

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 5, 2023

11:30 AM

Joint Workshop with Budget Advisory Board

The Parker

707 Northeast 8th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304

CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP

FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION

DEAN J. TRANTALIS Mayor

PAM BEASLEY-PITTMAN Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District III

JOHN C. HERBST Commissioner - District I

STEVEN GLASSMAN Commissioner - District II

WARREN STURMAN Commissioner - District IV

GREG CHAVARRIA, City Manager

DAVID R. SOLOMAN, City Clerk

D'WAYNE M. SPENCE, Interim City Attorney

PATRICK REILLY, City Auditor

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 11:42 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present: Commissioner John Herbst, Commissioner Steven Glassman, Vice Mayor Pamela Beasley-Pittman, Commissioner Warren Sturman, and Mayor Dean J. Trantalis

Budget Advisory Board Members Present: Chair Brian Donaldson, Vice Chair Jeff Lowe, William Brown, Michael Marshall, Prabhuling Patel, and John Rodstrom III

Budget Advisory Board Members Not Present: Ross Cammarata, and Christian Macellari

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Also Present: City Manager Greg Chavarria, City Clerk David R. Soloman, Interim City Attorney D'Wayne M. Spence, and City Auditor Patrick Reilly

OLD/NEW BUSINESS**BUS-1** [23-0854](#)

FY 2024 Tentative Budget Highlights (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Budget Advisory Board (BAB) Chair Brian Donaldson explained that he listened to discussions from the August 22, 2023, Commission Meeting and noted multiple meetings with Budget Office and City Manager Chavarria to bring forward the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 2024) Tentative Budget that includes additional revenue in the amount of \$5,300,000.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Chair Donaldson reviewed the additional revenue sources. Chair Donaldson confirmed there was no increase to the ad valorem rate, remarked on the diverse revenue streams, and noted adjacent municipalities' ad valorem rate increases. He explained that a bulk of the items discussed during the August 22, 2023, Commission Meeting were incorporated in the FY 2024 Tentative Budget.

Chair Donaldson narrated the presentation entitled *FY 2024 TENTATIVE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS*.

A copy of the presentation is part of the backup to this Agenda item.

Chair Donaldson reviewed FY 2024 Budget Public Safety funding. Commissioner Glassman noted the City of Miami Beach's ratio of Police Officer staffing per 1,000 residents is higher than the City's, but the City's Fire-Rescue staffing per 1,000 residents is similar. He remarked on the City's ratio of Public Safety staffing as compared to Broward County (County) municipalities with populations similar to the City, cited examples, and noted those municipalities have a higher ad valorem rate.

Commissioner Herbst commented that the City is the County Seat as well as a top tourist destination, which impacts population comparisons during the day. In response to Commissioner Herbst, Laura Reece, Office of Management and Budget Director, confirmed Staff could present related population data with the assistance of outside organizations.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his perspective as a Tourist and Development Council member.

Chair Donaldson remarked on future Public Safety staffing challenges due to attrition, which would require increased budget funding in the future. He confirmed Public Safety is a Commission Priority and commented on ways to address, including reviewing crime statistics, strategically focusing on areas of concern to enhance public safety. Chair Donaldson cited related efforts, including the License Plate Reader Program and the ShotSpotter Program. He noted that over seventy-five percent (75%) of the City's new hires have been in the Public Safety sector.

Chair Donaldson reviewed Special Event funding included in the FY 2024 Budget. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Reece confirmed the City sponsors the Special Events listed in the presentation. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Chair Donaldson reviewed the Microtransit Program funding included in the FY 2024 Budget. Mayor Trantalis remarked on the gap in Microtransit service along State Road A1A from Oakland Park Boulevard to Sunrise Boulevard. Chair Donaldson commented on input from the President of the Central Beach Alliance who said that beach area tourists use the Microtransit service as a free rideshare service. Chair Donaldson commented on the opportunity to fund Microtransit service with tourism dollars versus taxpayer dollars.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on conversations with the County related to the use of County Surtax funds for the Microtransit Program. Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility Department (TAM) Director, explained Staff outreach efforts to the County and commented on related details. The County shared its concerns regarding the City's Program and has not committed to funding the City's Program.

