Florida Blockchain Task Force Meeting
Meeting Date: December 13, 2019
110 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida

Agenda

I. Introduction
II. New Member Introductions
III. Adoption of Minutes
IV. Presentation: Industry Applications of Blockchain Technology
V. Presentation: Identifying the Technical Skills to Develop Blockchain Technology in Secondary and Post-secondary Institutions
VI. Presentation: Opportunities/Risks Presented by Blockchain Technology in Local and State Governments
VII. Open Discussion
VIII. Other Business & Public Testimony
IX. Adjourn

Call to Order at 1:01 p.m.
Meeting called to order and welcome by Chair Ron Brisé

Roll Call at 1:02 p.m.
Roll was called at 1:02 p.m. by task force staff

Members present:
Commissioner Altmaier
Ron Brisé
Charles Ghini
Jason Holloway
Director Ken Lawson
Brad Levine
Gary Ruderman

Members Excused:
Woody Pollack
Director Terry Rhodes
Secretary Jonathan Satter

I. Introduction at 1:02 p.m.

Chair Brisé introduced the content of the agenda, including: studying projects and cases from other state and local governments to improve the system in the state of Florida; identifying the technical skills

to develop blockchain technology in secondary and post-secondary institutions; and opportunities/risks presented by blockchain technology.

II. New Member Introductions at 1:03

New task force members were asked to introduce themselves, comment on their professional background, their interest in blockchain technology, and what they hope to gain from the work of the task force. The following provides summary comments from members.

- Commissioner Altmaier introduced himself and shared his excitement for being on The Florida Blockchain Task Force. The Commissioner spoke about the insurance industry's interest in this emerging technology. He said that he will keep that, as well as his regulatory perspective, in mind to add to the work of the task force.
- Mr. Jason Holloway introduced himself and shared his background with the Florida legislature. He described his experience in digital currencies and with a blockchain think-tank.
- Mr. Brad Levine introduced himself and shared his background as a technology entrepreneur. He described his experience with technology and how it progresses from ideas to implementation into society. He explained his excitement of being on this task force through different lenses, including his role with Florida Atlantic University, where he is on the Board of Trustees.
- Mr. Gary Ruderman described his 25 years of experience as a certified public accountant and how he hopes to use his background to help this task force.

III. Adoption of Minutes at 1:08 p.m.

Members were provided with the meeting minutes in advance of the meeting to allow time for review. There was a motion from Vice Chair Ken Lawson to adopt the minutes, and a second by Mr. Charles Ghini. The minutes were adopted.

Motion to Adopt Minutes by Vice Chair Ken Lawson, Second by Charles Ghini
Vote: All in favor, 0 opposed
Resolved: Motion carried

IV. Presentation: Industry Applications of Blockchain Technology

Pete Teigen – IBM Services at 1:09 p.m.

Mr. Pete Teigen illustrated a world where blockchain technology has been implemented into the government sector and explained the net benefits from this system. He then described the three main questions with blockchain: whether blockchain technology is the best solution to the problem, addressing the nature of blockchain and how it is a "team sport" instead of a centralized authority, and describing the need for trust in reference to blockchain. Mr. Teigen showed IBM's involvement with the food industry using blockchain technology by explaining the improvements to the industry after implementing blockchain technology. He then described how North Carolina used the blockchain technology to improve an active shooter situation.

V. Presentation: Identifying the Technical Skills to Develop Blockchain Technology in Secondary and Post-Secondary Institutions

Dr. Buvaneshwaran (Eshwar) Venugopal – University of Central Florida at 1:45 p.m.

Dr. Eshwar's presentation was a summary of the current and hopeful programs at UCF referring to FinTech and Blockchain. Various levels of degrees are available from undergraduate to masters in the FinTech field. He explained that UCF is dedicated to research and getting students involved with blockchain technology.

Q1: Mr. Gary Ruderman asked if getting approval for coursework was slowing down Dr. Eshwar and how he keeps the content relevant.

Answer: Dr. Eshwar stated that they update the course every year and it just means he must work harder.

Dr. Kaushik Dutta/ Dr. Shivendu Shivendu – University of South Florida at 1:59 p.m.

Dr. Dutta presented the background of himself and his colleague Dr. Shivendu. Dr. Dutta began by explaining how Blockchain at USF began. He then discussed the different Blockchain initiatives at USF currently. Dr. Dutta finished by describing the hopeful futures of Blockchain at USF.

Dr. Shivendu presented the key technology pillars of blockchain, the different opportunities it produces, and the need for collaborative efforts. Dr. Shivendu argued that the pillars of blockchain solves problems relating to consistency and validation of data. He began to explain the implementation of blockchain into the current and future workforces and how blockchain provides new opportunities to them. Finally, he introduced the topic of coordinated efforts in which he described the need for expansion of resources in the field as well as some governmental leverage to propel society into a more efficient future.

