

# City of Fort Lauderdale

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## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

1:30 PM

**Broward Center for the Performing Arts - Abdo New River Room  
201 SW 5th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312**

### **City Commission Conference Meeting**

*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*

*THOMAS J. ANSBRO, City Attorney*

*PATRICK REILLY, City Auditor*

## CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 1:52 p.m.

## COMMISSION QUORUM ESTABLISHED

**Commission Members Present:** Commissioner John C. Herbst, Commissioner Steven Glassman, Vice Mayor Pamela Beasley-Pittman, Commissioner Warren Sturman (arrived at 1:55 p.m.), and Mayor Dean J. Trantalis

**Also Present:** City Manager Greg Chavarria, City Clerk David R. Soloman, City Attorney Thomas J. Ansbro, and City Auditor Patrick Reilly

## COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COMMISSION

[24-0231](#)

Communications to the City Commission - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

***Budget Advisory Board (BAB)  
January 17, 2024***

***Communication to the City Commission***

***A copy of the BAB Communication to the City Commission is part of the backup to this Agenda item.***

Mayor Trantalis noted previous Commission discussions on this topic. Budget Advisory Board Vice Chair William Brown confirmed and explained BAB's recommendation that the City receive full recovery of City costs associated with special events. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, Vice Chair Brown commented on aspects of cost recovery items in addition to Public Safety. Laura Reece, Office of Management and Budget Director, discussed the Special Event Application (SEA) process, fees, and related costs. SEA fees do not cover all event costs. Ms. Reece remarked on the financial impact of SEA fees for events sponsored by not-for-profit organizations. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis noted previous discussions related to using a sliding scale for SEA costs based on attendance and commented that the City can only charge event organizers for the expenses incurred by the

City. He remarked on the SEA fee covering the cost of Staff time necessary to process the application. Carl Williams, Parks and Recreation Department Director, confirmed and remarked on related information. City Attorney Thomas Ansbro concurred.

Commissioner Sturman pointed out that SEA fees are significantly higher in adjacent counties. Ms. Reece confirmed and cited examples. She noted that the City can charge a licensing fee for events held on City property (Licensing Fee).

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Attorney Ansbro commented that the City has flexibility with charging Licensing Fees. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Chair Brown commented on SEA fees for smaller not-for-profit organization events in City Parks and remarked on additional ways event organizers could fund the costs of services provided by the City.

Mayor Trantalis noted his support for adding a surcharge to event tickets that would be included in a Licensing Fee Agreement with the City and requested related information. Vice Chair Brown confirmed and said the BAB would return with an all-encompassing recommendation.

## OLD/NEW BUSINESS

### BUS-1 [24-0169](#)

Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Assistance Panel Report Presentation - Mixed Use Development Corridors - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Chris Cooper, Development Services Department (DSD) Director. Mr. Cooper provided an overview of this Agenda item.

Jim Hetzel, DSD Principal Planner, narrated a presentation entitled *URBAN LAND INSTITUTE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT CORRIDORS*.

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

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Hetzel explained the focus areas of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) presentation.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on public opposition to development applications before the Commission and the inability of

the Commission to deny an application due to existing zoning code. In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions. Mr. Cooper explained Staff efforts to address, cited examples, and expounded on related information. Commissioner Glassman noted the need to better inform the community about the process the Commission is required to follow.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman concurred with Commissioner Glassman's comment regarding the need to better inform the community and said she would work with Staff to enhance neighbor participation. Commissioner Sturman agreed. Mr. Cooper confirmed outreach going forward would be improved and robust.

Mayor Trantalis confirmed the need for neighborhood input regarding their expectations going forward, cited examples, and expounded on related information. He commented on limitations imposed by Broward County (County) and the State of Florida (State) impacting the ability of the Commission to address neighborhood concerns, which the community needs to understand. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on his understanding of the Urban Land Institute Report (Report) and its viewpoint regarding the positive work of Staff. The Report indicated the pay in lieu of amounts for providing affordable housing units in a proposed development need to be increased. Mr. Cooper said County regulations limit that amount and explained related details.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Marilyn Mammano, 1819 SE 17th Street, Harbordale Civic Association President. Ms. Mammano discussed her viewpoint regarding this Agenda item, emphasized the importance of educating the community, and commented on related recommendations.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Ted Inserra, 912 SW 19th Street, River Oaks Civic Association President. Mr. Inserra discussed his perspective on this topic, his involvement with Staff, and remarked on the importance of addressing the needs of existing neighborhoods. Further comment and discussion ensued.

