

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

1:30 PM

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

City Commission Conference Meeting

FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION

DEAN J. TRANTALIS Mayor

STEVEN GLASSMAN Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District II

JOHN C. HERBST Commissioner - District I

PAM BEASLEY-PITTMAN Commissioner - District III

WARREN STURMAN Commissioner - District IV

SUSAN GRANT, Acting City Manager

DAVID R. SOLOMAN, City Clerk

D'WAYNE M. SPENCE, Deputy City Attorney

PATRICK REILLY, City Auditor

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 1:42 p.m.

COMMISSION QUORUM ESTABLISHED

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

Commission Members Not Present: Commissioner John C. Herbst

Also Present: Acting City Manager Susan Grant, City Clerk David R. Soloman, Interim City Attorney D'Wayne M. Spence, and City Auditor Patrick Reilly

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

BUS-1 [24-0899](#)

Building a Resilient Fort Lauderdale: Developing Criteria for Road Elevation; Urban Land Institute (ULI) Report - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Julie Medley, Executive Director of Urban Land Institute Southeast Florida/Caribbean. Ms. Medley narrated a presentation entitled *Building a Resilient Fort Lauderdale: Developing Criteria for Road Elevation*.

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

Mayor Trantalis recognized Jim Heid, Urban Land Institute Panel Chair, Mr. Heid continued narrating the presentation.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding ULI's consideration of flood plains versus anticipated sea-level rise in the City, Mr. Heid explained ULI's projections and recommendations through 2040. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Dr. Nancy Gassman, Public Works Department Deputy Director - Chief Resilience Officer. Dr. Gassman narrated the portion of the presentation entitled *Fortify Fort Lauderdale Building a Resilient Future in Fort Lauderdale*. Dr. Gassman requested Commission feedback on ULI Criteria and Staff recommendations.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's questions, Dr. Gassman explained how current plans differ from previously discussed resiliency concerns along neighborhood roadways such as Mola Drive. This Agenda item prioritizes commuter roads, critical roadways, and ULI criteria over identifying neighborhood roadways prone to flooding.

Dr. Gassman commented on unique aspects of Mola Drive and its adjacent homes and cited examples. Further comment and discussion ensued. Vice Mayor Glassman commented on feedback from residents regarding resiliency challenges and the need for additional discussion. He recommended increased communication with residents, educating the community on the City's efforts to address resiliency, and cited examples. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on the efforts of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) over the years to develop roadway infrastructure, efforts to address sea-level rise with higher seawalls, and the importance of raising roadways to address resiliency. In response to Commissioner Sturman's question, Dr. Gassman explained what is involved in raising roadways, its complicated nature and challenges, and cited examples. Further comment and discussion ensued. Commissioner Sturman remarked on the significant costs involved in raising roadways.

In response to Commissioner Beasley-Pittman's question regarding what will be needed to pursue a Resiliency Master Plan (RMP), Dr. Gassman noted the significant amount of data the City has and explained the need to hire consultants with transportation and utility experience to analyze and begin RMP efforts.

In response to Commissioner Beasley-Pittman's question, Dr. Gassman explained a significant challenge will be harmonizing raised roadways with adjacent properties and cited examples. Mr. Heid confirmed the vital nature of community education regarding an RMP in addition to technical consultant expertise.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding the feasibility of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Flood Plain Buyout Program included in the ULI Report, Mr. Heid explained related ULI Panel discussions and remarked on the need to begin laying the foundation, tools, and communications for a type of funding mechanism to move forward.

Dr. Gassman expounded on her viewpoint regarding the evolution of the

City and resiliency efforts going forward. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on his perspective regarding costs and discussed the cost of not taking action.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his viewpoint regarding resiliency issues on Mola Drive and the ability to mitigate versus the ability to find solutions. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the need to consider the feasibility of raising roads.

Mayor Trantalis discussed Las Olas Boulevard, an evacuation route, its resiliency needs and commented that a large number of impacted community stakeholders live in surrounding neighborhoods. He remarked on other evacuation routes, including Commercial Boulevard, Sunrise Boulevard, and Broward Boulevard. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis noted that discussions during his attendance at a recent MPO Meeting focused on addressing resiliency needs by the year 2100. Mayor Trantalis confirmed the need to focus on resiliency needs by 2040.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Ted Inserra, 912 SW 19th Street, River Oaks Civic Association President. Mr. Inserra discussed his viewpoint regarding this Agenda item and cited examples of resiliency concerns.

