

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 2, 2021

1:30 PM

City Hall - City Commission Chambers
100 North Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

City Commission Conference Meeting

FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION

DEAN J. TRANTALIS Mayor

HEATHER MORAITIS Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District I

STEVEN GLASSMAN Commissioner - District II

ROBERT L. McKINZIE Commissioner - District III

BEN SORENSEN Commissioner - District IV

CHRIS LAGERBLOOM, City Manager

JOHN HERBST, City Auditor

JEFFREY A. MODARELLI, City Clerk

ALAIN E. BOILEAU, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 1:36 p.m.

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Mayor Trantalis announced details regarding the meeting format, including how members of the public can view and participate.

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Commission Members Present: Vice Mayor Heather Moraitis, Commissioner Steven Glassman (participated via communication technology), Commissioner Robert L. McKinzie (arrived at 1:46 p.m.), Commissioner Ben Sorensen and Mayor Dean J. Trantalis

Also Present: City Manager Chris Lagerbloom, City Clerk Jeffrey A. Modarelli, City Attorney Alain E. Boileau and City Auditor John Herbst

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COMMISSION

[21-1075](#)

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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD (HPB) Monday, October 4, 2021

Communication to the City Commission

Motion made by Mr. Schiavone, seconded by Mr. Karney. In light of the City Commission's inquiry of this board concerning historic designation and the issues that we have come across today in the items that were addressed at the meeting [historic landmark designation for the New River Castle and potential designation of multiple properties], we again encourage them to dedicate more resources and more staff to historic preservation. We see repeatedly in our work here that Trisha Logan is spread so thin, we could accomplish more, the citizens of the City of Fort Lauderdale could accomplish more expeditiously, and we would be able to protect both property owners' rights and the historic preservation of the City better if there were more resources dedicated. In a voice vote, motion passed 7-0.

Motion made by Mr. Marcus, seconded by Mr. Karney. The Historic

Preservation Board requests that the City Commission ask the City Manager to have staff prepare a code amendment to include thematic historic district in the historic preservation ordinance that would enable the designation of noncontiguous historic districts. In a voice vote, motion passed 7-0.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the request for additional resources and Staff for historic preservation, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed work with Anthony Fajardo, Department of Sustainable Development Director, who had ideas to increase Staffing in that area.

Mayor Trantalis commented on previous efforts as District 2 Commissioner to initiate hiring historic preservation Staff.

Commissioner Glassman concurred with recommendations included in the communication, cited examples and explained a large amount of work needed to determine a direction moving forward.

City Manager Lagerbloom said he would present a solution to the Commission.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding amending the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Commissioner Glassman remarked there are many ways to address historic preservation, i.e., historic districts based on architects and their work.

Currently, historic districts must be contiguous. Mayor Trantalis remarked this would allow non-contiguous historic districts connected by a common denominator. Commissioner Glassman confirmed and cited examples, i.e., mid-century modern and Mediterranean architecture, recognizing architecture types. An Ordinance or Code amendment would enable historic designation of noncontiguous districts.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, Trisha Logan, Department of Sustainable Development Historic Preservation Planner, explained details of a Code amendment and the process. The Code amendment would include a definition of a *Thematic Historic District* and language allowing that designation. Staff would review thematic designation references in the *National Register Bulletin* and thematic designation language used by other municipalities.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Arthur Marcus, 1800 N. Andrews Avenue, and HPB member. Mr. Marcus explained details and purpose of historic

thematic structures, cited examples and noted the urgent need to protect them. Historic thematic structures should be subject to design and preservation standards to protect the area's historic character. Any exterior property improvements, alterations or demolition should require review by the HPB. Mr. Marcus urged the Commission to pursue and approve the addition of thematic historic districts.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' request for Commission input, Vice Mayor Moraitis and Commissioner Sorensen agreed to move forward with this recommendation. Mayor Trantalis noted a consensus to move forward.

***Budget Advisory Board (BAB) Hybrid Meeting
October 20, 2021***

Communications to the City Commission

Motion made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Marshall that the BAB would like the following:

- 1. To have feedback from the Commission regarding the 2023 non-profit award process;*
- 2. To refine the 2022 non-profit vetting process to narrow the criteria, to eliminate the number of applications;*
- 3. To continue public vetting of the non-profits;*
- 4. To have the Commission to identify organizations they feel do not need to be vetted or that they want to continue to award or give contracts to;*
- 5. For the City to streamline the criteria, and*
- 6. To have a discussion with the City Commission in November.*

In a roll call vote, motion passed 5-0.