**BUS-2** [24-0089](#)

Broward County Traffic Engineering Division Presentation on Traffic Signalization - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility Department Director. Mr. Rogers provided an overview of this Agenda item.

Rasem Awwad, Broward County Traffic Engineering Division Assistant Director, narrated a presentation entitled *Traffic Signalization Presentation entitled Broward's Advanced Signal Control System - Moving Forward Into the Future*.

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

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, Mr. Awwad explained information regarding the operation of Advanced Thermal Sensor Technology and efforts to deploy new and emerging technologies such as adaptive signal control and vulnerable user detection. Mr. Awwad said he is unaware of plans to fence areas along Commercial Boulevard and Sunrise Boulevard to prevent pedestrians from crossing in areas outside of intersections. Mayor Trantalis commented on the Vision Zero goal and the need for additional efforts to assist with pedestrian safety to reduce pedestrian fatalities. Mr. Awwad concurred and noted ongoing County efforts with City Staff.

Commissioner Sturman commented on District 4 areas in the presentation. In response to Commissioner Sturman's questions, Mr. Awwad explained that those areas in District 4 fall under the systematic retiming of traffic signalization for optimal traffic signalization. When the SE 17th Bypass is implemented, the systematic retiming of traffic signalization in these areas will be reassessed.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on significant neighbor input regarding the importance of addressing traffic congestion. Further comment and discussion ensued. In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, Mr. Awwad explained that as new technology emerges, there will be improvements in dense downtown grid adaptive networks and commented on pilot programs being tested.

Charlie Zhu, Broward County Public Works Department, noted the sixteen (16) year effort associated with *Broward's Advanced Signal Control System - Moving Forward Into the Future*.

**BUS-3** [24-0213](#)

Discussion on Tunnel Top Branding - (Commission District 4)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility Department Director. Mr. Rogers provided an overview of this Agenda item and narrated a presentation entitled *Tunnel Top Branding*.

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

In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question, Mayor Trantalis confirmed formal community outreach has yet to start. In response to Mayor Trantalis' comment regarding current tunnel signage, Mr. Rogers confirmed that the Commission's direction would allow Staff to begin moving forward.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on neighbor feedback from Colee Hammock and the Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Eugenia Ellis, President & Chief Executive Officer of Riverwalk Fort Lauderdale Inc. Ms. Ellis confirmed support for Tunnel Top Park branding, fundraising, and noted the need to proceed quickly.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Melinda Bowker, 511 SE 5th Avenue, Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association President. Ms. Bowker confirmed support for Tunnel Top Park branding and discussed related information.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Rogers discussed the options moving forward based on Commission feedback and remarked on design aspects of Tunnel Top Park branding.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on the process and recommended receiving input from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) before moving forward. Mr. Rogers confirmed that following an initial meeting with FDOT on this topic, the Commission would be provided an update, after which Staff would present options and the process to the Commission. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question, Mr. Rogers said there is currently no funding and confirmed a budget needs to be developed, which could include fundraising options.

In response to Commissioner Herbst's question, Mr. Rogers explained how Staff would move forward with the process based upon Commission consensus, including informal discussions with FDOT followed by public outreach and presentation to the Public Arts and Placement Advisory Board. Commissioner Herbst remarked on neighbors along the corridor making financial contributions. Mr. Rogers said that Staff will propose a funding strategy to the Commission. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on the ability of the District 4 Commission Office to assist with a Public Workshop on this topic.

Commissioner Herbst discussed his support for Las Olas and Riverwalk branding at Tunnel Top Park. Further comment and discussion ensued.

**BUS-4** [24-0250](#)

2024 State Legislative Update - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Daphnee Sainvil, Public Affairs Manager. Ms. Sainvil provided a summary update of items under consideration at the State Legislature, including the status of appropriation requests, vacation rentals, municipal utility rates, development regulations, taxation, and other items.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Sainvil confirmed the State Statute related to vacation rentals is perpetual and does not sunset.