Mayor Trantalis said that neighborhoods experiencing flooding is primarily due to their lack of stormwater drainage infrastructure when they were developed. Recent development in other areas do not contribute to those flooding concerns. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Mayor Glassman concurred with Mayor Trantalis' comments and discussed his perspective and efforts when he was a Planning and Zoning Board member.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on the need to address increasing groundwater elevation. In response to Commissioner Sturman's questions, Dr. Gassman confirmed the need to consider increasing groundwater elevations, noted that Broward County (County) has developed a future groundwater elevation table map that will impact land use and development, and explained related information. Dr. Gassman explained the advantages of pumping water during flooding events versus relying on gravity and noted the impact of a higher water table that will impact capacity.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's questions, Dr. Gassman commented on the history of the Riverland and Edgewood neighborhoods and the decision to prioritize infrastructure stormwater projects in those neighborhoods. Dr. Gassman confirmed recent efforts and standards implemented to address the impact of climate change and concurred that development in other areas of the City does not impact the Riverland and Edgewood neighborhoods. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Tricia Halliday, 50 Nurmi Drive. Ms. Halliday discussed her viewpoint regarding this Agenda item, requested input from Mark Hagerty, Flood Plain Manager, and noted that the City is ranked seven (7) in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (NFI Rating System).

Dr. Gassman commented on the NFI Rating System relative to the cost of National Flood Insurance and discussed related information and efforts by the City to improve the City's NFI ranking.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question, Dr. Gassman explained the related process and anticipated timeline.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Suzee Bailey, 105 Nurmi Drive. Ms. Bailey discussed her water conservation and resiliency efforts. She expounded on her viewpoint associated with this Agenda item and the need for thorough communication with residents and including residents in resilience efforts.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Jerry Bailey, 105 Nurmi Drive. Mr. Bailey discussed his viewpoint regarding this Agenda item and addressing resiliency during King Tides. Dr. Gassman discussed the history and ongoing concerns regarding tidal valves to address King Tide flooding and expounded on plans in 2025.

Vice Mayor Glassman commented on the increased intensity of the King Tides and expounded on his perspective. Dr. Gassman confirmed and explained related data and details. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on resiliency goals and necessary measures to ensure Las Olas Boulevard remains dry during a storm surge.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Mike Schneider, 139 Fiesta Way. Mr.

Schneider discussed his viewpoint regarding this Agenda item, including proactive efforts by Staff to prevent vehicles from entering flooded areas and residents having access to current and future resiliency plans.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman remarked on her perspective regarding weather events and the impact on residents and the need to balance neighbor resiliency education efforts with the projected lengthy timelines to rectify flooding. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question, Dr. Gassman confirmed City Master Plans are posted on the City's website and expounded on related information.

Acting City Manager Grant explained monthly updates are provided on the website and to neighborhood associations. Further comment and discussion ensued. Dr. Gassman noted that neighbors who sign up can access real-time information during weather events and cited examples.

Vice Mayor Glassman recommended that Staff pursue informing residents of how to access information on the City's website.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's question, Dr. Gassman discussed how residents can proactively access infrastructure project information and significant weather events on the City's website.

Vice Mayor Glassman commented on his recommendation to hire a Resilience Officer for proactive neighborhood efforts associated with King Tide flooding events. Dr. Gassman remarked on proactive efforts by Staff during King Tides.

Acting City Manager Grant said Staff will provide an update on Vice Mayor Glassman's flood-related recommendations in January 2025.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Charles King, 105 N. Victoria Park Road. Mr. King discussed his viewpoint regarding this Agenda item as it relates to new construction and other flood concerns in his neighborhood.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman and Mayor Trantalis' questions, Chris Cooper, Acting Assistant City Manager, explained information about existing Code requirements for new construction and home remodeling related to current flood regulations and drainage requirements. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's question, Mr. Cooper noted an

updated Flood Zone Map that requires increased elevations for new construction.