Mr. Rogers explained the County is building its own Microtransit Program, planned for implementation in late 2023 or early 2024, in areas outside the City's Microtransit Program service areas. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, Mr. Rogers confirmed TAM Staff and the Office of the City Manager are lobbying the County to fund the City's Microtransit Program.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question to Commission Members regarding their interest in funding the City's Microtransit Program, Commissioner Herbst confirmed his support of the City's Microtransit Program providing service along the entire beach area and expounded on his viewpoint that include efforts to reduce the carbon footprint. Commissioner Herbst commented on related discussions with the County and City Staff and confirmed the need for continued pursuit of County Surtax funding for the City's Microtransit Program.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the initial Las Olas Parking Garage (Garage) model, which included suburban residents visiting the City and utilizing the Garage to park vehicles, and traveling via the Microtransit Program to visit other areas of the barrier island. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mr. Rogers commented on the BAB's concerns regarding funding the City's Microtransit Program and noted the funding in FY 2023 was for the Pilot Microtransit Program. Staff is exploring different ways to implement the City's Microtransit Program going forward and will return to the Commission with a presentation in October 2023 that will include an operational plan based on Commission input. Mr. Rogers discussed details included in a color-coded slide illustrating Staff's proposed operational routing, which connects multiple areas in the City. Staff built three (3) different service areas that include free ridership for short distances in dense areas and a small ridership fee for travel to peripheral areas.

A copy of the slide has been made part of the backup to these

Meeting Minutes.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Mr. Rogers discussed his understanding that the Beach Business Improvement District (BBID) would fund approximately \$19,000 in FY 2024 for the City's Microtransit Program and said he would confirm. Commissioner Glassman noted the need to coordinate with BBID. He discussed his support for continuity of service, including addressing current service gaps. Mr. Rogers commented on additional information included in the slide related to increased routing and service areas.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Rogers explained implementation of a small ridership fee for traveling from one boundary area to another. He reiterated Staff would return to the Commission to finalize the proposed operational plans for the City's Microtransit Program in October 2023. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding Microtransit funding.

Chair Donaldson remarked on FY 2024 Budget adjustments made by BAB were based on discussions at the previous Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Glassman commented on sidewalk funding, expounded on his viewpoint and the need for necessary criteria. In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding the \$500,000 in the FY 2024 Budget for sidewalks, Chair Donaldson explained a related consultant's report on sidewalks had not been received. The \$500,000 in funding resulted from discussions and what was understood as a Commission consensus at the Commission Meeting. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis remarked that an estimated \$40,000,000 would likely be the funding necessary for sidewalk needs. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's questions, Mr. Rogers explained the FY 2023 budget allocated \$180,000 for a consultant to prepare a Sidewalk Gap Plan (Plan), which is underway and includes criteria noted by Commissioner Glassman. Mr. Rogers said that Staff has a list of sidewalk requests that have not been vetted. The Plan is expected to be completed in Spring or Summer of 2024 that will be followed by public outreach sessions and Staff recommendations that will be presented to the Commission.

Commissioner Sturman recommended revising the term Sidewalk Gap Plan to Sidewalk Master Plan. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mr. Rogers discussed details related to current Public Works Department funding for repairs and maintenance of sidewalks.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on allocated funding for sidewalk projects. Chair Donaldson explained ongoing related CIP projects and expounded on details. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Chair Donaldson noted the possibility of expenditure adjustments to the FY 2024 Budget due to ongoing Public Safety collective bargaining negotiations. The FY 2024 Proposed Budget includes funding for what is currently on the table for those agreement negotiations.

Chair Donaldson discussed Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's request to recognize Juneteenth as a paid holiday and explained that would be an employee benefit that should be part of Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiations.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' request for BAB feedback, BAB Member William Brown remarked that earlier discussions regarding Public Safety should be addressed holistically, and cited examples. Mr. Brown remarked on his experience with the Microtransit Program, noted the need for additional vehicles, recommended ridership fees similar to the City of Hollywood, and discussed additional routing. Mayor Trantalis concurred.

Chair Donaldson concurred with Mr. Brown's recommendation to implement a small ridership fee to provide revenue for the City's Microtransit Program. Commissioner Sturman agreed and noted the opportunity for residents to purchase an annual pass, providing an additional source of revenue. Chair Donaldson commented on additional revenue sources, including partnerships with beach area businesses.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions regarding the BAB's viewpoint related to providing paid parental leave to City employees, Chair Donaldson explained that paid parental leave is an employee benefit that should be part of Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiations.

Commissioner Glassman discussed his viewpoint regarding the importance of the City funding nonprofits in the arts and cultural sector and support of restoring previous funding for the NSU Art Museum. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman discussed the need for more strategic public safety efforts to address ongoing safety concerns in District 3.

Further comment and discussion ensued. Chair Donaldson concurred and remarked on the need to be strategic regarding public safety, including pursuing related grant opportunities. He reiterated the benefits realized from the ShotSpotter Program.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 12:54 p.m.