

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Friday, January 19, 2024

12:00 PM

Commission Prioritization Workshop

Fort Lauderdale Executive Red Tails Conference Room

6000 NW 21st Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

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

THOMAS J. ANSBRO, City Attorney

PATRICK REILLY, City Auditor

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m.

COMMISSION QUORUM ESTABLISHED

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

OLD/NEW BUSINESS**BUS-1** [24-0155](#)

Fiscal Year 2025 City Commission Prioritization Workshop -
(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the format of the City Commission Prioritization Workshop (Workshop).

City Manager Chavarria provided opening remarks regarding Staff efforts, the importance of public participation, and introduced a video about the *City's Vision Plan*.

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

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Manager Chavarria confirmed how Staff will increase public participation and transparency and cited examples.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Laura Reece, Office of Management and Budget Director. Ms. Reece narrated a presentation entitled *CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE - VISION STRATEGY ACTION*.

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

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the limited number of parcels available for constructing single-family homes in the City and varying daily population demographics. Further comment and discussion ensued. Commissioner Herbst discussed the impact of these demographics on public safety needs and cited examples. Mayor Trantalis concurred.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the large amount of tourism tax dollars generated in the City and received by Broward County (County) and expounded on his perspective. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Reece explained information regarding the company partnering with the City to administer statistically valid surveys, discussed related information, and cited examples.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman remarked on the lower Average Median Income (AMI) in District 3 compared to other areas of the City. She commented on her perspective and noted the need for an affordable housing discussion with the County relative to the AMI formula utilized by the County to ensure a level playing field.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the benchmarks included in the presentation and noted positive feedback from residents regarding public safety, cleanliness and maintenance efforts, and noted that safety varies in different areas. Ms. Reece remarked on Staff efforts. Commissioner Herbst noted feedback from District 1 residents regarding the negative impact of the large influx of homelessness, which creates safety concerns. He cited examples and expounded on his perspective.

Commissioner Sturman confirmed public safety is a top concern of District 4 residents and expounded on related information. Commissioner Herbst remarked on Staff efforts to address homelessness disbursed throughout the Districts, which contribute to public safety concerns and explained related information.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman remarked on her viewpoint regarding the accuracy of benchmarks included in the presentation and City surveys. She discussed the need to ensure the surveys include District 3 residents.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman discussed the following District 3 priorities, including the need to address gun violence that requires a strategic plan and an increased Police presence. Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman confirmed support of the Broward County School Board creating its own police force that would allow police officers to return to addressing other public safety needs. She confirmed the need to replicate cleanliness and maintenance efforts on the barrier island in all areas of the City.

Commissioner Glassman noted the in-depth information included in the

presentation and cited examples. In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, Ms. Reece detailed survey responses and confirmed she would provide additional information. Commissioner Glassman expounded on his viewpoint and survey results. He noted resident perception does not match the City's efforts on items of concern. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Fort Lauderdale Police Department (FLPD) Chief (Chief) William Schultz. Chief Schultz discussed FLPD efforts to address public safety, which includes a focused, aggressive approach with local, state, and federal officials over the next ninety (90) days.

In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question, Chief Schultz said the FLPD will be assisted by the Broward County Sheriff's Office, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and analysts from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI).

City Manager Chavarria discussed the Bloomberg Philanthropies' Mayors Challenge (Bloomberg Challenge), which was an event attended by Mayor Trantalis and Staff. Mayor Trantalis explained goals of the Bloomberg Challenge addressing municipal concerns. Ms. Reece expounded on Staff efforts, related information and noted they will be presented to the Commission. Mayor Trantalis remarked on his ongoing participation in the Bloomberg Challenge.

Commissioner Herbst said his comments regarding goals and priorities include Citywide and District 1 perspectives. He discussed homelessness, expounded on his viewpoint, acknowledged Staff efforts, and noted that homelessness will be an ongoing challenge. Commissioner Herbst remarked on the need for faith-based organizations to follow-up and disburse homeless individuals following feedings in areas of District 1.

Commissioner Herbst said public safety is a top priority City-wide, discussed related concerns, and cited examples.

