



WCCY MINUTES

Wakulla County Coalition for Youth

Date | time 03/04/26 12:30 pm-1:30 p.m. | *Meeting called to order by* Kimberly Mattox

In Attendance

Karen Zak, Carl Roach, Kimberly Mattox, Caden Gruebel, Amanda Gruebel, Yolanda Carlson, Patrick Allison, Chandra Godwin, Michelle Peltier, Lynda Kinsey, Tara Cockman, Clayton Bania, Erika McDaniel, Karley Gordon, Lottie Roy, Amber Volano, Lisa Sherry, Jennifer Phillips, Emily Kohler, Matthew Carter, Olivia Piazza, Tamika Rich

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from February 2026 Meeting – A motion was made by Caden Gruebel and seconded by Carl Roach to approve. The motion carried.

Agenda Items/Presentation

1. Karen Zak on Drug-Free Communities Grant:

- Drug-Free Communities (DFC) grant goals: sustaining WCCY long-term and reducing substance use in Wakulla County through prevention and education efforts.
 - The coalition is completing its mid-year report (including the Year Four action plan and budget), due March 17; Year Four begins October 1.
 - The “Too Good for Drugs” curriculum has begun at Coast Charter School (grades 5–8), with two lessons completed; the 10-week program runs through early May.
 - The “Future Leaders of Wakulla” youth group has covered leadership topics and will host upcoming sessions on resume writing and CPR. Their teen town hall, “Prevention Before Intervention,” has been rescheduled to May 16 at the Extension Office and will include a panel, dinner break, and free community dance.
 - Posters, planners, and newsletter sign-ups were promoted, and volunteers are needed for Wakulla Wonderful on March 14.
- At the CADCA conference, Karen and Bonnie participated in Capitol Hill Day, meeting with aides for Rick Scott and Ashley Moody. They advocated for prevention funding, noting cost savings, and supported extending the DFC grant to 15 years and restricting hemp-derived products like Delta-8.
 - Collaboration with other coalitions provided ideas such as student clothing closets and retailer partnerships to reduce underage drinking.

2. Kimberly Mattox on Fundraising Committee Update:

- **Champions for Change Brunch**
 - A new Elavon online donation platform is active, allowing direct and optional anonymous contributions via QR code.
 - The Champions for Change Brunch will be held May 2 (10 AM–1 PM) at the Wakulla Community Center to honor volunteers and raise funds through a silent auction. Sponsorships, nominations, and support are encouraged.

- Donations and support have been received from several local businesses and organizations, with additional sponsorships and catering partnerships in progress.
 - A Firehouse subs share night is being finalized, a Dairy Queen even is in planning, and a summer back-to-school event is being developed.

County Report

Josh Lawhon was not in attendance.

Sheriff Report

Lt. Tom Mallon/Chase Savary:

- Will be participating in upcoming community events like Wakulla Wonderful and the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

School District Report

Simeon Nelson was not in attendance.

Treasurer Report

Lottie Roy:

Lottie presented the quarterly financial report covering December through February, dated March 4, with a beginning balance of \$4,026.77. During this period, a total of \$390 in donations was collected from WCCY members. As referenced in prior meeting minutes, these funds were combined with an additional contribution from the coalition, and an extra \$10 was added to round the total to an even \$500, which was then donated to Operation Wakulla. Expenses for the quarter included standard operational costs such as monthly bank maintenance fees totaling \$45, a Sunbiz registration fee of \$61.25, and the annual P.O. Box renewal fee of \$69.15. All expenses and checks, including the \$500 donation, have cleared the account, and the account remains in good standing. Lottie noted that donations and sponsorships have been coming in slowly but steadily, including a recent contribution from Hair by Suzanne and a \$75 sponsorship from the Leon-Wakulla Retired Educators Association. Additionally, the coalition received 10 passes to the Gulf Specimen Aquarium for future use. She reported that the new Elavon online donation platform is now fully connected to the coalition's bank account, with the organization's debit card on file to process transactions. Finally, she confirmed that the coalition's mailbox has been checked and is currently empty, with all items accounted for.

Partner Reports

Chandra Godwin (FL Dept of Health/SWAT): SWAT will host a community movie night on March 13 featuring *Lilo & Stitch*. The event is open to families and the entire community, with gates opening at 6:00 PM and the movie beginning at 7:00 PM. The event will be held outdoors at Calvary's open space, and organizers are coordinating for three to four food trucks to be present so families can purchase dinner on-site. SWAT will also provide free popcorn and water. Additionally, SWAT will participate in the St. Patrick's Day Parade and continues to hold regular meetings at local schools, including recently reestablishing meetings at the high school. Chandra also emphasized the importance of increasing awareness and correcting misconceptions about SWAT among students.

