

City of Fort Lauderdale

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



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 7, 2017

12:00 PM

**Joint Workshop with Fire-Rescue Facilities Bond Issue Blue Ribbon
Committee
City Commission Conference Room**

CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP

FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION

***JOHN P. "JACK" SEILER Mayor - Commissioner
BRUCE G. ROBERTS Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District I
DEAN J. TRANTALIS - Commissioner - District II
ROBERT L. McKINZIE - Commissioner - District III
ROMNEY ROGERS - Commissioner - District IV***

***LEE R. FELDMAN, City Manager
JOHN HERBST, City Auditor
JEFFREY A. MODARELLI, City Clerk
CYNTHIA A. EVERETT, City Attorney***

ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Vice Mayor Bruce G. Roberts, Commissioner Dean J. Trantalis, Commissioner Robert L. McKinzie, Commissioner Romney Rogers, and Mayor John P. "Jack" Seiler

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Also Present: City Manager Lee R. Feldman, City Auditor John Herbst, City Clerk Jeffrey A. Modarelli, City Attorney Cynthia A. Everett

Fire-Rescue Facilities Bond Issue Blue Ribbon Committee

Members: Chair Thornie Jarrett, Vice Chair Douglas Meade, Mark Booth, Frederick H. Nesbitt, Doug Ruth, Fred C. Snedaker, Jr., Patrick McTigue

No e-comments were submitted for this Workshop

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Seiler called the Fire-Rescue Facilities Bond Issue Blue Ribbon Committee and City Commission Joint Workshop of June 7, 2017, to order at 12:09 p.m.

Fire Bond Financial Status

City Manager Feldman gave a financial status update on the Fire Bond funds, confirming he believes the Fire Bond has sufficient funds for Fire Station 54, Fire Station 13 and Fire Station 8. City Manager Feldman confirmed the following:

- Fire Station 54 has been awarded
- Fire Station 8 costs will depend on its location
- Fire Station 13 costs will depend on its location.

To the extent that there are insufficient funds for these fire stations, the General Fund will contribute funds to make up any deficiency.

Mayor Seiler asked if there were any questions or any additional comments about the financial status of the Fire Bond. There were no

questions or comments.

Fire Station 13 Status

Mayor Seiler requested a status update on Fire Station 13. City Manager Feldman confirmed he has not been able to make progress with the Florida Department of Environment Protection (FDEP) due to the ending of the Legislative Session and recent appointment of a new Secretary of the FDEP. The lobbying team is in the process of setting up a meeting with the Secretary of FDEP. City Manager Feldman stated he is not optimistic about getting the site on the water approved due to State rules but he will continue towards achieving this goal.

Mayor Seiler asked all attendees to confirm the preference for Option One, having Fire Station 13 on the water to accommodate Fire Boat Rescue. There was consensus on this issue.

Chair Jarrett discussed Option Two, Fire Station 13 being rebuilt at its current location. He said that during construction, approximately \$500,000 would need to be spent on a temporary fire station at another location. As such, Chair Jarrett emphasized the importance of relocating Fire Station 13 near the water or a short distance west of its current location.

In response Mayor Seiler's inquiry about the implications of moving Fire Station 13 a short distance west and its impact upon current access, traffic signaling, etc., Fire Rescue Chief Robert Hoecherl confirmed traffic signaling would remain the same and the driveway would need to be extended. Chief Hoecherl confirmed the footprint would be increased by 40 feet to a 200 x 200 footprint.

In order to give direction to City Manager Feldman, Mayor Seiler asked members of the Fire-Rescue Facilities Bond Issue Blue Ribbon Committee (Committee) for their agreement with the following options regarding relocating Fire Station 13:

Option 1. Waterfront property with fire boat access with a deadline or

Option 2. A new fire station on the existing parcel a short distance west.

Chair Jarrett commented on Option 2, stating there are no nearby locations for a temporary fire station, noting the \$500,000 cost.

Commissioner Rogers asked City Manager Feldman about the easement allowing for an extension of the current footprint. City Manager Feldman said he would have to confirm but it should not be

an issue. Discussions continued on using the existing station until the new station is built just west of the current station. Chair Jarrett stated any parking issues related to this option could be worked out and building a new station a short distance west would be manageable.

