

Agency Snapshot: Space Florida¹

by Suzanne Van Wyk

In May 2006, the Florida Legislature passed the Space Florida Act, consolidating Florida's three existing space entities (Florida Space Authority, Florida Space Research Institute, and Florida Aerospace Finance Corporation) into a single new organization. Space Florida was established by the legislature on September 1, 2006, as an independent special district created by chapter 331, Florida Statutes. Like *Enterprise Florida*, it is not a state agency subject to chapter 120, Florida Statutes.

Space Florida is Florida's "aero-space economic development organization," committed to attracting and expanding the next generation of space industry businesses. Space Florida was created for the purpose of fostering the growth and economic development of the space industry in Florida. As such, Space Florida fosters economic development activities and projects to expand and diversify domestic and international opportunities related to the space industry. Towards that end, Space Florida supports, assists, facilitates, and/or consults on space-industry-related needs with governments and private businesses that work toward developing specific projects or components of the space industry, including the development of a space tourism industry. Space Florida's assistance and support includes monetary support, through grants or loans, for space-related development.

Past Project Highlights:

Northrup Grumman Expansion – In October 2015, the U.S. Air Force selected Northrup Grumman to build the nation's next long-range strike bomber, now known as the

B-21 Raider. Northrup Grumman chose to locate the project at Orlando Melbourne International Airport, where it constructed a 220,000 square foot facility and hired some 425 employees.

OneWeb Satellites Manufacturing – In 2016, OneWeb Satellites, a joint venture of OneWeb and Airbus Defence and Space, unveiled its decision to build a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Exploration Park, a Space Florida facility just outside of Kennedy Space Center. OneWeb is mass-producing satellites at the facility at a rate of two per day. OneWeb plans to deploy an innovative constellation of 900 satellites which will allow it to offer high speed internet access anywhere in the world. OneWeb successfully launched its first six broadband satellites in February 2019, and in March raised \$1.25 billion to continue mass production of the satellites, bringing it closer to its goal of "bridging the global divide." The current plan is to allow customer demos in 2020 and provide full global commercial coverage by 2021.

Governance:

Space Florida is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors (the "Board"), 12 of whom are the private sector members of the Enterprise Florida Board of Directors appointed by the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Governor serves as chair of the Board.

The governing policies are adopted by resolution of the Board, the most recent update of which was adopted September 12, 2012. The Board meets regularly (at least once a month).

Executives:

President and CEO – Frank DiBello
 VP, Treasurer, & Chief Investment Officer – Howard Haug
 CFO & VP of Administration – Denise Swanson
 Senior VP & General Manager – Jim Kuzma
 Senior VP Business Development & Marketing – Bernie McShea
 VP Government & External Affairs – Dale Ketcham
 VP Special Projects & Strategic Initiatives – Kevin Williams
 VP Spaceport Operations – Mark Bontrager
 VP Government Relations – Sharon Spratt
 VP Commercial Space – Todd Romberger
 VP Research & Innovation – Tony Gannon

Corporate Office/Physical Location:

505 Odyssey Way, Suite 300
 Exploration Park, FL 32953
 Main Number: 321-730-5301
 Fax: 321-730-5307
 Email: info@spaceflorida.gov

South Campus Office (Cape Canaveral)

100 Space Port Way
 Cape Canaveral, FL 32920
 Fax: 321-323-5070

Endnote

¹ Information for this article was obtained from www.spaceflorida.gov and www.oneweb.world