Caden Gruebel (Future Leaders of Wakulla/4H): Wakulla County will celebrate its birthday on March 14 at 10:00 AM at 84 Cedar Avenue. The event will include food vendors, music, and a historical timeline presentation for the community.

Clayton Bania (UF/IFAS Extension): Wakulla Wonderful will take place on March 14th. He also noted that registration is now open for upcoming 4-H summer youth camps and offered to provide additional details regarding fees and registration.

Tara Cockman (Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition): The organization is currently developing its five-year service delivery plan, focusing on three priority areas: access to care, community education, and fatherhood engagement. She emphasized efforts to expand their presence in Wakulla County and invited collaboration from partners interested in improving outcomes for pregnant women, infants, and families.

Patrick Allison (Caroline's Agape Project): There are several upcoming initiatives. He invited members to attend a Child Abuse Prevention Month kickoff event on April 1 at 10:00 AM at Azalea Park, which will include a pinwheel garden display, a national symbol for child abuse prevention. He noted that media outlets are expected to attend and that additional sponsors are still being sought. He also shared that the Wakulla County Chamber of Commerce will host its inaugural Nonprofit Resource Network meeting on March 11 at 3:00 PM, designed to bring nonprofits and businesses together to share resources, collaborate, and improve service coordination across the county.

Lynda Kinsey (Wakulla Sun): Highlighted the newspaper's ongoing support of community initiatives, including promotional efforts for WCCY events. She noted that their contributions, including advertising, can exceed \$3,000 in value and suggested that WCCY include sponsor recognition in event advertisements to strengthen future sponsorship relationships.

Carl Roach (CareerSource): Reported recent outreach efforts at Wakulla High School and Wakulla Christian School, where he connected students with workforce services and opportunities. He also announced an upcoming On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Apprenticeship Showcase event, targeting youth ages 16–24, where multiple employers will be present to offer career pathway opportunities with no prior experience required.

Yolanda Carlson (NWF Health): Encouraged members to utilize and promote their resource website, which connects individuals to local services, especially those offering free or sliding-scale support. She shared that NWF Health serves as the managing entity for behavioral health, mental health, and child protection services across the region and announced an upcoming event in April focused on the CORE Network and community services.

Erika McDaniel (Healthy Families Wakulla/Franklin/Gulf): She shared that the program provides free, voluntary in-home support services, including parent education and child development screenings for expecting and new parents. She also noted that additional information is available through their Facebook page and outreach materials.

Karley Gordon (Survive and Thrive Advocacy Center): Their regular monthly training will not take place this month, an upcoming STAC (Stop the Trafficking and Awareness Certification) training is planned for April. She encouraged members to attend and stated that additional details will be shared soon.

Lottie Roy (LWREA): Shared that their organization received 39 submissions for their fifth-grade essay contest, with 35 entries coming from Wakulla County students at Shadeville Elementary. She announced that one student placed in the competition and that an Ice Cream Social will be held on April 7 to recognize students, parents, and teachers.

Amber Volano (Help Me Grow): Reported that while there are no immediate Wakulla-specific events, the organization is looking to expand its "Books, Balls, and Blocks" developmental screening events and is seeking community partners interested in hosting or collaborating.

Lisa Sherry (DISC Village): Shared updates on medication safety education efforts, offering 30-minute presentations for youth, parents, and community groups focused on reducing risks associated with unused or improperly stored medications. She noted that participants receive disposal tools such as Deterra and DisposeRx and encouraged organizations to schedule presentations.

Jennifer Phillips (North Florida Learning Center): Reported that their homeschool learning pods in both Wakulla and Leon counties are currently at full capacity and operating successfully.

Emily Kohler (Big Bend AHEC): Shared several health initiatives, including tobacco cessation programs offering Walmart gift card incentives for participation, with both in-person and virtual options available. She also announced an upcoming Tai Chi program at the Wakulla Senior Center beginning in July, as well as ongoing services such as diabetes education and assistance with Florida KidCare applications.

Matthew Carter (DJJ Circuit 2): Introduced himself as a new member of the coalition and expressed interest in becoming more actively involved.

Olivia Piazza (Safe Kids Big Bend): Highlighted Child Abuse Prevention Month in April and shared that pinwheels, the national symbol, can be obtained through Prevent Child Abuse Florida. She also announced plans for a Child Passenger Safety (CARSI) certification training in Wakulla County, anticipated for early June. Preventchildabuseflorida.org

Tamika Rich (Wakulla County Christian Coalition): Expressed appreciation to community partners for their support during the recent African American History celebration events, which included a gala, parade, park celebration, and literacy-focused activities for youth. She noted the event continues to grow each year and thanked media partners for their coverage.

Caden Gruebel moved to adjourn the meeting. Carl Roach seconded the motion. The motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:11 PM.

Next Meeting

April 1st, 2026 at 12:30 pm at Wakulla County Public Library & Virtually