

# City of Fort Lauderdale

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## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 5, 2022

1:30 PM

City Hall - City Commission Chambers  
100 North Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

### City Commission Conference Meeting

*FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION*

*DEAN J. TRANTALIS Mayor*

*HEATHER MORAITIS Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District I*

*STEVEN GLASSMAN Commissioner - District II*

*ROBERT L. McKINZIE Commissioner - District III*

*BEN SORENSEN Commissioner - District IV*

*CHRIS LAGERBLOOM, City Manager*

*JOHN HERBST, City Auditor*

*JEFFREY A. MODARELLI, City Clerk*

*ALAIN E. BOILEAU, City Attorney*

## CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 1:42 p.m.

## MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

City Manager Lagerbloom provided an overview of Agenda items and discussed deferring *BUS-1 - Waterway Quality Update - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)* to the January 18, 2022 Commission Conference Meeting. Mayor Trantalis confirmed this Agenda item would be deferred to January 18, 2022.

## QUORUM ESTABLISHED

**Commission Members Present:** Vice Mayor Heather Moraitis, Commissioner Steven Glassman, Commissioner Ben Sorensen and Mayor Dean J. Trantalis

**Excused:** Commissioner Robert L. McKinzie

**Also Present:** City Manager Chris Lagerbloom, City Clerk Jeffrey A. Modarelli, City Attorney Alain E. Boileau and City Auditor John Herbst

## CONFERENCE REPORTS

### CF-1 [21-1212](#)

Carr, Riggs & Ingram (CRI) Status Report of the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Center (FLAC) Renovation Project - (Commission District 2)

Megan Gaillard, Assistant City Auditor III, presented the Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC's (CRI) Status Report for the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex (FLAC) Renovation Project (Project).

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Gaillard reconfirmed the amounts under review towards resolution.

Ms. Gaillard confirmed the review was through July 31, 2021, and there are plans to amend the contract with CRI to review pay applications through the end of the Project. The Final Report that would include the close-out process is anticipated in August 2022.

### CF-2 [22-0055](#)

Independent External Quality Review - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Megan Gaillard, Assistant City Auditor III, explained details associated with this peer review audit mandated every three (3) years by the City Charter. This Independent External Quality Review (Review) covered thirty-nine (39) months and is current through September 30, 2021.

Based on the Review performed by the external auditor, the Office of the City Auditor and its system of quality control was suitably designed to comply with all standards and provides reasonable assurance that it is in compliance in all material respects.

### OLD/NEW BUSINESS

**BUS-1** [21-1136](#)

Waterway Quality Update - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Deferred to the *January 18, 2022 Commission Conference Meeting*.

**BUS-2** [22-0009](#)

Discussion Regarding Expenditures Related to the Scope of Work for a Fiscal Year 2021 Not-For-Profit Grant Participation Agreement with First Call for Help of Broward, Inc. - \$10,000 - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

City Manager Lagerbloom provided background regarding this Agenda item. Items submitted for grant payment were not contemplated in the grant scope, and the Commission would need to approve an amendment to the grant scope. He confirmed the need for guidance and explained options available to the Commission.

Mayor Trantalis reviewed items included and outside the original scope of the grant.

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on the need for clear communication regarding the use of grant funds. City Manager Lagerbloom explained the unique nature of this Agenda item and said this is an exception, not the rule. Vice Mayor Moraitis confirmed that reimbursement should only be for defined uses.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, City Manager Lagerbloom said agreements exist with all funding for not-for-profit organizations. Commissioner Glassman commented on the need for consistency, specificity and equitable treatment for all non-profit funding entities.

Laura Reece, the Office of Management and Budget Director, reviewed details of not-for-profit funding documentation and audit requirements, including agreements and scope of services. Due to a large number of

not-for-profit funding entities, not-for-profit organizations receiving funding for \$25,000 or less would not come before the Commission, and each would have a two (2) page funding agreement. These not-for-profit organizations receive upfront funding and are required to submit a year-end report listing use of funding that Staff would review to ensure compliance with the scope of grant funding.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Ms. Reece explained not-for-profit funding organizations who receive funding upfront and fund expenses outside the grant's scope would need to repay those funds or they could be pursued legally by the City for reimbursement. Staff will review year-end reports to ensure grant funding compliance.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his perspective regarding this use of grant funding for items that do not correlate with the purpose of the grant's funding.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Colleen Lockwood on behalf of *First Call for Help of Broward, Inc.* Ms. Lockwood explained aspects of *Bridge 2 Life (B2L) Program (Program)* expenses not specified in the grant scope related to college-going tasks towards empowering students and supporting volunteer efforts.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding the ability to do in-person activities following the COVID lockdown, Ms. Lockwood explained the use of virtual technology served to improve student participation and coordinate *Program* speakers. She explained examples of career-related partnerships tied to the purpose of the grant.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding contacting Staff when the scope changed, Ms. Lockwood explained she did not have a clear understanding of items allowed to be remitted and items not allowed.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions, Ms. Lockwood explained nine hundred fifty-three (953) students attended virtual *Program* workshops between July 21st and July 29th. Students who attended two (2) or more *Program* workshops were included in the *IMAX Theater* event and one hundred twenty (120) students attended. She expounded on additional details.

