

City of Fort Lauderdale

City Hall
100 N. Andrews Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
www.fortlauderdale.gov



Meeting Minutes - APPROVED

Tuesday, December 17, 2013

1:30 PM

City Commission Conference Room

City Commission Conference Meeting

FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION

JOHN P. "JACK" SEILER Mayor - Commissioner
BRUCE G. ROBERTS Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District I
DEAN J. TRANTALIS Commissioner - District II
BOBBY B. DuBOSE Commissioner - District III
ROMNEY ROGERS Commissioner - District IV

LEE R. FELDMAN, City Manager
JOHN HERBST, City Auditor
JONDA K. JOSEPH, City Clerk
CYNTHIA A. EVERETT, City Attorney

Meeting was called to order at 1:36 p.m. by Mayor Seiler.

ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL

Present 5 - Mayor John P. "Jack" Seiler, Vice-Mayor Bruce G. Roberts, Commissioner Dean J. Trantalis, Commissioner Bobby B. DuBose and Commissioner Romney Rogers

Also Present: Assistant City Manager Susanne Torriente, City Auditor John Herbst, City Clerk Jonda K. Joseph, City Attorney Cynthia A. Everett and Sergeant-At-Arms Sergeant Jeffrey Brull

CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

Events and Matters of Interest

Members of the Commission announced recent and upcoming events and matters of interest including the environmental study presented at the Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting. Mayor Seiler asked that lighting of the tree for the Light Up Sistrunk event be earlier next year.

North Beach Shops Area

Vice-Mayor Roberts said he would like to facilitate a discussion with business owners to address concerns about parking in the North Beach Shops area where Bokamper's is located. In response to Mayor Seiler, Director of Transportation and Mobility Diana Alarcon confirmed the trolley runs to that area during the day but not in the evenings. Vice-Mayor Roberts noted that funding may not be available to expand the trolley's hours of operation. Commissioner DuBose said the problem could be attributed to the fact that Bokamper's recently opened and it is the holiday season. Vice-Mayor Roberts predicted this could be an ongoing problem because of the success businesses are having in the area. Most of the residential community is pleased with the activity.

Alarcon noted that the City is planning crosswalks that will help pedestrian traffic and facilitate use of the garage. Additionally, new signage will direct visitors to garage parking. Commissioner Trantalis added that the activity may ignite interest to repurpose some of the other buildings in the area. Commissioner DuBose encouraged viewing the area in the long-term as it may not have as much popularity during sports off-seasons.

Lauderdale Live Event; Noise; Sale of Alcohol and Tobacco

Commissioner Rogers said he received complaints about the Lauderdale Live event being shut down before schedule. There are others that complain about the noise. He does not believe some venues should be permitted to stay open until 4 a.m. There was discussion about regulating the sale of alcohol and tobacco products. He wanted a scheduled discussion of this topic at some point.

Economic Development Workshops

Commissioner Rogers wanted to be sure the consultant has complete information. He felt district commissioners should find out what businesses did not attend the workshops and get that information

from the consultants. He wanted to focus attention on marketing correctly. He wanted to be sure that current statistics on vacancy rates be furnished to the consultant.

Traffic Congestion at Dunkin Donuts and Starbucks; Broward Boulevard and Federal Highway

Commissioner Rogers noted that a safety hazard is created due to traffic buildup during peak periods at the Dunkin' Donuts on Broward Boulevard and Starbucks on Federal Highway. Mayor Seiler noted the problem was compounded by recent construction work. Commissioner DuBose added that since the traffic lights have been synchronized on Broward Boulevard, it is difficult for residents in the 15 Street area to get in and out of their neighborhood. Commissioner Rogers thought staff should meet with the business owners to come up with some solutions. Commissioner DuBose noted the small footprint of the coffee shops does not allow for a large number of vehicles. There is a high demand. He suggested looking at the economic development aspect and exploring attracting an additional coffee business.