Commissioner Sturman commented on the negative impact of vacation rentals on the community. In response to Commissioner Sturman's questions, Ms. Sainvil discussed her perspective regarding proposed changes to vacation rental legislation, commented on related information, and recommended that constituents contact their State legislative representative to convey their concerns. Commissioner Sturman recommended the Commission adopt a Resolution stating its position.

Ms. Sainvil continued her review of updates on State legislative items.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's question, Ms. Sainvil explained the details related to proposed legislation impacting State elections and noted the possibility of additional amendments.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Geoff Rames, 2530 Gulfstream Lane, Lauderdale Isles Civic Improvement Association Vice President. Mr. Rames commented on vacation rental concerns, cited examples of meaningful enforcement, and remarked on related information. Mr. Rames discussed the negative impact that pending vacation rental legislation would have on neighbors.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Rames commented that lobbyists for vacation rental businesses are driving State legislation on this issue. Further comment and discussion ensued. Commissioner Glassman noted that the viewpoint of State legislators relates to property rights and expounded on his perspective. Mayor Trantalis said property owners are entitled to the quiet enjoyment of their property and expounded on his perspective.

Commissioner Herbst acknowledged Ms. Sainvil's work and informing residents on how best to communicate their viewpoints to State legislators.

Commissioner Sturman remarked that this issue dramatically impacts the quality of life of residents and confirmed the need to do whatever possible to address at the State level.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Sainvil explained information and details regarding the role of the City's lobbyists representing the City.

**BUS-5** [24-0192](#)

Discussion - Advisory Boards and Committees - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

City Clerk David Soloman provided an overview of this Agenda item.

Mayor Trantalis recognized William Brown, 112 N. Birch Road, and Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations (CFLCA) District 2 Representative. Mr. Brown read a prepared statement from Mary Peloquin, 2510 NE 12th Court, Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations (CFLCA) President, opposing City lobbyists serving on City Boards and Committees.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Jacquelyn Scott, 1626 SE 1st Street, and Colee Hammock Homeowners Association President. Ms. Scott spoke in opposition to lobbyists serving on City Boards and Committees.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Vanessa Apotheker, 712 SW 9th Terrace, Tarpon River Civic Association President, and Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations (CFLCA) District 4 Representative. Ms. Apotheker read prepared statement from Kitty McGowan, Edgewood Civic Association, and Nancy Long, River Oaks Civic Association, in opposition to lobbyists serving on City Boards and Committees. Ms. Apotheker read the names of additional representatives of homeowners associations and civic associations opposed to lobbyists serving on City Boards and Committees.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Melinda Bowker, 511 SE 5th Street, and Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association President. Ms. Bowker spoke in opposition to lobbyists serving on City Boards and Committees.

Commissioner Glassman reviewed items included in the backup to this Agenda item. He discussed language in Broward County's Code regarding lobbyists serving on Boards and Committees. Commissioner



Glassman quoted language in a memorandum from City Attorney Thomas Ansbro regarding lobbyists serving on Boards and Committees, discussed how other municipalities address this topic, and commented on input from residents. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman noted current Commission Member appointments of lobbyists to City Boards and Committees. In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question regarding the genesis of this discussion and whether there is a current specific concern, Mayor Trantalis noted this topic had been a point of discussion for several years, expounded on his understanding, and noted the need to avoid the appearance of impropriety or a conflict of interest, and cited examples.

Mayor Trantalis discussed his viewpoint regarding not allowing lobbyists to serve on City Boards and Committees. Commissioner Glassman concurred and expounded on his viewpoint, noting that this Commission policy would support government transparency serving the best interests of the City.

Commissioner Herbst remarked on case law regarding concerns related to free speech rights of lobbyists, which he discussed with City Attorney Ansbro. Commissioner Herbst expounded on his viewpoint regarding the advisory role of most Boards and Committees and the need to be philosophically consistent. Should the City choose to prevent lobbyists from serving on Boards and Committees, it should be all-encompassing and apply to include all City representatives on government bodies. Any person who could benefit in any manner should not sit on Boards and Committees. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis commented that Commissioner Herbst's comments have merit, remarked on his viewpoint, and cited examples of related concerns.