Ken Baldauf – Florida State University at 2:27 p.m.

Mr. Ken Baldauf presented the many different research projects going on at FSU. He described a trip that FSU takes to IBM's conference referring to blockchain. FSU sends students to this conference to spark interest and to expand their understanding of blockchain. He also referred to many of the student's research projects that relate to the effects of blockchain on different institutions.

Dr. Mark Jamison – University of Florida at 2:35 p.m.

Dr. Jamison began by emphasizing Florida's comparative advantages and how blockchain should be used to accelerate production in those areas. Dr. Jamison argued that the way to integrate blockchain effectively into these areas is to change the legal framework, governmental applications, and entrepreneurial climate. He then discussed the world leaders in use of blockchain. He listed countries such as Estonia, Bermuda, Catalonia, China, and more to describe the ways these countries are using blockchain effective. Dr. Jamison continued by addressing the university roles in blockchain use. He stated that research is UF's top priority regarding blockchain. Dr. Jamison predicted that blockchain will be an instrumental part of the next greatest innovate breakthrough.

Questions After the Presentations:

Q1: Vice Chair Ken Lawson asked how the universities are collaborating and trying to leverage each other in terms of research on blockchain.

Answer: Dr. Jamison and Mr. Ken Baldauf described the relationship between universities in terms of research and innovation sharing.

Q2: Mr. Brad Levine asked if there is any way to collaborate and incorporate blockchain within the university system and used an example like the student ledger system.

Answer: Dr. Kaushik Dutta answered that blockchain can be used to ease the complications with students that come from many different institutions. He also explained how the screening process for hiring purposes could be improved using blockchain.

Q3: Mr. Brad Levine asked if there were people on the panel that could use their university and its resources to be the catalyst for a multi-university project.

Answer: Dr. Kaushik Dutta stated that with the proper incentives and resources it could be done. Dr. Eshwar added that there are collaborative efforts to keep track of student scores using blockchain. Jason Holloway added that perhaps diplomas could potentially be dispersed using blockchain. Dr. Jamison stated that he could fully commit to a project, but the University would not endorse it. Mr. Brad Levine disagreed with Dr. Jamison's remarks and said that with his experience at FAU he could see it working.

Q4: Commissioner Altmaier asked what kind of career students who graduate from these blockchain programs could expect.

Answer: Dr. Shivendu answered that after the last three semesters he had two students working in the field with a couple more hoping to get into the field. Shivendu explained the complex and difficult nature of translating these degrees into careers because of the nature of blockchain technology in relation to business.

Q5: Ms. Robin Westcott asked if any on the panel had looked into colleges that are heavily dependent on data from both public and private sector to find consortiums or what consortiums would make good targets for those colleges.

Answer: Dr. Eshwar answered that the need to get data in the blockchains to talk to each other is important, which means buying information from both the public and private sector. Dr. Jamison added that Florida has data collection infrastructure for hurricanes that could use blockchain technology to help share that data. He added to say that UF is working with businesses and entrepreneurs to aid in the relationship of their student's hopeful future employers.

Q6: Chair Ron Brisé asked if the academic panel had any recommendations for the task force panel.

Answer: Dr. Shivendu stated that having a department or task force to take initiative on this project would build confidence and kickstart the project in an effective way. Mr. Ken Baldauf answered that the

vision of collaborative work between universities would be ideal. Dr. Jamison stated that governmental initiative and leadership using resources would be an effective way to insert blockchain in Florida.

Student Experience on Blockchain: at 3:08 p.m.

In a video, UCF student Cooper Skat described his interest in UCF's FinTech program and how it has allowed the blend of finance and technology. In his opinion, it is easier for an IT major to learn business than for a business major to learn IT. FinTech has improved the existing finance programs as well as building bridges between finance and computer science majors.

FSU students Mario Bajric and Sean Psulkowski shared their experience with blockchain and reasons for wanting to pursue the field of knowledge and careers. Mr. Bajric is a self-taught blockchain programmer and is excited that blockchain is being discussed. Sean has experience in the engineering field and hopes to use blockchain to identify and prevent counterfeit and fault.

Questions for the Students:

Q1: Commissioner Altmaier asked what it was about blockchain that made the students decide to study blockchain and potentially pursue a career in the field.

Answer: Mr. Psulkowski answered that the potential for this new technology is undiscovered and the amount of resources and time that is required on the research side is a challenge but, he does not regret it.