Sustainable Development Call Center

In response to Commissioner Rogers, Deputy Director of Sustainable Development Jenni Morejon said the department recently implemented a call center and is working out some glitches. Sometimes the proper connections are not being made from the switchboard which is being worked out. They are working to cross-train staff to better identify how to route calls. They are studying data on the call volume, queue time and dropped calls. They originally intended to not allow an option for dialing 0 to reach an operator because that could remove the ability for customers to be routed to the appropriate person. They are trying to structure it so that callers do not have a long wait time. They are also educating external customers. Once operational issues are resolved, she did not think the dialing 0 option will be necessary. Commissioner Trantalis noted that sometimes callers do not know who to ask for. Morejon said call center dispatchers are trained to glean the appropriate information from callers so they can be routed to the right person. Commissioner Rogers expressed concern that callers may become frustrated if they are not quickly connected with a person who can help them. If it takes too long, the purpose of being efficient is defeated.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

CF-1 13-1496 CODE COMPLIANCE PROCESS IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE

Deputy Director of Sustainable Development Jenni Morejon reviewed slides concerning this matter. A copy of the slides is attached to these minutes.

In response to Commissioners Rogers and DuBose (Key Performance Indicators slide), Structural Innovation Manager Amy Knowles noted that benchmarking is compiled from benchmarking associations that collect information from their members after the fiscal year is complete. The report is then issued about six months after the data is collected. She offered to look into why the most current information is from 2010. Sometimes the associations change the measures and methodology. She offered to look into this. Morejon added staff wants to make sure it is an apples-to-apples comparison.

Commissioner Rogers asked why the target was missed by the number indicated. Morejon explained that in the past, targets were set based on intangibles. Now there is a targeted approach that matches up with resources and the direction that neighbors have requested. There was discussion about how the data could be better presented to reflect the department's progress. Senior Performance Analyst Paula Romo pointed out that the number of code violation cases shown are all types. Staff focused on safety violations and therefore some were removed which would have reduced the case load significantly.

Specifically trash cart violations were eliminated. Commissioner DuBose felt perhaps a footnote should be added. During continued discussion on the slide, Morejon commented that when organizations start using data to tell the story, there is much more than numbers. There are some targets that the City may not want to meet for example. Assistant City Manager Susanne Torriente noted that the department is changing the way it approaches code compliance by tying data directly to the budget process so the Commission has that information when making financial decisions. It will probably be another year before a direct year-to-year comparison is available. Morejon added that this slide begs so many of these types of questions, but part of the process of improvement is to get down into the fine-grain level, understand the numbers and be more effective in the outcomes of the community.

Senior Performance Analyst Paula Romo continued review of the slides relating to process improvement.

Commissioner Trantalis questioned the end result of the validation part of the process improvement. Romo explained the approach is usually started without knowing the answer. There needs to be a determination that the process is indeed in alignment. Director of Sustainability and Economic Development Greg Brewton commented that staff found a common complaint is someone whose neighbor did not return his trash can to the appropriate place after the garbage was collected. By the time staff responded, the trash can had been put in place and there was no violation. Because that kind of information is tracked and evaluated, staff has that knowledge and can focus on what is in line with the vision. Limited resources have to be utilized in the most beneficial way. Torriente explained it could have been found that staff was doing something that was not a priority. This is what the validation is about. Romo noted that staff is aligning their efforts and resources with what the neighborhoods want.

Commissioner Trantalis was interested in knowing how code enforcement officers operate in responding to a call and specifically whether they look for violations in the area once they are on site. Morejon said they are aware of their surroundings but primarily respond to complaints. If they respond to a particular violation, they take note of additional violations on that property or the surrounding area. There are some cases of proactivity, like hot spots where redevelopment is occurring or a neighborhood or corridor. The division has had to move to a reactive approach due to the reduction in staff of some 44 percent over the past five years. Other factors have been changes in the economy and the foreclosure crisis, which triggered many vacant and abandoned homes.

Morejon continued review of the slides, at Slide 16, noting staff walked residential streets and a commercial corridor with the City Manager who shared his vision of code enforcement, including high visibility and easy compliance, that get the quickest compliance time frame.

Code Service Coordinator Jeri Pryor continued review of the slides, at Slide 21, Technology.

In response to Commissioner DuBose, Brewton explained that staff had difficulty identifying whether offenders are repairing a personal vehicle in their garage or operating a business at that location. The City's approach on this is being refined. A code amendment will be before the Commission in the next 60 days or so.

