Officer, presented Action Item A as outlined in the agenda packet.

Noelle Wostal made a motion to approve the resolution for approval of CLASS Assessor Contractor. Dr. Daira Barakat made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution for Approval of Young Children Summit Space for Rental
Dr. Frederick Hicks, Chief Executive Officer, presented Action Item B as outlined in the agenda packet.

Noelle Wostal made a motion to approve the allocation of funds for Young Children Summit Space for Rental. Dr. Daira Barakat made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Gary Meyer, Chief Financial Officer, presented the financial report and year-to-date financials through November 30, 2025, as outlined in the agenda packet.

Mr. Meyer shared the following:

- School Readiness (SR) enrollment is currently at 10,765 compared to 13,060 this time last year. It was shared the waitlist was down to 160 children from a high of 4,551 on August 25, 2025.
- Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) enrollment is 9,265 compared to 9,528 this time last year. It was shared that the 3% decrease is lower than the statewide trend of 4%.
- Funding for the remainder of the fiscal year is $80 million and tracking to underspend by $750,000, as the waitlist will soon be exhausted. It was shared forecasting was overspending on the Special Needs rate, ELCHC requested obligation and received an additional $39,000 on January 9, 2026, for a total of $448,000.
- Grant Agreement Targets table was spoken to from the agenda packet.
- Department of Early Learning (DEL) Fiscal Monitoring from the period of October 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, by Thomas Howell Ferguson was completed. It was shared that the preview of results indicates zero findings and one recommendation.

Dr. Hicks and the committee took time to recognize the outstanding work of CFO, Gary Meyer and his team.

- Forvis Mazars External Audit currently, taking place with the hopes of presenting results to the committee at the next finance committee meeting in late March. It was shared the deadline to the federal offices for this reporting is set for March 31.

- Looking ahead to Fiscal Year 2027 the proposed draft of the State Governor's budget has SR down $100M from $1.2B next year. The ELCHC's proposed allocation has been reduced by $2.6M to date. Dr. Hicks confirmed that this reduction will likely be offset by a recount of more recent children enrolled.

Mr. Meyer walked the committee through budget to actuals through November 30, 2025, as presented in the agenda packet.

Mr. Meyer shared with the committee the need for ELCHC to move to another location in which to reduce office footprint as a measure of cost savings. Mr. Meyer shared information on the three state-approved lease brokers that early learning coalitions can be used for the purpose of moving offices. Mr. Meyer shared that a formal request for proposal (RFP) has been submitted to all three state- approved lease brokers and the ELCHC team will narrow it down to two of the brokers. Mr. Meyer shared with the committee that leadership would be meeting with the two brokers to then select the one that would better understand the specific needs of ELCHC.

There was committee discussion on possible office spaces within the Hillsborough community.

Mr. Meyer thanks the committee for their input, as Board input is important for this critical decision around the future office footprint in Hillsborough County.

CEO REPORT

Dr. Frederick, Hicks CEO ELCHC gave reports on the following:

Legislative Update

Hillsborough Day 2026

Dr. Hicks shared he hoped the budget cut to the upcoming fiscal year would be smaller than last fiscal year's reduction. Dr. Hicks stated that the ELCHC worked through the waitlist of children and families and those that met the qualifications were served.

Dr. Hicks thanked all ELCHC Board members that attended and participated in Hillsborough Day 2026. Dr. Hicks stressed the importance of representation to the state's legislators.

Waitlist Update

Dr. Hicks shared CFO, Gary Meyer, explained this agenda item in his reporting.

Young Children Summit 2026

Dr. Hicks shared that the date is secured for this year's Young Children's Summit, September 24, 2026 at The Motor Enclave with a tentative date of October 3, 2026, for part II at The Skills Center.

Motion was made to add an additional agenda item under CEO Report- Breakdown for PM 2 Update by Noelle Wostal. Wynton Geary made a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Hicks explained the testing process and the increase of VPK score requirements to 707. Dr. Hicks shared the importance of identifying children who are close to the new required score and working with these children and their families to ensure success.

ANNOUCEMENT

Chair Dr. Jenkins shared the next ELCHC, Finance Committee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2026.

Chair Dr. Jenkins also shared the next Day of Play event scheduled for Saturday, February 21, 2026, from 10:00 am -12:00 noon at Sadie Gibbs Martin Community Center in Plant City.

ADJOURNMENT

Citing no further business, Noelle Wostal made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:39 pm. Felicia Thomas made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

Read and approved by:

_X Robert Hyde ________________________ 21/07/2026

ELCHC Board Member Robert Hyde, ELCHC Board of Directors Secretary *Date*

Signature: Robert Hyde
Robert Hyde (Jul 21, 2026 12:26:28 EDT)

Email: robert.hyde@suncoastcreditunion.com

February 4, 2026-ELCHC Finance Committee Draft Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report 2026-07-21

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