

City of Fort Lauderdale



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

12:00 PM

Joint Workshop with Affordable Housing Advisory Committee

Broward Center for the Performing Arts - Mary N Porter Riverview
Ballroom - 201 SW 5th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33312

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 12:10 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) Members

Present: Vice Chair Leann Barber, Vice Mayor Pamela Beasley-Pittman, Pablo Calvo, William Condon, Sister Robin Merrill, and Susan Spragg

Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) Members Not

Present: Chair Margi Nothard, Willie McKay, and Ryan Wipplinger

COMMISSION 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** [23-0994](#)

Joint Workshop with the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) 2023 - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis noted an item on tonight's Commission Regular Meeting Agenda is related to a recommendation of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) to increase the amount of affordable housing in the City.

Avis A. Wilkinson, Assistant Housing and Community Development Manager, Development Service Department (DSD) and AHAC Liaison, reviewed the Workshop Agenda included in the presentation. AHAC member Susan Spragg narrated the presentation.

A copy of the presentation has been made part of the backup to this Agenda item.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Rachel Williams, Housing and Community Development Manager, explained details regarding funding from the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) and

other sources to address homelessness through the City's Rapid Rehousing Program and Senior Rental Assistance, which include planning and collaboration with community stakeholders.

Mayor Trantalis discussed efforts to alleviate homelessness, including Police Department Homeless Outreach Staff and Community Court. He remarked on the lack of sufficient funding, his viewpoint, and noted constituent feedback regarding the negative impact of homelessness on the community.

Ms. Williams explained Staff uses funding layering strategies from multiple sources to address homelessness needs, cited examples, and presented related information.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions regarding housing strategy efforts that incorporate social services, Ms. Williams confirmed and explained aspects of social services to assist with the rehabilitation of homeless individuals that include job training. Ms. Williams described details of social services case management support and its holistic approach towards the goal of individuals achieving self-reliance.

Ms. Williams noted that approximately \$1,000,000 in American Rescue Act funding was awarded to Broward Housing Solutions and explained related efforts. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Williams explained Broward Housing Solutions is a nonprofit 501c (3) not affiliated with Broward County. They provide housing services and specialize in the support of older people who are experiencing mental health and chronic homelessness.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding what occurs following the twelve (12) months of the Rapid Rehousing Program, Ms. Wilkinson said the goal is for individuals to achieve self-sufficiency. Ms. Wilkinson expounded on details related to the certification and qualifications of the Partners listed in the presentation and efforts to address homelessness. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Williams confirmed the need for additional funding to address the ongoing housing crisis. She explained details related to the influx of homeless individuals from other areas, remarked on the need for homeless individuals to be willing to participate in the Rapid Rehousing Program, and expounded on related information.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Williams said \$6,300,000 was spent to address the needs of seven hundred

ninety-nine (799) homeless individuals over twenty-four (24) months. Further comment and discussion ensued.

City Manager Chavarria discussed his perspective, including efforts to mitigate homelessness as well as the pursuit of mental health services.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on outreach to the Broward Sheriff's Office and Chief Judge Jack Tuter regarding discharge proceedings at the Broward County Jail (Jail) and Broward Health. He requested City Manager Chavarria provide a report on efforts to modify those discharge proceedings at an upcoming Commission Conference Meeting. City Manager Chavarria confirmed.

Ms. Williams discussed the lack of adequate, affordable housing units and the need to bridge the gap. Mayor Trantalis noted the City's efforts to participate with private developers and nonprofit organizations to increase affordable housing inventory, cited an example, and remarked on related challenges.

Mayor Trantalis commented on the need for landlord participation and adequate funding for the Rapid Rehousing Program. Ms. Williams concurred and commented on affordability. She explained developers offer affordable units at eighty percent (80%) of the average median income (AMI), which is not reasonable for some service workers. Mayor Trantalis concurred and noted the need for developers to provide affordable units at forty percent (40%) of AMI.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on his understanding of point-in-time (PIT) homeless numbers in the City. In response to Commissioner Sturman's questions, AHAC Member Pablo Calvo explained that at the last Countywide PIT measurement in January (January Court) 3,147 households were identified. The City has assisted approximately 780 individuals or about one (1) in four (4) individuals or families experiencing homelessness through its Rapid Rehousing Programs. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sturman commented on the two (2) primary sources of homelessness in the City, individuals discharged from the Jail and Broward Health.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Manager Chavarria said Staff has only been working with individuals discharged from the Jail. Commissioner Sturman said he would be part of an initiative with Staff to work with individuals discharged from Broward Health. He commented on his understanding that the federal government may