Commissioner Glassman commented on his viewpoint and suggested alternate ways to address non-profit funding, i.e., the Community Services Board. Vice Mayor Moraitis concurred on the need for discussion to address non-profit funding.

City Manager Lagerbloom explained the goal was to have the BAB, an independent body, vet non-profit funding requests and noted the ability to pursue options.

Commissioner McKinzie concurred with Commissioner Glassman. Mayor Trantalis noted this discussion would be impacted by the availability of funds.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' question, Mayor Trantalis confirmed Property Appraiser Office financial information availability in June. She suggested Commission discussion of these recommendations at the *Commission Goal Setting Workshop* in January and scheduling a *Joint Workshop with the BAB* in June to review non-profit funding. Mayor Trantalis agreed.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Brian Donaldson, Budget Advisory Board Chair. Chair Donaldson discussed timelines and explained the BAB had streamlined the review and vetting of applications. A different board would require a similar learning curve. The BAB would be more efficient going forward and recommended it maintain this task. Chair Donaldson expounded on details and cited examples based upon BAB's efforts last year. There would be narrower criteria benefiting a specific number of people. He commented on his viewpoint regarding non-profit funding availability next year with a flat ad valorem rate.

***Education Advisory Board (EAB) Meeting
Thursday, April 22, 2021***

Communication to Commission:

- 1. We encourage Broward County School Board to continue to review all options for the construction of a cafeteria at Stranahan High School, which is a critical construction requirement in the City of Fort Lauderdale.*
- 2. We recommend they acknowledge the less expensive reuse option, which is predicted to be completed and open roughly one school year earlier and cost less than a new design option, as their preferred option.*
- 3. We ensure the eventual cafeteria meets the dining, restroom,*

and all other requirements for Stranahan High School.

5. *Our recommendation is based on our belief that the reuse option will be faster and is more likely to be completed, but if these constraints did not exist, we would prefer a new design cafeteria.*

Motion by Mr. Christopher Relyea, seconded by Mr. Moises Acosta, to approve the communication. Motion passed unanimously. (11 -0)

Commissioner Sorensen noted the efforts of Zoie Saunders, Chief Education Officer, the *EAB* and Mary Fertig.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Mary Fertig, 511 Poinciana Drive. Ms. Fertig explained *Broward County School Board (School Board) District* support for a new *Stranahan High School (Stranahan)* cafeteria (Cafeteria) was unanimous. The *School Board* agreed to place a specific amount in the budget. However, they wanted a smaller cafeteria in keeping with other items in the District. She remarked on review and benefits of prototype plans similar to Miami's *Palmetto Senior High School* with stakeholders. Ms. Fertig encouraged the Commission to support this request and request the *School Board* to move ahead with plans for the Cafeteria.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Dr. Allen Zeman, Education Advisory Board Chair. Dr. Zeman explained numerous stakeholders' attendance at the recent *EAB* Meeting and the robust discussion regarding a Cafeteria. The *EAB* recommended reuse resulting in cost savings, which allows funding of other school construction needs. Reuse addresses *Stranahan's* principal needs, saves \$2,000,000 - \$5,000,000 and allows completion a year earlier.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Dr. Zeman explained the *School Board* is considering reuse or new construction. Dr. Zeman expounded on stakeholders' examination of both options and recommendations for reuse.

Mayor Trantalis discussed his understanding of a reuse approach.

Commissioner Sorensen clarified reuse involves using an existing prototype design for a new Cafeteria building. Dr. Zeman confirmed and explained details associated with contractor benefits and cost savings. Further comment ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Zoie Saunders, Chief Education Officer. Ms. Saunders confirmed *Stranahan* would have a new cafeteria. She expounded on Dr. Zeman's comments and noted the sense of community urgency. Ms. Saunders explained the plan for reuse fits Cafeteria criteria and space and would be completed sooner.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Saunders confirmed reuse of the prototype design would allow the Cafeteria to be completed in the fall of 2023. The *School Board* is pursuing its due diligence prior to its final recommendation, which is anticipated to go before the *School Board* on November 9, 2021. Ms. Saunders explained the position of the Commission is needed to advocate in the best interests of *Stranahan*.