City Manager Feldman explained the process for building on State land, including environmental concerns. He emphasized this may necessitate a temporary station while the new station is built on the existing site. City Manager Feldman said an area on the south side of Sunrise Boulevard may work and discussed other options to reduce the \$500,000 expense for a temporary fire station.

City Manager Feldman confirmed the urgency of Fire Station 13, stating on a scale of 1 to 10, he would put it at a 7. In the next 30 days he will need to determine if the FDEP will entertain discussions. Mayor Seiler stated, from the aerial view, there looks to be enough room to locate Fire Station 13 next to the existing one without going all the way to the water. Mr. Snedaker confirmed there is enough room, though not on the existing footprint. Chief Hoecherl commented on the existing footprint and the new 200 x 200 footprint, stating he was not sure how the City would be allowed to expand the additional 40 feet.

At the request of Mayor Seiler, City Clerk Modarelli put Google Maps on the television screen. Discussions continued on the Army Corp of Engineers being consulted on putting Fire Station 13 on the water.

Mayor Seiler inquired about construction on the parking area to concurrently keep the station open to ensure no downtime. Board Member Patrick McTigue said the underside of the fire station is larger than the current parking area. City Manager Feldman confirmed a portion of the current parking is an easement. Vice Chair Meade pointed out a buffer area on the Google map. City Manager Feldman commented on environmental issues with the State. Mayor Seiler requested City Manager Feldman set a deadline to act on this matter. Discussions continued on the timeframe for the deadline. Vice Chair Meade suggested making the building an "L" shape to allow the building to have a garage in front and the fire house in the rear. The cost of a design and a temporary station was discussed. Chair Jarrett confirmed a design has not yet been completed.

Chair Jarrett stated Fire Station 13 is on a six lane highway, noting the convenience of having a drive through station, confirming Fire Station 13 should have this ability.

In response to Chair Jarrett's inquiry, Fire Chief Hoecherl suggested a

ladder truck could be utilized in a drive through station, though significant maneuvering and backing into the station would be required. Chair Jarrett commented that Fire Station 13 is the most dangerous station to back in and out of in the City. Fire Chief Hoecherl noted those reasons included its construction in 1972 with the intention of housing two fire trucks. He confirmed two additional fire trucks have since been added.

In response to Mayor Seiler's question, Chief Hoecherl stated this new fire station will probably be three or four bays. Mayor Seiler asked Chief Hoecherl about Vice Chair Meade's earlier comment regarding designing the station to have four bays toward the front. Mr. Snedaker confirmed this could be done. The building would probably have to be two stories. Discussions continued on maneuverability and having four bays. Vice Chair Meade discussed ways to design the fire station, allowing for two bays in front and two bays in the rear with a drive-through for the larger trucks and smaller bays for the other trucks. City Manager Feldman suggested not designing the station until there is an understanding of the FDEP parameters.

Mr. Nesbitt asked City Manager Feldman about the timetable needed to get a solid answer from the State in order to proceed. City Manager Feldman reiterated his previous statement of 30 days to determine if FDEP will entertain the City's requests. Mayor Seiler stated he would get involved as he has dealt with FDEP in other areas, and that he does not want to limit the timeframe to 30 days.

Mr. Ruth asked if the City is in a position to bargain with the State for something the City can offer in exchange for the requested land. Commissioner Rogers commented on the improvements done to Birch State Park.

Mayor Seiler confirmed consensus of a 90-day deadline for Option One and Option Two.

Fire Station 8 Status

Mayor Seiler thanked Commissioner Rogers for his efforts with Fire Station 8 to achieve the goal of locating a site that meets the necessary coverage in District IV. Mayor Seiler discussed the possibility of utilizing Hardy Park, confirming his position this is not a good option. For purposes of discussion, he would like to consider making the site on SW 17th Street work for Fire Station 8, with an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Substation further to the east.

City Manager Feldman commented on the work completed, noting there is a 90% design plan for Fire Station 8 at the SW 17th Street

site. He also commented on the deadline to spend the Fire Bond proceeds. Unless there is a compelling reason, he and Staff will recommend moving forward with the SW 17th Street location. City Manager Feldman stated further discussions about a future EMS Substation to the north should continue.

City Manager Feldman reconfirmed Fire Station 54 has been awarded. The bid for Fire Station 8 could be out in several days. Therefore, all focus could be put on acquiring the land for Fire Station 13.

