

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

12:15 PM

2024-2026 Federal Legislative Program Workshop

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

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 12:30 p.m.

COMMISSION QUORUM ESTABLISHED

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

Commission Members Not Present: Commissioner John C. Herbst

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

CONFERENCE REPORTS

CF-1 [24-0236](#)

2024-26 Federal Legislative Program Workshop - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Daphnee Sainvil, Public Affairs Division Manager, discussed the updated 2024-26 Federal Legislative Program (Program).

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Sainvil explained the term homelessness hot spots. Mayor Trantalis commented on homeless gatherings at the Brightline Station and confirmed the need to address.

Commissioner Sturman discussed outreach to members of the Broward County (County) Board of County Commissioners regarding utilizing the Broward County Stockade (Stockade) to house homeless individuals. Commissioner Sturman commented on conversations with County Mayor Nan Rich and County Commissioner Lamar Fisher, and outreach to the Broward County Sheriff's Office (Sheriff's Office).

Mayor Trantalis remarked on previous discussions with the County on this subject. In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, City Manager Chavarria confirmed Staff efforts to communicate with County staff via email on this topic and confirmed that he did not receive a response.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, Anthony Fajardo, Assistant City Manager, explained Neighbor Support Staff coordinates proactive efforts with the Fort Lauderdale Police Department (FLPD), including mapping homelessness hotspot areas. Mr. Fajardo cited examples, expounded on details, and discussed related limitations. Further

comment and discussion ensued.

FLPD Chief William Schultz discussed details of County efforts to address homelessness at the Brightline Station. FLPD has yet to receive any direct communication from the County regarding this concern. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Manager Chavarria confirmed he would call the County Administrator directly. Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman commented on areas of District 3 that are experiencing homelessness that Staff needs to include in homelessness mapping. She confirmed the need to make all areas experiencing homelessness in the City a priority. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Fajardo confirmed Staff would update homelessness mapping information. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Susan Lent, Esq., Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, federal lobbyist on behalf of the City, said federal grant funding opportunities addressing homelessness are available through Broward County Continuum of Care (CoC), Broward County's local planning group working to end homelessness. The City can also apply directly for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to fund efforts to address homelessness. Mayor Trantalis remarked on his perspective and confirmed the need for Staff to continue their efforts to address homelessness.

Commissioner Sturman discussed his involvement with Broward Health towards addressing homelessness and remarked on the opportunity to work with the Sheriff's Office to utilize the County Stockade facility. Chief Schultz noted that the Sheriff's Office has indicated that was not an option. Further comment and discussion ensued. Chief Schultz confirmed he would resubmit a request to have a meeting with the Sheriff's Office to discuss this topic. City Manager Chavarria said he would provide individual updates with each Commission Member going forward.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the role and opportunity for Broward Health Medical Center (Broward General) to be more involved with discharged homeless individuals. Due to Commissioner Sturman's affiliation with Broward General as a physician, Mayor Trantalis commented on the opportunity for Commissioner Sturman to act as a liaison with Broward General. Mayor Trantalis discussed ensuring homeless individuals are returned to their communities, noting that friends and family could provide housing.

Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman remarked on her understanding of patients served by Broward General. Commissioner Sturman explained related information. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding mental

health needs and the related process that requires adjudication.

Ms. Sainvil continued reviewing Program requests. Mayor Trantalis remarked on his understanding that additional funds are needed for SE Isles Stormwater Improvements. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Alan Dodd, Public Works Department Director, explained that this appropriation request continues flood mitigation efforts for SE Isles, which is one (1) of the initial seven (7) neighborhoods planned for stormwater improvements. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Sainvil remarked on her understanding of the cost for the Breakers Avenue Project submitted by Transportation and Mobility Department (TAM) Staff.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Ben Rogers, TAM Director, explained details of grant funding assistance from the State of Florida (State) for the design and construction of a segment of LauderTrail, which is expected to be presented to the Commission in March 2024.

In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question, Ms. Sainvil said the federal funding request for Multi-Modal Transportation in Lauderdale Manors Park was removed. Mr. Rogers said that he was unaware of this and would research and provide an update.

In response to Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman's question, City Manager Chavarria explained that State grant funding for Broadband Infrastructure in the North Fork Elementary School area is undergoing environmental review by Staff. Staff is also working with a private broadband vendor for installation of broadband infrastructure at no cost. This opportunity is currently undergoing review by the Office of the City Attorney. City Attorney Thomas Ansbro confirmed the need for specialized legal review on this topic, and outside counsel was hired to facilitate. Further comment and discussion ensued. Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman noted concerns regarding possibly missing a federal funding opportunity. City Manager Chavarria commented on an opportunity for additional grant funding to be presented to the Commission in March 2024 and expounded on related information.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions regarding federal funding for broadband services through the State, Ms. Lent explained the bulk of federal grant funding for broadband infrastructure from the U.S. Department of Commerce was distributed to the states and is known as the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program (BEAD Program). Local municipalities can apply for BEAD Program grants from

the State. Ms. Lent said she would research other competitive funding opportunities and provide an update.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his understanding that the BEAD Program funding would be distributed to and administered by the states. Ms. Sainvil explained that in 2023, \$40,000,000 in BEAD Program funding was allocated for cyber security grants, which City Staff applied for. There are ongoing discussions in the State Legislature regarding the unused portion of BEAD Program funding from 2023. City lobbyists have indicated State Legislature Members are considering BEAD Program funding to continue for local broadband and cyber security needs. Ms. Sainvil confirmed this BEAD Program funding request would be included in the final version of the Program.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Lent commented on federal grant funding for cameras to address public security concerns. She confirmed she would research and would provide an update.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's question regarding the reduced funding request for Riverland Road traffic calming measures, Mr. Rogers explained the funding strategy associated with this request.

Commissioner Glassman remarked that the Program should have included previously requested funding requests. In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions regarding items not included in the updated Program document, Ms. Sainvil explained that Program revisions were reflective of 2025 Program funding requests.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, Mr. Rogers confirmed his understanding that the previous 2024 Program Funding requests would remain in the Program. Commissioner Glassman noted the previous funding requests deleted from the Program. Mr. Rogers explained information related to Congressional District 23 referenced in the Program and confirmed he would work with Ms. Sainvil to include the 2024 funding requests in the Program.

Ms. Sainvil continued reviewing the Program. Commissioner Glassman noted that Pedestrian Improvements in the Westwood Heights Elementary School area was not included in the previous Program. Ms. Sainvil said it was a new request.

Ms. Lent explained federal earmarked grant funding requests are limited to ten (10) projects per U.S. House of Representative Member and cited examples. She reiterated that the majority of grant funding opportunities are available through the State. Ms. Lent also explained that

transportation grant funding is available through the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Further comment and discussion.

In response to Commissioner Sturman's questions regarding weekly legislative updates, Ms. Sainvil explained monthly legislative updates are provided by Ms. Lent and are forwarded to Commission Members. More frequent updates would be provided for items on a fast track. City Manager Chavarria confirmed the ability of Commission Members to reach out directly to City lobbyists.

Commissioner Sturman noted that the City currently has only one (1) lobbying firm and Maurice Kurland, Esq., Alcalde & Fay, is no longer a lobbyist for the City. Further comment and discussion ensued. Ms. Sainvil explained related details, including budget reductions and other items that she could discuss with each Commission Member individually.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 1:19 p.m.