Commissioner Sturman noted valid points were raised by Commissioner Glassman and Commissioner Herbst. Commissioner Sturman commented on the difference between quasi-judicial Boards and other Boards and Committees. He remarked on the need to include individuals involved in City election campaigns, and cited examples. Mayor Trantalis concurred and commented on his perspective regarding the need to adhere to efforts toward transparency and good government.

City Attorney Ansbro explained the case law discussed by

Commissioner Herbst, which does not apply to this case. Commissioner Herbst explained his viewpoint regarding this topic, including the need for Board and Committee members to be content neutral. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding any legal challenges to municipalities restricting lobbyists serving on boards and committees, City Attorney Ansbro said he is unaware of any legal challenges.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on the current process whereby Commissioners nominate Board and Committee appointees that the Commission must ratify. In response to Commissioner Sturman's question, City Attorney Ansbro confirmed the same process applies to the removal of Board and Committee members.

Commissioner Glassman commented on the ability to address Commissioner Herbst's concerns related to City appointees to other governmental boards and committees and cited examples. Commissioner Glassman remarked on his viewpoint opposing Commissioner Herbst's concerns regarding members of homeowners and civic associations having conflicts of interest.

Commissioner Herbst discussed his viewpoint opposing any changes on this topic. Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman confirmed her position in opposition to making any changes and explained her position. Commissioner Sturman concurred with Commissioner Herbst's position.

In response to Commissioner Herbst's questions, City Attorney Ansbro explained the difference between City Boards and Committees, including quasi-judicial. The role of Boards and Committees is advisory. Quasi-judicial Boards are designated by the Commission to make decisions. Further comment and discussion ensued. City Attorney Ansbro remarked on the prohibition of a Board member sitting on more than one Board.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, Deputy City Attorney D'Wayne Spence explained information related to the prohibition of a member sitting on more than one Board per State Statute. He noted that a Committee or Task Force is developed to address a specific issue, has a shorter duration, and cited examples. Board Members can serve on other Committees and Task Forces.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on possible liability concerns. In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, Deputy City

Attorney Spence noted that quasi-judicial boards function as impartial fact finders and remarked on possible concerns related to that member's position on another committee, and cited examples.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's question, Deputy City Attorney Spence confirmed that committee members who also serve on a quasi-judicial board can recuse themselves.

Commissioner Glassman explained his viewpoint that members of quasi-judicial boards should not be allowed to serve on other City Boards, Committees, or Task Forces.

City Attorney Ansbro explained the need for quasi-judicial board members to be impartial and commented on recusal.

In response to Commissioner Herbst's question, Deputy City Attorney Spence explained that Advisory Boards and Committees generally have no decision-making authority.

Commissioner Glassman quoted from language included in the Board and Committee Handbook regarding defining members of City Boards and Committees as Officers of the City. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the difference between quasi-judicial Boards and other Boards and Committees and said that Commission discussion of this topic would continue.

**BUS-6** [24-0247](#)

Code of Conduct for Elected Officials Discussion - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Vanessa Apotheker, 712 SW 9th Terrace, Tarpon River Civic Association President, and Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations (CFLCA) District 4 Representative. Ms. Apotheker spoke in support of the Commission adopting a Code of Conduct for City Officials (Code of Conduct).

Mayor Trantalis recognized Jacquelyn Scott, 1626 SE 1st Street, on behalf of the Colee Hammock Homeowners Association. Ms. Scott spoke in support of the Commission adopting a Code of Conduct.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Melinda Bowker, 511 SE 5th Street, and Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association President. Ms. Bowker spoke in support of the Commission adopting a Code of Conduct.

Mayor Trantalis discussed his support of a Code of Conduct and expounded on his viewpoint.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Attorney Ansbro confirmed the Office of the City Attorney would develop a Code of Conduct based on examples in other municipalities for Commission consideration.