Commission Rogers expounded on his work to find an alternative location for Fire Station 8, due to the limitations of size and cost. He confirmed the importance of safety and the time constraints involved, acknowledging the need for an EMS Substation to the north.

Chair Thornie Jarrett stated the Fire Bond Committee did not suggest Hardy Park, noting it was recommended by City Manager Feldman. He confirmed the Committee position that the SW 17th Street location is not the correct site for Fire Station 8, referencing 2016 Call Volumes and advising this station belongs further north.

A copy of the 2016 Call Volumes is attached to these minutes.

Chair Jarrett said the ideal footprint would be 30,000 square feet for a three bay fire station. Mr. Snedaker confirmed the station would be just less than one acre. Chair Jarrett discussed significant EPA issues at the SW 17th Street location.

Commissioner Trantalis asked Chair Jarrett if the referenced call volume map considers future growth and development. Discussions continued on future development in the SW and downtown areas. Chair Jarrett expressed his concern about future funding to build the needed EMS substation, commenting on how it differs from a regular fire station. He said an EMS Substation has one less bay, noting the associated reduction in costs. He stated he would recommend the location of an EMS substation north of the river.

Committee Member Patrick McTigue thanked everyone for this additional review, the importance of these issues to the Commission, Fire Bond Committee Members, and for the betterment of the community and its citizens. He confirmed his agreement with the SW 17th Street site with a later determination on an EMS Substation for medical support in areas to the north. Commissioner McKinzie concurred.

Committee Member Mark Booth stated Hardy Park is a better choice,

noting the majority of the Committee is against the SW 17th Street site. He confirmed a decision should not be delayed. He stated his support of the fire station site at Hardy Park and if not, moving forward with SW 17th Street site.

Committee Member Doug Ruth stated if medical considerations are the issue, an EMS substation should be built in lieu of a fire station. He suggested aggressively pursuing another site for the fire station by utilizing incentives. City Manager Feldman discussed the efforts by Staff in this regard. Further discussions and comments ensued on the pursuit of this recommendation and the high cost of real estate in the area.

Committee Member Frederick Nesbitt commented on the deadline set at the previous workshop meeting, confirming the need to move forward with the SW 17th Street location. He noted the EMS Substation is a good idea to provide the City with the best protection. City Manager Feldman estimated the cost of an EMS Substation would be approximately \$2,000,000 - \$2,500,000.

Committee Member Fred Snedaker concurred that the SW 17th Street site is good but Hardy Park would be a better alternative site. He acknowledged the difficulty involved with Hardy Park, similar to what was experienced at the Mills Pond Park. He recommended moving forward with the SW 17th Street location and vigorous pursuit of other locations for an EMS Substation to the north, acknowledging the need to serve future development and medical emergencies. He recommended charging developers Fire Impact Fees to fund the EMS Substation, noting the significant increase in development.

Commissioner Trantalis discussed options for utilizing Hardy Park. Commissioner Rogers commented on past discussions of using Hardy Park as a fire station site, confirming all preliminary designs encroached on the tennis courts and new parking encroached on the shuffle board courts.

Mayor Seiler suggested using City property for the EMS Substation and moving forward with the SW 17th Street site. Public Works Deputy Director Alan Dodd explained the four configurations previously considered for having the fire station at Hardy Park, confirming they were all for a one story building with two bays. He also noted the impact of two nearby buildings eligible for consideration for historic designation in addition to a nearby lift station and water mains.

Chair Jarrett commented that the designs being considered are for

one-story stations, noting a two story station would allow for a smaller footprint. Comments and discussions ensued on what was involved in building a fire station at Mills Pond Park. Commissioner Trantalis acknowledged the push back from the neighborhood should Hardy Park be used for Fire Station 8.

Vice Chair Douglas Meade commented on thinking “outside the box” for a better location, i.e., a smaller building design footprint with parking on the top level. He stated that the SW 17th Street location will serve the purpose at hand. He warned about the consequences of a rush and making an incorrect decision, commenting on other possible ways to achieve a better result.

Commissioner Rogers commented on the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) using the SW 17th Street location for future use as a commuter station, commenting the EMS Station should be located north towards the river, near downtown. He continued discussions on future MPO plans for commuter stations, noting their next step will be downtown. Mr. Snedaker asked if there was any City owned property south of the River.