Commissioner Sorensen explained his perspective and said he would support funding related to this Agenda item.

Mayor Trantalis explained his perspective and cautioned on setting a precedent.

Commissioner Glassman concurred, explained his viewpoint, noted the excellent work of *First Call for Help of Broward, Inc.* and recommended funding fifty percent (50%) of outstanding items. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding excluding the *IMAX Theater* cost from reimbursement.

Commissioner Sorensen confirmed his willingness to support the majority position of the Commission.

Mayor Trantalis confirmed a consensus to fund sixty percent (60%) of *Program* costs, which would exclude the *IMAX Theater* cost.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Ms. Lockwood explained the *IMAX Theater* event details included several speakers and workshop snippets preceding the film. She said students left feeling like the movie's message spoke to them, i.e., empowerment, resilience, etc. She confirmed the need for *First Call for Help of Broward, Inc.* to have a clear understanding regarding what is appropriate going forward and thanked the Commission for its feedback.

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed he had obtained Commission direction.

## **CITY COMMISSION REPORTS**

### ***Members of the Commission announced recent and upcoming events and matters of interest.***

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' question regarding the ability of Boards to meet virtually until COVID numbers reduce, City Attorney Boileau explained said it is an option and is all-encompassing, which would include members of the public. She noted a board member raised this question at the District 1 Pre-Agenda Meeting. City Attorney Boileau said it is a policy and business decision. He commented on the position of the State and confirmed Broward County has been renewing its *State of Emergency Orders* every seven (7) days from the beginning of the pandemic. City Attorney Boileau concluded his remarks, stating it would be at the discretion of the Commission. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions regarding virtual meetings, City Manager Lagerbloom explained the only costs relate to Staff coordination. He cautioned against switching back and forth from virtual meetings to in-person meetings. City Manager Lagerbloom explained related challenges. City Attorney Boileau discussed challenges related to public advertising of meetings. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, City Attorney Boileau reiterated his previous comments regarding the position of the State, the City operating under the County's renewed *State of Emergency* and noted related details. The City Commission and its boards and committees are treated the same for virtual meetings. City Attorney Boileau expounded on the history of this topic, safety protocols and his legal perspective. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sorensen suggested maintaining in-person Commission Meetings, allowing board and committees to meet virtually and revisiting this topic in one month.

Commissioner Glassman noted the ongoing nature of COVID rising and falling in the future. He urged board and committee members to come to City Hall and take proper precautions to manage risk, i.e., wear a mask, maintain adequate distance, be vaccinated, receive a vaccination booster, etc. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recommended maintaining in-person meetings. Vice Mayor Moraitis concurred on the need to be consistent and explained this topic was raised based on the personal concerns of a board member.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' question regarding providing license plate reader (LPR) information to neighborhoods, City Manager Lagerbloom explained LPR data was never intended to be shared with neighborhoods. City Attorney Boileau concurred. He explained agreements with the company, and that they own the data. The data is shared with the Fort Lauderdale Police Department. LPRs are not live, and data is used for investigative purposes.

City Manager Lagerbloom commented on partnering with neighborhoods requesting LPRs and noted other areas with a greater need. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman congratulated the *Bonnet House* on its one

hundred (100) year anniversary. He noted an upcoming Central Beach Alliance meeting on Thursday, January 13, 2022 focused on Bahia Mar.

Commissioner Glassman commented on inquiries regarding the Tree Ordinance and discussed the removal of trees in *Holiday Park* due to ongoing work at *War Memorial Auditorium* and other projects. He received an email from a resident who noticed red dots marking certain trees, one of which is considered by a resident to be the most iconic mahogany tree in *Holiday Park*. Commissioner Glassman requested Staff look into this situation.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's inquiry regarding hiring a Strategic Communications Officer to replace Mark Fein, City Manager Lagerbloom explained details of the hiring process. He confirmed Ashley Doussard, Strategic Communications Manager, would be stepping in on an interim basis and anticipates a ninety (90) to one hundred twenty (120) day timeline for hiring a Strategic Communications Officer.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on the Commission's dedication and investment in infrastructure improvements. He discussed the importance of addressing human trafficking and remarked on efforts by local attorneys and advocates.

Commissioner Sorensen requested Commission input regarding exploring cryptocurrency.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his viewpoint, its speculative nature, the risk involved and the need for a dedicated team for daily monitoring.