Commissioner Sorensen provided additional context related to seating capacity. Ms. Fertig confirmed total Cafeteria seating capacity is seven hundred eighty-one (781) with an inside seating capacity of five hundred eighty-four (584). The school population is approximately fifteen hundred (1,500), with two shifts for lunch. Ms. Fertig said current Cafeteria seating is three hundred (300), initially built as an elementary school. She encouraged the Commission to support this recommendation and request the *School Board* to move as quickly as possible.

Vice Mayor Moraitis confirmed support of *EAB* efforts. She requested an update regarding the *EAB* addressing *Northeast High School* (Northeast) and *James S. Rickards Middle School (Rickards)*. Though not located in the City, areas of District 1 are zoned for these schools. Dr. Zeman confirmed the *EAB* would take this up at its next meeting and return with recommendations.

Ms. Fertig commented on her understanding that *Rickards* is going before the *School Board* in a workshop tomorrow with a prototype design recommendation to build as soon as possible. She noted *Northeast* does not have a guaranteed maximum price at this time.

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on the need for *School Board* community outreach and keeping the Commission updated.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed Commission support of the prototype. Commissioner Sorensen noted unanimous Commission support. City Manager Lagerbloom said Ms. Saunders would communicate this to the *School Board*.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

CF-1 [21-1081](#)

Computer Software and Programs Inventory Review - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

City Auditor John Herbst provided opening remarks and introduced Megan Gaillard, Assistant City Auditor III, who presented on this Agenda item.

Ms. Gaillard explained the objective, scope and methodology used for this internal audit discussed in the Exhibit attached to this Agenda item (Agenda Exhibit). The review was based upon an Information Technology Services (ITS) list and review of all departments and charter offices compared to the *National Institute of Standards Technology (NIST) Best Practices* framework for controlling security risks.

Ms. Gaillard reviewed the findings discussed in the Agenda Exhibit. The findings were summarized to prevent possible additional security risk exposure and could be discussed in person-to-person meetings. ITS agreed with the two (2) findings and four (4) recommendations. ITS is working to implement remedial actions.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Ms. Gaillard explained deficiencies listed on page two (2) of the Agenda Exhibit were standard definitions. For the entire program, material weakness was the only one cited.

CF-2 [21-1082](#)

Summary of Follow-Up Audits as of September 30, 2021 - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Megan Gaillard, Assistant City Auditor III, reviewed the Summary of Follow-Up Internal Audits as of September 30, 2021 (Reports), including:

1. Three (3) Public Works Department Reports - Still in progress.
2. Finance Department Report Finding -
 - a. Duplicate P-Card Detection would be resolved with implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System anticipated for completion in the first or second quarter of 2022.
3. Human Resource Department Findings -

- a. Succession Planning would be resolved with implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System anticipated for completion in the first or second quarter of 2022.
- b. New Hire Training would be addressed with surveys that are currently being analyzed.
- c. Consolidation of one (1) Employee Manual is being finalized for implementation.

4. Code Enforcement Report Finding -

- a. Determining records related to outstanding Code liens and implementing policies and procedures to communicate information to the Finance Department. The Code process is approximately twenty-five percent (25%) complete.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding the process for independent audits within the City Auditor's process, City Auditor Herbst explained his office captures and tracks both internal and all external audit reports, i.e., financial audits, single audits and other audits done by outside agencies and follows up until remediated. City Auditor Herbst noted an upcoming Commission presentation from external auditors.

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the efforts of Staff to address all outstanding audit items.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

BUS-1 [21-1073](#)

Discussion on the Office of the City Clerk - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

City Manager Lagerbloom explained this Agenda item discusses hiring a City Clerk due to the retirement of City Clerk Jeffrey Modarelli. The Office of the City Clerk is a Charter Office position at the direction of the Commission. Available options include hiring from within or an interim appointment until a national search could be done.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his perspective, history of greater success hiring from within due to the large learning curve and recommended hiring from within.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's request for input, City Clerk

Modarelli confirmed Deputy City Clerk (Deputy Clerk) David Soloman is qualified and suggested promoting him to the position of City Clerk as soon as possible, ensuring a smooth transition. City Clerk Modarelli explained staffing details of the Office of the City Clerk Office.

