



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING

#23-0588

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Greg Chavarria, City Manager

DATE: July 5, 2023

TITLE: First Reading - Ordinance Amending Chapter 11, Code Enforcement, Article II Section 11-3, Jurisdiction of Board and Special Magistrate, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale to Establish a Lien Amnesty Program and to Provide for Temporary Suspension of Section 11-3(c) During Periods of Lien Amnesty – **(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission consider amending Chapter 11, Code Enforcement, Article II Section 11-3, Jurisdiction of Board and Special Magistrate, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale to establish a lien amnesty program.

Background

In April 2015, the City Commission adopted Ordinance C-15-16 authorizing the special magistrate to reduce fines and liens that meet certain criteria. As of May 2023, outstanding code enforcement liens and fines are valued at approximately \$62.5 million. The City does receive requests for the Special Magistrate to reduce fines and liens, but from time to time it may be beneficial for the City to initiate an amnesty program to reduce the amount of outstanding fines and liens. Periodically initiating lien amnesty will allow the City to establish a fixed settlement amount that may encourage property owners to settle their code enforcement fines and liens. When this occurs, the City will be able to clear a portion of the old fines and liens from its books.

The chart below shows the total reductions provided by the special magistrate from October 2023 through May 2023.

Fiscal Year 2023 Month	Lien Value	Amount Ordered	Percent of Lien Value
October	\$60,900.00	\$12,709.50	21%
November	\$1,018,960.00	\$40,534.98	4%
January	\$521,590.00	\$81,915.08	16%
February	\$310,400.00	\$31,857.92	10%
March	\$870,900.00	\$51,857.92	6%
May	\$920,225.32	\$142,502.55	15%

Amendments Summary

The proposed amendments to Chapter 11, Code Enforcement, Article II Section 11-3, Jurisdiction of Board and Special Magistrate, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale include the following:

- Include a provision to periodically adopt a lien amnesty program by resolution; and
- Provide for temporary suspension of the authority of the special magistrate to reduce liens as provided in Section 11-3(c) during periods of lien amnesty.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Strategic Connections

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024* Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area.
- Goal 4: Build a thriving and inclusive community of neighborhoods.
- The Internal Support Area
- Goal 8: Build a leading government organization that manages all resources wisely and sustainably.
- Objective: Maintain financial integrity through sound budgeting
- practices, prudent fiscal management, cost effective operations, and long-term planning.

This item advances the Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Community

This item supports the Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- The Housing Element
- Goal 2: Be a community of strong, beautiful, and healthy neighborhoods

Attachment

Exhibit 1 – Ordinance

Prepared by: Porshia L. Garcia, Development Services Department

Department Director: Christopher Cooper, AICP, Development Services