Commissioner Sturman discussed flooding concerns at Broward Health, requiring activation of its Emergency Operations Center, the impact on hospital Staff, and cited examples. In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, Commissioner Sturman remarked on flooded locations, including Andrews Avenue. Acting City Manager Grant confirmed that Staff will contact Broward Health to address those concerns. Further comment and discussion ensued. Dr. Gassman explained Staff efforts to address drainage on flooded roads near Broward Health and explained that roads adjacent to Broward Heath are Broward County roads.

In response to Dr. Gassman's request for Commission feedback, Mayor Trantalis recommended that Staff pursue a phased approach to the new Vulnerability Assessment for the RMP starting with known vulnerable areas.

Vice Mayor Glassman recommended a holistic approach to the Vulnerability Assessment and a phased approach to the implementation of corrective measures in the RMP. Dr. Gassman confirmed and remarked on the need for funding.

CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

Members of the Commission announced recent and upcoming events.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman remarked on attending the National League of Cities Conference in Tampa, where topics discussed included homelessness and other municipal issues. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Commissioner Beasley-Pittman commented that the City is on track with homelessness efforts and is consistent with national efforts.

Vice Mayor Glassman remarked on Chris Barnett being recognized by Ernst and Young as Entrepreneur of the Year for establishing the ABA Center. Further comment and discussion ensued. Mayor Trantalis said this illustrates the growth and importance of the financial services industry, which is part of the City's new economic base.

Vice Mayor Glassman requested a discussion at an upcoming Conference Meeting regarding lobbyists sitting on Boards and Committees and remarked on possible carve-outs for specific Boards and Committees. Mayor Trantalis suggested including this topic during

the Commission's January 2025 Goal Setting Session.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's request for additional information related to the proposed Noise Ordinance, Chris Cooper, Acting Assistant City Manager, introduced Katrina Johnson, Development Services Department Code Compliance Manager.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's questions, Ms. Johnson discussed the recommendations included in a presentation entitled *NCAC and Staff Recommendations*.

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

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's questions related to this discussion of the Noise Ordinance adhering to the required process, Interim City Attorney Spence explained the process. Commission recommendations or changes to the Noise Ordinance should be discussed during the Regular Meeting when the Noise Ordinance is heard. Vice Mayor Glassman remarked on his perspective and concerns. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's questions, Ms. Johnson explained information regarding dBC and dBA decibel limits. Further comment and discussion ensued. Anthony Fajardo, Assistant City Manager, noted that the noise consultant had indicated that there is approximately ten (10) decibels between dBC and dBA decibels. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's question regarding the Noise Ordinance applying to a business on State Road 84, which is not located in an Entertainment District, Interim City Attorney Spence confirmed the Noise Ordinance will apply City-wide.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

MGR-1 [24-1081](#)

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

Acting City Manager Grant confirmed a Walk-On Item at tonight's Commission Regular Meeting to certify the results of the municipal election.

Mayor Trantalis recessed the meeting at 4:03 p.m.

Mayor Trantalis reconvened the meeting at 5:15 p.m. and announced the

Executive Closed-Door Session.

**EXECUTIVE CLOSED DOOR SESSION - 5:15 P.M. OR AS SOON THEREAFTER AS
POSSIBLE**

[24-1122](#)

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

LaToya Ratlieff v. City of Fort Lauderdale, et al. Case No.:
22-cv-61029-RAR

Mayor Trantalis announced the Executive Closed-Door Session concerning the above matter:

Present at the attorney-client session will be:

Mayor Dean J. Trantalis
Vice Mayor/Commissioner Steven Glassman
Commissioner John C. Herbst
Commissioner Pamela Beasley-Pittman
Commissioner Warren Sturman
Acting City Manager Susan Grant
Interim City Attorney D'Wayne M. Spence
Assistant City Attorney Robert M. Oldershaw
Outside Counsel Jeffery R. Lawley, Esq., Billing, Cochran, Lyles, et al.
Outside Co-Counsel Scott D. Alexander, Esq., Johnson Anselmo, et al.,
and
Certified Court Reporter from Bailey-Entin Court Reporting

The estimated length of this session will be approximately 30 minutes.

Mayor Trantalis announced the reconvening of the Conference Meeting at 6:04 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis announced the termination of the Executive Closed-Door Session and adjourned the meeting at 6:05 p.m.