Vice Mayor Moraitis said she was open to discussing possibilities and commented on her risk aversion.

Commissioner Glassman explained he does not have a clear understanding of cryptocurrency.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on his perspective towards positioning the City to be pro-business and attracting employers by considering accepting cryptocurrency as a form of payment to the City.

Mayor Trantalis requested City Auditor Herbst provide a report regarding the City accepting cryptocurrency and immediately converting it to government currency.

City Auditor Herbst confirmed he would discuss with Treasury Department Staff to determine whether banks used by the City are set up to accept cryptocurrency. He explained several other issues that could be problematic, noting the thousands of different types of cryptocurrencies and concerns related to the anonymity of payment. City Attorney Boileau noted the need to review bond covenants to determine whether the City would be permitted to accept that type of payment for items funded by bonds.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the success of the *New Year's Eve Downtown Countdown Event*. He remarked on the opportunity to make this a signature event, having a prominent singer or group, partnering with *Inter Miami* and holding the event at the *Inter Miami Stadium at Lockhart Park*. Vice Mayor Moraitis concurred and said she would welcome this in District 1.

Mayor Trantalis announced the opening of a COVID Testing Center in *Snyder Park*. The hours of operation would be 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. In response to Mayor Trantalis' inquiry, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed he would provide an update regarding the use of this testing site.

Mayor Trantalis commented on a *Day of Service* in recognition of the *Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday* and explained organizers of the *Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade* canceled this year's parade event. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the location of the *Day of Service* and preceding breakfast.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' request for an update on redistricting, City Manager Lagerbloom explained he received two (2) academic proposals, one from *Florida International University (FIU)* and one from *Florida Atlantic University (FAU)*. Staff is evaluating, and he would bring a recommendation forward at the *January 18, 2022 Commission Meeting*. If started by February 1, 2022, both organizations can meet an end of April 2022 deadline.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions regarding the redistricting process, Mayor Trantalis commented on the process. City Manager Lagerbloom explained redistricting information and statute parameters for input, and computer technology calculates data resulting in redistricting maps. He is evaluating both proposals, and the main difference in the proposals is one offers the ability for online interactive participation at a significantly higher cost.



In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, City Manager Lagerbloom said the Secretary of Elections has set a deadline at the end of April 2022. Further comment and discussion ensued. City Manager Lagerbloom said redistricting maps are submitted to Broward County and the State. City Attorney Boileau said would verify when redistricting maps take effect, i.e., upon adoption by the Commission or during the next election. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis commented on the impact of Holy Cross Hospital (Holy Cross) and its doctors no longer being included in Cigna Healthcare (Cigna) Network Providers. City Manager Lagerbloom explained negotiations between Cigna and Holy Cross had broken down. The opportunity to use another healthcare insurance provider that would include Holy Cross as an in-network provider was explored, which would result in a significant cost increase. Human Resources Department will prepare a memo explaining related information and details that will be sent to Commission Members.

Mayor Trantalis discussed a recent video received illustrating motorcycles careening through the *Henry E. Kinney Tunnel* and participating in unsafe behavior. He acknowledged input from Fort Lauderdale Police Department (FLPD) Chief Larry Sciroto, summarizing proactive efforts to address this type of illegal activity via encounters and interdictions in the month of December 2021 (Summary Report). Mayor Trantalis remarked on safety concerns and noted that this activity continues to increase. He emphasized the need to continue to be aware of safety concerns and improve efforts to address this unsafe behavior.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions, Chief Sciroto urged the community to continue to contact 911 when viewing these types of incidents. He discussed his perspective regarding the need for proactive enforcement and awareness of related safety challenges. The FLPD's proactive strategy continues to include billboard messaging and marketing campaigns. He explained the need to make the public aware when considering purchasing an ATV or a dirt bike, that both are illegal to operate on City roadways. Chief Sciroto provided an overview of additional illegal motorcycle activities and confirmed motorcycles must follow the same roadway rules as automobiles.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' questions, Chief Sciroto discussed Strategic Communications efforts to ensure the public is aware of important information related to this topic. This effort would include

safety concerns, and he confirmed he would send his Summary Report to District Commission Members. Vice Mayor Moraitis said she would extend invitations to District 1 annual neighborhood meetings and include Chief Sciroto, who could update the community on pertinent information on this topic. Further comment and discussion ensued on FLPD efforts to address late-night motorcycle activity in the area of SE 17th Street and A1A. Chief Sciroto explained his advocacy for making nuisance motorcycle behavior uncomfortable and deterring those individuals from coming to the City.

Vice Mayor Moraitis provided an update that the *L.A. Lee YMCA* has been torn down, and the new YMCA will open in April.

### **CITY MANAGER REPORTS**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 3:16 p.m.