Commissioner Herbst confirmed the construction of Lockhart Park is a top District 1 priority. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Commissioner Herbst said the sixty percent (60%) design phase will be presented in February 2024 and explained related information. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Commissioner Herbst confirmed efforts are ongoing to schedule continued mediation negotiations with Miami Beckham United, LLC (Inter Miami) for the development of Lockhart Park.

Commissioner Herbst noted additional items of concern in District 1 include ensuring quality roadway conditions. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the underlying causes of this concern in all Districts.

Commissioner Herbst discussed examples of the positive impact of micro transit and the need to expand micro transit to better serve residents, cited examples, and noted continued population increases impacting traffic concerns.

Commissioner Herbst confirmed the critical need to continue actively hiring public safety personnel, the importance of moving forward with the vision for a new City Hall, and planning for anticipated future needs of the George T. Lohmeyer Wastewater Treatment Plant (GTL). Commissioner Herbst discussed information related to these needs, including the City improving long-term planning. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, City Manager Chavarria discussed details related to the impact of infiltration and inflow (I&I) on GTL capacity and remarked on a possible second wastewater facility. Alan Dodd, Public Works Director, explained recent correspondence from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) stating GTL permit capacity had been increased, allowing sufficient capacity for the next ten (10) years. Mr. Dodd expounded on future efforts to ensure adequate capacity.

Commissioner Herbst discussed efforts necessary to plan beyond ten (10) years relative to GTL expansion and cited examples. It was confirmed there is no space on the GTL footprint for expansion.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's questions, Mr. Dodd said GTL is approximately thirty-five (35) to forty (40) years old and is anticipated to be in operation for the next twenty (20) to thirty (30) years with ongoing augmentation and supplementation efforts. Commissioner Herbst remarked on the need for awareness about this topic, including starting conversations with the County about GTL expansion.

Commissioner Herbst discussed corporations purchasing twenty percent (20%) of new residential housing listings for short-term rentals in areas not zoned for commercial use. He remarked on the negative impact on residents' sense of community and acknowledged constraints implemented by the State of Florida (State).

Commissioner Glassman said his priorities include Public Safety, homelessness, resilience, infrastructure and related improvements, traffic

management, revitalization of the Himmarshee District, incentivizing historic preservation, utility undergrounding, improving barrier island landscape maintenance, ensuring clean waterways, and moving forward with plans for LauderTrail. Commissioner Glassman discussed in-depth details associated with each priority and cited examples. He recommended developing Master Plans for each neighborhood.

Commissioner Glassman discussed needs and concerns expressed by residents. He remarked on the need to update residents on the status of City Hall. City Manager Chavarria confirmed plans to demolish the existing building are scheduled for August 2024.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, City Manager Chavarria explained the fluctuating nature of information received from the County regarding its plans for the County Public Library.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Mr. Dodd confirmed that the current utility undergrounding in District 2 is expected to be completed in February 2024, followed by roadway restoration and cleanup. Commissioner Glassman remarked on input from Las Olas Isles neighborhoods requesting utility undergrounding.

Commissioner Glassman commented on additional feedback from District 2 residents, including requests for improved coordination of roadway detours. Commissioner Glassman noted reduced vacation rental complaints and improved neighbor communications resulting from the Civic Associations Presidents Roundtable.

Mayor Trantalis recessed the meeting at 2:03 p.m.

Mayor Trantalis reconvened the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman discussed District 3 priorities, confirmed Public Safety is a top concern, commented on discussions with Chief Schultz, confirmed the need for additional police staffing, and a Police Substation in District 3.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman noted additional priorities include affordable housing needs in District 3 and throughout the City. She remarked on the ability of developers to pay into the Affordable Housing Trust instead of providing ten percent (10%) of new affordable housing units. Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman reiterated concerns regarding the AMI formula used by the County to qualify for affordable housing units, noting it applies to Workforce Housing, and requested a discussion on this topic with the County. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis discussed his perspective, efforts and incentives related to higher-paying skilled job opportunities. He commented on the need to determine how to locate lower-income housing units throughout the City. Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman concurred and expounded on her viewpoint that include opportunities associated with the National League of Cities *Good Jobs, Great Cities Academy*. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman discussed the need to address several areas of infrastructure in District 3, including roadway improvements, stormwater and broadband infrastructure, and cited examples.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman confirmed the importance of education, the need to fill the City's Chief Education Officer position, and the need for Commission Members to actively recruit residents to serve on the Education Advisory Board. She remarked on other educational concerns, including under-enrollment at legacy schools.