In response to Commissioner Rogers, Romo explained why it was necessary to identify homestead properties in staff's work on the foreclosure issue. In response to Commissioner DuBose, Morejon confirmed that staff works with the Property Appraiser's Office to identify homestead properties. In many cases, the program has been successful in identifying properties that should not be classified as homesteaded. Pryor explained how criteria is now reviewed with respect to being homestead eligible not before a case is sent to the City Attorney's Office, which is a step forward.

Discussion turned to the goal of moving cases through the process quickly. Commissioner Trantalis mentioned a case that has been extended by the special magistrate for some three years. Morejon explained that staff makes recommendations at the special magistrate hearings on code violations. Until the magistrate determines no more extensions will be allowed, staff has no recourse. It would be beneficial for policy-makers to let the magistrate know the violations should not be continually extended. Mayor Seiler noted that the Commission does not have the authority to stop the extensions but the Commission selects the special magistrates and can replace that person if he or she is not responsive to the will of the Commission.

Morejon added that response time frames have been categorized into immediate for life/safety, one-day for high priority, forty-eight hours for intermediate and 96 hours for minor. With such categories, it provides a better use of resources. People calling in are informed of this so their expectations are set. She explained for Commissioner Trantalis how an illegal sign is handled.

Morejon advised that staff is about 20-23 percent complete with the 23 action items in the implementation plan shown in the slides. In response to Mayor Seiler's question about the trend of compliance shown in Slide 28, Romo explained the analysis is based on a 12-month period and with that in mind, the number of days for a violation to come into compliance is trending down. Vice-Mayor Roberts felt the analysis should be on the priorities and not overall. Romo agreed, but explained it was necessary to start with everything and then go to subsets.

Vice-Mayor Roberts emphasized his view that it is valuable for Code Enforcement and the Police Department to work in cooperation. The broken window theory is still effective. Romo advised that ride-alongs between the two are planned. Vice-Mayor Roberts wanted to know if there has been too much cutting back of staff. Torriente said that question would be part of the budget process. Vice-Mayor Roberts also wanted more proactivity which may be lacking because of staffing level or lack of training. He would like this to be one of the outcomes.

Commissioner DuBose emphasized that there are some issues that are not necessarily for Code Enforcement, but rather the Police Department and an opportunity to educate residents. In terms of staffing level, he believes technology should be leveraged. In response to Mayor Seiler, Morejon said Code Enforcement has 16 code officers who are assigned to geographic areas. Five years ago the division had 53 staff members and today there are 29. She thought there could be some adjustment to how the code teams work in the interest of being more proactive, perhaps focusing on certain violations. It is a balance of appropriate staffing and deployment of resources. Commissioner DuBose pointed out that it is a seven-day operation. Morejon added that there has been a focus on prominent commercial corridors. Commissioner DuBose stressed the value of having code officers assigned to particular areas because they get to know the neighborhoods and build a rapport with the homeowners associations. Morejon agreed.

CF-2 13-1550 SOUTH SIDE SCHOOL UPDATE

Mayor Seiler deferred this item until the City Manager is available.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

BUS-1 13-1082 MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Transportation and Mobility Director Diana Alarcon made introductory remarks.

Principal Planner Renee Cross and Planner Karen Mendrala of Transportation and Mobility reviewed slides concerning this matter. A copy of the slides is attached to these minutes.

At Mayor Seiler's request, Alarcon agreed to provide an inventory of existing bicycle lanes.

In response to Commissioner Rogers' concern about resistance of the Florida Department of Transportation in adding a bicycle lane over the new Sunrise Boulevard bridge, Alarcon said staff works closely with FDOT, which has agreed to add bicycle lanes on Broward Boulevard. Staff is still working through the logistics with respect to the Sunrise Boulevard Bridge. Commissioner Rogers said there seems to be a disconnect between what FDOT leaders are saying and the work actually being performed. Alarcon elaborated on how City staff is working in training FDOT's planners and engineers on the Complete Streets concept. She believes they are headed in the right direction.