allow health care assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness outside a health care facility. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mr. Calvo discussed his perspective regarding rates of homelessness. He explained they are not static, likening it to the employment rate that would never be zero, and explained similarities and cited examples. He commented on details of the January Count and the unduplicated January through December Count, which the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimated to be approximately three point two (3.2) times higher, or approximately 12,000 individuals who are homeless or living under comorbidity conditions.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Roderick Newkirk, 500 N. Andrews Avenue. Mr. Newkirk explained information related to his involvement in Broward County's Rapid Rehousing Program, which he explained has a three (3) to five (5) year term.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Newkirk explained additional resources available from Broward County, including emergency housing vouchers. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Ms. Spragg narrated the next portion of the presentation. When the Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights Community Redevelopment Agency (NWPFH CRA) sunsets in 2025, the AHAC is recommending fifteen percent (15%) of the tax increment financing funds (TIFF) going into the General Fund be placed in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) beginning in Fiscal Year 2024 - 2025 with an initial annual \$5,000,000 contribution increasing ten percent (10%) each year.

AHAC Vice Chair Leanne Barber narrated the next portion of the presentation, listing Florida International University's 2022 Affordable Housing Needs Assessment and the demand for rental market affordable housing units by low-income residents. Ms. Barber explained aspects of Broward County's Continuum of Care findings, including the lack of low-income rental housing impact on social issues, information related to income restrictions on rental units, and cited examples.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Barber noted the availability of additional federal funding assistance that has a five (5) year waiting period. She said that the \$10,000,000 - \$12,000,000 in the City's annual funding budgeted for affordable housing needs is received from grants. Ms. Barber reviewed the AHAC's

recommendations for what needs to be done to address homelessness going forward.

Ms. Barber reviewed details of recent affordable housing projects in the City, the *Gallery in Flagler Village*, and *Seven on Seventh*. Commissioner Glassman noted the need for clarification about the number of affordable housing units at the *Seven on Seventh* project. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Ms. Barber's comment about the one percent (1%) food and beverage tax implemented by Broward County to address affordable housing needs, Mayor Trantalis explained details regarding the Commission's inability to duplicate that effort.

Ms. Barber reviewed efforts of other Florida municipalities to address affordable housing. In response to Commissioner Sturman's question, Ms. Barber confirmed Pinellas County is one of the counties that have partnered with outside nonprofit organizations for a steppingstone type program model to end homelessness (Program). The Program begins with a minimum shelter, i.e., tents, moves on to a shipping container converted to accommodate three (3) units, followed by a tiny home, and ultimately to permanent supportive housing in the form of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) manufactured in several areas of the State. Ms. Barber cited examples and explained related information. She confirmed the Program's positive feedback, significantly reducing the time homeless individuals spend in jails and hospitals. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Herbst recommended the pursuit of ADUs as a solution on larger parcels but noted it would only work in some areas of the City. He commented on conversations with Interim City Attorney Spence to create more density and remarked on the need to ensure ADUs are not used as vacation rental units.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman noted the clarity brought forth on this issue with this AHAC presentation. She concurred with Commissioner Herbst's comments, noted her support of pursuing ADUs, and remarked on Broward County's efforts that will allow municipalities to move forward.

Mayor Trantalis recognized AHAC Member Sister Robin Merrill. Sister Merrill noted the need for an ombudsman position to assist with navigating the Building Department process for affordable housing development. Chris Cooper, Development Services Department Director, confirmed and said there are Business Assistance Coordinators in place to help with the process and discussed related

information.

Mr. Newkirk remarked on applying for the HUD Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, formerly known as the Section 8 Housing Program, to assist low-income families with safe and affordable housing in the private rental market.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the significant challenge of finding real estate in the City to address homelessness. He commented on the City's efforts, including selling infill housing for affordable housing, and expounded on related information.

Mr. Newkirk remarked on his experience with the pricing of affordable housing units allocated in rental developments approved by the Commission and cited examples. Rachel Johnson, Executive Director of Helping Others Make Everything Right (H.O.M.E.R), concurred with Mr. Newkirk's comments and cited examples of inappropriate actions of property owners and management companies. Mayor Trantalis remarked on the need for improved monitoring by Staff.

Ms. Wilkinson clarified the definition of SHIP funding for individuals earning below established AMI tiers and cited examples.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m.