Mayor Trantalis discussed his viewpoint regarding the Broward County School Board and the City's expectation of excellence. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman discussed food insecurity needs in District 3, ways to address it, and the goal of providing a grocery store in the District. Commissioner Glassman commented on the weekend Farmers Market in District 2 as a possible opportunity for a location in District 3. Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman concurred and discussed related information.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman remarked on the need to clean and maintain New River waterway quality in District 3 and expounded on related information.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman confirmed additional priorities that include the need for equitable City non-profit funding in District 3, increased funding for City-wide events held in District 3, and additional funding for Carter Park. Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman discussed the need for Commission collaboration and a holistic view moving forward.

Commissioner Sturman concurred with Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's remarks regarding District 3 being a food desert and the need to address, and the importance of education. He remarked on the District 4 Goals and Priorities Workshop with residents and discussed related information and resident input. District 4 priorities include expediting the

Tree Ordinance, and he suggested a Commission Workshop to obtain resident input.

Commissioner Sturman explained additional District 4 priorities include sidewalks, moving forward with LauderTrail and other biking infrastructure. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sturman discussed feedback from District 4 residents who indicated that current trees located along Las Olas Boulevard should remain. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Manager Chavarria provided a related update on the Las Olas Mobility Plan design efforts. There would be two (2) designs presented, one (1) design will preserve the median with trees and one (1) design that relocates shade trees on widened sidewalks.

Commissioner Sturman remarked on resident feedback regarding a previous neighbor participation program for community improvements and explained related information. Further comment and discussion ensued. Commissioner Herbst remarked on the previous program and concerns that arose, cited examples, and noted the need to reimagine the program should the Commission choose to reimplement. Commissioner Sturman confirmed his support of reinstating this type of program. Further comment and discussion ensued. City Manager Chavarria confirmed.

Commissioner Sturman discussed additional District 4 resident priorities, including moving forward with a public-private partnership (P3) ordinance, discussion of development impact fees, more comprehensive traffic studies to understand the impact of proposed developments, public safety issues related to sidewalks, including exploring possible bond funding, traffic calming measures, street lighting, the *Green Your Routine* initiative, pursuit of a trash ordinance to address hazardous waste disposal, and increasing the frequency of storm drainage maintenance. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sturman concurred with Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman regarding ensuring adequate stormwater infrastructure as a priority along with seawall needs. He supports hiring a Chief Waterway Officer to address resident and waterway concerns across government agencies. He discussed the need to address dredging and providing related funding.

Commissioner Sturman discussed the need to work proactively with upland municipalities to address flooding concerns during storms. Additional priorities include the opportunity to develop an Affordable

Housing Master Plan and a Homelessness Master Plan.

Commissioner Sturman requested Staff allow adequate time for Commission Members and the public's review of Agenda items, making the Commission aware of Agenda items anticipated to have lengthy community input and possible Agenda modification. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Herbst pointed out the Commission's conflicting goals and the impact on the ability of Staff to implement, and cited examples. Mayor Trantalis concurred. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sturman agreed with Commissioner Herbst's remarks regarding the importance of Public Safety, noted it is the City's number one priority, and expounded on his viewpoint.

Mayor Trantalis explained information and details related to the simultaneous timing of the Florida Department of Transportation's Henry E. Kinney Tunnel project and the State Road A1A Streetscape project. He remarked on other infrastructure projects impacting traffic flow and requested the public's patience.

Mayor Trantalis noted completion of Police and Firefighter's Collective Bargaining Agreements, water and stormwater infrastructure milestones achieved, and today's Prospect Lake Water Treatment Plant groundbreaking.

Mayor Trantalis concurred that public safety and sidewalk needs in all Districts are a priority. He discussed the need to pursue multiple funding sources, and requested Staff to pursue.