Mayor Seiler raised the option of a public/private partnership for an EMS Substation with a developer. City Manager Feldman commented on other municipalities using Fire Impact Fees to build fire stations and purchasing fire apparatus. He stated he will do more research to determine feasibility. Commissioner Rogers and Vice Mayor Roberts commented on the transit oriented development coming in the future and the need to be ahead of the curve in the South Andrews area.

Vice Mayor Rogers discussed locating the EMS Substation closer to the river and downtown and the need for City Manager Feldman to work towards negotiating with developers to build an EMS substation within their developments. He noted public/private developments such as these are located primarily in areas north of South Florida. He also recommended looking for a second EMS Substation east, near the beach area.

Mayor Seiler discussed other Florida counties with Fire Impact Fees, stating none were in major metropolitan areas. Chair Jarrett suggested building an EMS Substation with the funds allocated for Fire Station 8. This would address the immediate needs of the City rather than building a fire station where it is not needed, commenting on the savings and a smaller footprint.

In response to Mayor Seiler’s question, Chief Hoecherl discussed efforts to put a fire station on the east side of the railroad tracks and

the need to shore up coverage in the southeast area. He confirmed future development supports a fire station at the SW 17th Street location, confirming its coverage of both Port Everglades and Fort Lauderdale International Airport. This is in addition to housing the Hazardous Materials (Hazmat) Team at this fire station. Chief Hoecherl confirmed that \$450,000 is received annually from the County to house the Hazmat Team in the City and this is the proper location.

Vice Mayor Roberts reiterated the need to build for the future and the importance of building a full-fledged building and facility.

Mr. Snedaker asked Chief Hoecherl about the closure of 2nd Street and if there has been any degradation in response times. Chief Hoecherl confirmed it has an impact on response times. The only fire stations currently available for the south side of the City are located at Snyder Park on the west side of the railroad tracks or Fire Station 49 at the Bahia Mar site. He confirmed the need for resources south of the river. Chief Hoecherl confirmed his support of the SW 17th Street site and the need to move forward. At a later date, the need for an EMS Substation for the downtown area can be addressed. Mayor Seiler confirmed his support of putting aside \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000 from next year's budget for the EMS Substation.

Vice Chair Meade asked about a previous fire station located on Sunrise Boulevard near Federal Highway, asking if the City owned that land. Commissioner Trantalis confirmed this land had been sold.

Mayor Seiler acknowledged there was not unanimous support but there was a consensus to move forward quickly with the SW 17th Street fire station. Additionally, he confirmed Chair Jarrett's recommendation of looking at the area of SW 6th and SW 7th Street to build an EMS Substation with existing land owned by the City or through a public/private partnership. He recommended the Commission allocate funds from the 2018 budget for the EMS Substation. Vice Mayor Roberts confirmed his support of committing those funds as the 2018 budget is being developed. Discussions continued on committing funds for the EMS Substation and possible opportunities for its location.

Commissioner Trantalis questioned possible opportunities (illustrated on the map shown on screen). Chair Jarrett commented on the type of property needed such as an office building or parking building where sirens would not impact tenants.

Mayor Seiler reconfirmed the plan to build the fire station on SW 17th

Street with plans to build an EMS Substation at a location to be determined. Mayor Seiler asked if there were any further comments or discussion items. There were none.

Commissioner Rogers and Mayor Seiler thanked the Fire Bond Committee for their 13 years of hard work. Chair Jarrett thanked the Commission for their consideration of the Committee's recommendations. Mayor Seiler acknowledged Chief Hoecherl's recommendation, confirming the need to begin the SW 17th Street for Fire Station 8 project, recognizing the City's Fire Department is one of the most respected in the country.

Mayor Seiler requested a meeting in September 2017 to revisit Fire Station 13 and make a final decision on its location. Mr. Nesbitt requested a sketch of the available options on Sunrise for Fire Station 13. Mayor Seiler confirmed and requested City Manager to have this available for the September meeting. City Manager Feldman confirmed.

Open Items

Mayor Seiler asked if there were any open items. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Fire-Rescue Facilities Bond Issue Blue Ribbon Committee at the meeting on June 7, 2017, Mayor Seiler adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m.