

Health Care Innovation Council
Meeting Minutes

February 5, 2026, 1 p.m. ET

Virtual meeting

Opening. Lt. Governor Collins opened the meeting, greeted the members and made introductory remarks concerning the Councils' focus on solving problems in Florida and shared his experiences in traveling the state and meeting with incredible companies, including new companies moving to our state. He posed a question about whether Florida is optimizing health care, and if not, how do we solve this? He summarized the topics on the meeting agenda.

Roll Call. Dr. Spencer called the roll and the members participating included:

Secretary S. Harris
Director R. Asztalos
Secretary M. Branham
Dr. Ken Scheppeke for Dr. J. Ladapo
Morgan Jones for Director Taylor Hatch
Director R. Asztalos

Dr. D. German
Dr. R. Diaz
Dr. A. Rastogi
Dr. R. Douthett
Mr. T. Sabatino
Mr. G. Fraser

Quorum was established.

Meeting Minutes. Chair Collins asked for and received a motion to approve the minutes for the November 12, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes approved. Approval of the minutes was followed by member introductions.

Agenda Items.

Dr. Spencer shared with the group that her role in the Department is changing. She introduced two staff members:

- Jennifer Cooke is a project manager and supporting the HCI Program and the Council
- Jeff Johnson is taking Dr. Spencer's role as the interim Director for the Division of Public Health Statistics and Performance Management.

Dr. Spencer shared a slide presentation for the members that included a summary of the loan application process, eligibility requirements, and scoring rubric. She then summarized the number of applications received (16) and the number eligible for funding (7).

She provided an overview of each of the following seven eligible projects:

1. Jackson Hospital- Surgical Robotics Program Expansion
2. Calhoun Liberty Hospital- Full Patient Capacity and Health Innovation Project
3. Hendry Regional Medical Center- 340b Drug Savings Proposal
4. Special Friends, Inc.- Home Health Services Proposal

5. Open Arms & Heart Services- Integrated Pediatric and Disability Care Hub
6. Blackstone Medical Services- Mobile App for Home Sleep Testing
7. Old Cutler Retirement- Behavioral Assisted Living Expansion and Innovation Initiative

The summary included in the slide presentation included an overview of the project, the amount of the loan request, the score for the project based on the established scoring rubric, and details on loan criteria including originality, technology integration, workforce development, scalability, and impact.

Discussion. Council members asked a variety of questions regarding project details, e.g., the number of patient beds, matching funds, continuation of certain federal funds, and the extent of rural or underserved populations being served. Dr. Spencer said the team would get back to the members with answers to these questions.

Council members engaged in an extended discussion following the project overview. The discussion focused on the loan program's available funding, eligibility by those licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration, the program's purpose to support innovation, and different ways to consider innovation. For example, a project that brings technology to a rural area may not be new/innovative except that its use in a rural or underserved area may itself be innovative. Lt. Governor Collins also expressed appreciation for all the excellent work by staff for today's meeting. He asked if the application review process could be more efficient in an electronic format that would allow Council members to participate in review and scoring. Dr. Spencer agreed that the team could work in that direction.

Lt. Governor Collins asked Dr. Spencer how long it would take for her team to get answers to the members' questions. She replied that the team would have to take some questions back to the applicants to obtain answers but that we would begin immediately. He shared his thoughts about wanting macro solutions for Florida and these applications have a micro focus. He asked for a motion to hold the applications until their questions were answered. A motion was offered and seconded.

Public Comment. Time for the meeting expired without comments by members of the public attending.

Closure. The meeting concluded at 2:30pm, ET.

Guests for the meeting included:

DOH Staff

Mary Alice Nye
Jeff Johnson
Melissa Jordan
Christina Omran
Sheri Creel
Jennifer Cooke

Other Guests

Caleb Joiner,
Aleskia Fernandez
Trey Fenske
Christina Lenz
Cari Ann Eyre
Hannah Meyers

Nancy Taylor

Several guests were identified only by telephone numbers and are not included here.

DRAFT