Commissioner Glassman recommended the Code of Conduct apply to Boards, Committees, Task Forces, and Staff. City Attorney Ansbro recommended a separate Code of Conduct for Staff. He explained information regarding the limited disciplinary action of Commission Members.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, City Attorney Ansbro explained information included in the State and County's Code of Ethics, which is applicable to the Commission. A Commission Code of Conduct would apply to Commission decorum and how Commission Members interact with each other. Commissioner Herbst concurred.

### **EXECUTIVE CLOSED DOOR SESSION - 4:30 P.M. OR AS SOON THEREAFTER AS POSSIBLE**

Mayor Trantalis announced details of the Executive Closed-Door Session.

Mayor Trantalis recessed the meeting at 4:47 p.m.

#### [24-0234](#)

The City Commission shall meet privately to discuss pending litigation, pursuant to Section 286.011(8), Florida Statutes, concerning the following matter(s):

JMS Construction Services, Inc. v. City of Fort Lauderdale  
Case No.: CACE 16-020549 (04)

Mayor Trantalis reconvened the meeting at 5:21 p.m.

### **CITY COMMISSION REPORTS**

***Members of the Commission announced recent and upcoming events.***

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman discussed meetings associated with the City assisting the Old Dillard Museum with its Centennial Celebration scheduled in April 2024.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman noted meetings with Sprouts Mobile Food. Plans are ongoing to continue this opportunity over the next three (3) months.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman discussed nominating a business owner who does not speak English to the Homeless Advisory Committee Meeting and inquired about the ability to provide an interpreter. Further comment and discussion ensued. City Manager Chavarria confirmed that Staff could accommodate this request.

In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question regarding the Ordinance allowing vendors to sell fireworks, Anthony Fajardo, Assistant City Manager, explained that the Code restricts the sale of fireworks and other items such as Christmas Trees and said this inquiry should be directed to the Development Services Department Zoning Staff.

Commissioner Glassman requested Sandra Post be remembered during tonight's Moment of Silence at the Commission Regular Meeting. He remarked on the numerous community contributions and accomplishments of Ms. Post.

Commissioner Glassman commented on the need to prepare for Spring Break due to recent actions by the City of Miami Beach. In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, City Manager Chavarria confirmed Staff has a strategy to address Spring Break concerns and expounded on related information. There is a related Walk-On item on tonight's Commission Regular Meeting Agenda. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman noted that the DRV PNK Stadium had been renamed Chase Stadium. In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions regarding naming rights, City Manager Chavarria confirmed that Staff is reviewing the Comprehensive Agreement and would provide an update.

Commissioner Sturman commented on the District 4 Townhall to discuss State vacation rental legislation, the upcoming District 4 Townhall to discuss the Tree Ordinance, and District 4 Bike Ride Events promoting outdoor parks, bike paths, and health.

Mayor Trantalis recognized upcoming City Staff retirees, including Denise Greenstein - Office of the City Manager; Dana Swisher - Police Department Assistant Chief; Desiree Laffey - Police Department Crime Scene Investigator; and David Carter - Fire-Rescue Department Battalion Chief.

Mayor Trantalis acknowledged the philanthropic efforts of the National Hockey League Florida Panthers Organization and its owner, Vinnie Viola, for reimaging the Fort Lauderdale War Memorial Auditorium.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on an upcoming meeting with Broward County Board of County Commissioners Member Lamar Fisher to tour the Port of Miami Tunnel to discuss logistics and costs associated with building and maintaining a tunnel for the New River Crossing and will provide an update to the Commission. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis welcomed the Miami Sharks, a new rugby team playing at Chase Stadium.

### **CITY MANAGER REPORTS**

City Manager Chavarria remarked on Staff efforts with Broward Health regarding Dottie Mancini Park and would provide an update when available. He discussed information regarding the new AI technology available on the City's website and via text message. City Manager Chavarria remarked on the new Police Substation at the L.A. Lee YMCA/Mizell Community Center. He confirmed the relocation of Staff at the 101 Building at the end of February 2024. City Manager Chavarria discussed the success of Neighbor Support Night and commented on events planned for the upcoming Employee Appreciation Day.

City Manager Chavarria provided an update on the renaming of DRV PNK Stadium. The Comprehensive Agreement requires prior written notice to the City but not City approval.

#### **MGR-1 [24-0232](#)**

City Commission Follow up Action Items - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 6:03 p.m.