In response to Mayor Seiler, Cross agreed to look into establishing a transit hub in an area north of Commercial Boulevard near Cypress Creek. Some discussion followed on other items including the tri-coastal link (train service). Vice-Mayor Roberts noted the following hubs that should be requested: 13 Street, 62 Street and 18th and Federal Highway.

Mendrala continued review of the slides pertaining to the next steps for the program.

In response to Commissioner DuBose, Alarcon explained that staff will be conducting community outreach to discuss new sidewalks as well as the overall program. Once the budgeting strategy is complete, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Unified Land Development Regulations will be necessary as well as changes to the development review process. Criteria will be presented for approval and then prioritization of the projects by the Commission.

BUS-2 13-1604 CITY PROPERTY INSURANCE RENEWAL

Risk Manager Guy Hine advised that there are minimal changes from last year. Insurable value has decreased by about \$162,000. The difference is because the old fire station at the airport was valued higher than the new maintenance building there.

Mayor Seiler suggested and there was consensus for Option 1.

Hine also mentioned that there are two properties at cash value: Lockhart and Fort Lauderdale stadiums. He confirmed for Commissioner Rogers that the Nova leasehold east of Snyder Park (8 Avenue) was not included. Commissioner Rogers suggested taking a second look at properties being considered for demolition.

In response to Commissioner DuBose, Hine said 13 locations were added to the flood insurance policy. The \$40,000 difference has to do with an increase in rates, changes in the structures (additional) and boundaries. It was confirmed for Commissioner DuBose that the flood insurance projection is conservative.

The Commission recessed and convened as the Community Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners at 3:53 p.m. The Commission then reconvened the conference meeting with Agenda Item BD-1 at 4:35 p.m.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

BD-1 13-1605 COMMUNICATIONS TO CITY COMMISSION AND MINUTES CIRCULATED - period ending December 12, 2013

Central City Redevelopment Advisory Board

Motion made by Member Vonder Meulen and seconded by Member Jones requesting the City Commission to support the 13th Street Station in the National Environmental Policy Act study for the South Florida Regional Transit Authority Coastal Link Project. Motion passed unanimously.

There was consensus support of the 13 Street Station.

BD-2 13-1606 BOARD AND COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Please see regular meeting item R-2.

Regarding the Housing Authority of Fort Lauderdale, Mayor Seiler said he believes those terms expire in May, not January. The City Clerk confirmed that is correct and there is no urgency to make those appointments. Mayor Seiler said he will make new appointments when two board members reach their term limits.

Beach Redevelopment

Ina Lee (Mayor Seiler)
Daniel S. Matchette (Mayor Seiler)
Melissa Milroy (Vice-Mayor Roberts)

Cemetery System Board of Trustees

Vicki Mowrey (Mayor Seiler)
Damon R. Adams (Vice-Mayor Roberts)
Mark Van Rees (Vice-Mayor Roberts)

Citizens Committee of Recognition

Courtney Crush (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)
Gloria Katz (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)

Code Enforcement Board

Paul Dooley (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)
Joan Hinton (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)
Chad Thilborger (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)
Joshua D. Miron (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)

Community Appearance Board

Leah Manzo (Commissioner Trantalis)

Economic Development Advisory Board

Cary Goldberg (Mayor Seiler)
John Scherer (Mayor Seiler)
Keith Costello (Commissioner Rogers)

General Employees Retirement System

Mark Burnam (Mayor Seiler)

Nuisance Abatement Board

Dale Hoover (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)
Donald Karney III (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)
Lorraine Saunders (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)
Cindy Smith (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)
Robert L. Wolfe Jr. (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)
Elizabeth "Betty" DiMaio (Consensus/Mayor Seiler)

Parks, Recreation and Beaches

Steve Buckingham (Commissioner Rogers)

Sustainability Advisory Board

Alena Alberani (Commissioner Trantalis)

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

None.

The City Commission convened the Executive Closed Door Session at 4:46 p.m. and adjourned at the end of the session.

EXECUTIVE CLOSED DOOR SESSION

13-1658

THE CITY COMMISSION SHALL MEET PRIVATELY PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 768.28(16) CONCERNING:

- 1) Randy Schleger - City property damage (VS CPD 12-686)
- 2) Daniel Caporale - General Liability Bodily Injury (GL 12-494C)