Mr. Bajric then responded by suggesting that he thinks that in the next 5-10 years, all new industries will utilize blockchain. They believe that this is a good opportunity to get involved in an emerging technology.

Q2: Vice Chair Ken Lawson asked if the students had any recommendations on how to set up future students for better understanding blockchain.

Answer: Mr. Psulkowski answered that building bridges between different fields of study would be the best thing for the progression of blockchain in different fields.

Mr. Bajric answered that skepticism in the media has been detrimental and that a base level of understanding is important to setting up the future students.

Q3: Mr. Jason Holloway asked if the students believe that more collaboration between businesses and the university would be beneficial to the progression of blockchain.

Answer: Mr. Psulkowski answered yes and explained that this is a safer way for students to enter the field. If the students can see how blockchain is being applied in the different industries, then they can have confidence in trying to find a career.

VI. Presentation: Looking at Opportunities/Risks Presented by Blockchain Technology

Charles Ghini – Florida Blockchain Task Force Member at 3:20 p.m.

Charles Ghini first tackled the question "Why is blockchain significant?" He explained the nature of blockchain and how it has a great track record of not crashing or being hacked. He then discussed that the social relevance will add to blockchain's significance. Ghini further described the similarities between blockchain and the internet, Linux, and Open source. He then began to relate the risks of Open source to the risks of blockchain. The responsibility of security is at question with blockchain Ghini stated as well as, society needs to be careful not to judge technology in its early forms. He transitioned to the duties of the State through blockchain's progression. The State should: be a good customer and active participant, be a consume rand provider, participate in private blockchain, determine what will be helpful for citizens, and strive for homogenous governance. Ghini concluded by briefly summarizing his opportunities and risks related to blockchain. His opportunities included openness to new technology, consolidation and coordination with the state, and participation in the development of blockchain. Ghini's believed some of the risks involved with blockchain include acting individually, failing to take risks, and if the state forgets its responsibilities then it could be detrimental.

Questions on Mr. Ghini's Presentation at 3:35 p.m.

Q1: Brad Levine asked for the level of bureaucracy required for handling blockchain effectively.

Answer: Mr. Ghini responded that the State should be the catalyst and should light the fuse initially. He believed a good way to demonstrate and experiment would be to take an effective agency or department and apply blockchain technology to it and see the effects of blockchain on the production in the department.

Ms. Robin Westcott added that she thinks its is important that the state identify and study/implement blockchain technology into Florida's successful industries.

Mr. Ghini agreed with Westcott and then explained that the line on when and how the State should get involved is still undefined and needs to be addressed.

Q2: Mr. Jason Holloway asked if there were any system that Ghini sees that should implement blockchain technology in their field.

Answer: Mr. Ghini stated that he would pick a system that already produces effectively and apply blockchain to it because you eliminate risk in case it fails since the system's old mechanism is effective. He also argued that the State has an important issue with master data management. Choosing a system that can address that problem would be an ideal candidate to utilize the technology.

Presentation: Opportunities/Risks Presented by Blockchain Technology at 3:40 p.m.

Dr. Shivendu began his presentation by addressing the idea that governments too can be customers of innovation and the State should explore blockchain as an investor, facilitator, and regulator.

VII. Open Discussion at 3:45 p.m.

The floor was opened for additional comments from members.

Mr. Jason Holloway suggested that the next meeting address some different fields for application of blockchain.

Ms. Robin Westcott suggested that the task force assemble a design thinking exercise.

Mr. Brad Levine suggested having the meeting in South Florida as well because of the additional interests the southern counties have.

Mr. Charles Ghini suggested the importance of the government keeping the momentum in the long-term for the state being involved.

VIII. Other Business and Public Testimony at 3:50 p.m.

Mr. Samuel Armes, who is the President of the Florida Blockchain Business Association, believed that in terms of education - Middle and High School students cannot be left out. Mr. Armes suggested that they are the ones who will be using the technology and that the best thing for universities to do is partner with the private industry. He also argued that educating investors is important. Mr. Armes also believed incubators are very important. Incubators need to be empowered and lead to implement blockchain.

Q1: Mr. Charles Ghini asked Mr. Armes to clarify what kind of investors he is talking about.

Answer: Mr. Samuel Armes said that it is mostly the businesses who are the investors. Investors who aren't educated on blockchain are less likely to invest in it, which creates a need to educate investors.

Vice Chair Ken Lawson suggested that the task force have a presentation regarding this industry in terms of development. He also suggested universities to use some of the federal funding to invest in a regional project regarding blockchain.

Mr. Jason Holloway explained that the task force need not forget about FinTech, because Florida is losing FinTech investors too.

IX. Adjourned at 3:58 p.m.