Mayor Trantalis discussed vacancy rates at first-floor commercial space in multi-use development projects in District 3. He recommended Staff develop a program to incentivize developers to activate those vacant commercial areas and remarked on related information. Commissioner Glassman discussed the opportunity to allow local artists to use this vacant commercial space and explained his perspective.

Mayor Trantalis concurred with Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's comments regarding maintaining roadways. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Dodd explained Staff efforts to address roadway maintenance and discussed related information. Mayor Trantalis noted this is a public safety issue and should be a Staff priority. City Manager Chavarria confirmed. Commissioner Sturman requested Staff efforts also include bike lanes.

Mayor Trantalis commented on factors that limit the City's ability to address gun ownership. He remarked on other ways to message the community about alternative ways to address gun violence, including offering free education on the use and maintenance of guns and providing safety clips to firearm owners.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman commented on a citizen's grassroots organization known as *Cities United* whose goal is to strategize on how to implement change regarding gun violence. She requested City Manager Chavarria research best practices and provide an update.

Mayor Trantalis recommended that the Commission consider a commercial trash recycling program in conjunction with vendors in the City.

Mayor Trantalis commented on the General Services Administration's (GSA) request for input regarding the disposition of the Federal Courthouse (Courthouse) to the City, including renovation of the Courthouse. He expounded on related information and details, and requested Commission Members consider this opportunity and provide feedback. Commissioner Sturman remarked on environmental issues at the Courthouse. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding this opportunity and historic preservation of the Courthouse. Commissioner Glassman commented on a previous workshop and voluminous research regarding Courthouse renovations. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding reimagining and repurposing the Courthouse as a new City Hall.

Mayor Trantalis discussed meetings with the City of Pembroke Pines and its efforts to ensure student excellence with the establishment of Charter Schools. He noted that the State's *School Voucher Program* allows public funding of Charter Schools and commented on the opportunity to work with the teachers' union. Mayor Trantalis remarked on several City schools and requested Commission Members consider exploring establishing Charter Schools in the City.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on previous updates to the City Charter and ongoing efforts to schedule a Commission Workshop with the Charter Revision Board (CRB). If a mutually agreeable meeting date is not possible, he recommended that the Commission discuss its recommended Charter revisions and communicate them to the CRB. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his attending CRB Meetings and

explained related information. He recommended the Commission task the CRB with issues of importance raised by the community and provide CRB feedback for Commission discussion at a Conference Meeting.

Commissioner Herbst suggested a Commission consensus on issues be communicated to the CRB. He noted that Commission Members could communicate their individual Charter recommendations to their respective CRB appointees.

In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question, Mayor Trantalis explained that City election dates were changed in 2020 to coincide with national elections.

Commissioner Glassman discussed requiring winning City Commission Member candidates to receive at least fifty percent (50%) of the vote. Further comment and discussion ensued. Mayor Trantalis requested City Attorney Thomas Ansbro research and clarify election information and options. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding refining the City's election process.

Mayor Trantalis discussed utilization of Community Court to provide social services to people experiencing homelessness. He requested City Manager Chavarria work with City Attorney Ansbro to navigate homeless individuals from the State Court System into the Community Court System.

Mayor Trantalis requested City Manager Chavarria meet with the Broward County Sheriff's Office to develop a program to address the needs of individuals released from the County Jail who entered the court system from other areas of the County. City Manager Chavarria confirmed.

Commissioner Sturman commented on similar concerns associated with homeless individuals discharged from the Broward County Hospital District (Hospital District) facilities. Mayor Trantalis noted previous discussions regarding the willingness of the Hospital District to assist. Commissioner Sturman said he would facilitate.

Mayor Trantalis confirmed his support of South Florida commuter rail and the City's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) of a tunnel for the New River Crossing. He provided an overview of efforts to date, including BDO's work on a new tunnel concept, discussions with the County Commission, and separate discussions with the US Department of Transportation who are eager to receive grant applications. Mayor Trantalis remarked on information related to consultants working with the

City on grant applications.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Laura Reece, Office of Management and Budget Director. Mayor Trantalis requested that Ms. Reece present Staff's review of Commission Goals and Priorities at an upcoming Conference Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 4:02 p.m.