Tarlesha Smith, Assistant City Manager - Human Resources Director, confirmed her exceptional work experience with Deputy Clerk Soloman and support of providing internal staff opportunities, allowing continuity of operations related to the large learning curve.

City Manager Lagerbloom commented on aspects of a nationwide search.

City Attorney Alain Boileau commented on the value of institutional knowledge due to the large learning curve. Any outside hire would need to be familiar with local and state law. His work experience with Deputy Clerk Soloman had been exceptional.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions, Deputy Clerk Soloman confirmed his interest in the position. He explained his background, education, experience, and qualifications, including a Master's Degree in Public Administration. Deputy Clerk Soloman commented on the importance of continuity that would continue.

Vice Mayor Moraitis confirmed her support of appointing Deputy Clerk Soloman to the position of City Clerk.

Commissioner Glassman commented on his perspective and support of promoting Deputy Clerk Soloman to the position of City Clerk.

Commissioner McKinzie concurred with Vice Mayor Moraitis and Commissioner Glassman and commented on his support of Deputy Clerk Soloman as City Clerk.

Commissioner Sorensen explained his perspective regarding a nationwide search and support of promoting Deputy Clerk Soloman to City Clerk. He commented on future Commission consideration of diversity for Charter Offices.

City Attorney Boileau explained the process moving this forward, bringing forth a resolution at the December 7, 2021 Commission Regular Meeting.

Further comment and discussion ensued regarding filling the Deputy City

Clerk position when vacated in early January 2022. City Manager Lagerbloom said the Human Resources Department would assist.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed clear direction from the Commission.

City Attorney Boileau explained details related to salary and a contract would occur through individual conversations with Commission Members, City Manager Lagerbloom and Deputy Clerk Soloman.

City Manager Lagerbloom said the associated resolution would capture all relevant information.

CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

Members of the Commission announced recent and upcoming events and matters of interest.

Vice Mayor Moraitis discussed noise concerns raised by District 1 residents residing west of the *Beach Community Center (BCC)* should Pickleball Courts be located adjacent to the *BCC*. She remarked on moving forward with a different option and inquired about the unsolicited proposal for Pickleball Courts. City Manager Lagerbloom said the unsolicited proposal would be discussed later today in a shade meeting.

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on the amount of *Parks Bond* funding available for park improvements next to the *BCC*. Phil Thornburg, Parks and Recreation Department Director, will work with *AECOM* to present another option. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner McKinzie inquired about a status update for *Bahia Mar*.

Commissioner Glassman noted his two (2) scheduled meetings before the *Commission Workshop on Bahia Mar* planned on November 16, 2021.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his meetings related to *Bahia Mar*. The public would be informed of the latest information at the November 16, 2021 *Commission Workshop on Bahia Mar*.

Commissioner McKinzie commented on Commission involvement with easing COVID-related restrictions at City facilities. City Manager Lagerbloom discussed his perspective and related challenges. Mask wearing is not discouraged but no longer required. Commissioner

McKinzie expounded on his viewpoint and requested Commission feedback.

Mayor Trantalis concurred with the actions of City Manager Lagerbloom.

Commissioner Sorensen explained his desire to continue to wear a mask and his comfort with the decision of City Manager Lagerbloom.

Vice Mayor Moraitis concurred with the actions of City Manager Lagerbloom and is comfortable wearing a mask if requested.

Commissioner Glassman suggested becoming involved in the *Adopt a Dune Program* on the beach and explained details. He forwarded contact information to City Manager Lagerbloom and Phil Thornburg, Parks and Recreation Department Director, to pursue.

Commissioner Glassman thanked everyone for their condolences, cards and flowers in memory of his mother.

Mayor Trantalis, Commissioner Glassman and Commissioner Sorensen commented on the success of the robust *2021 Boat Show*.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the completion of the *River Oaks* Stormwater Project and its outstanding design, including a park and wildlife preserve destination.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on efforts to establish a *Sister Cities* relationship with England.

Mayor Trantalis commented on a recent event recognizing contributions of the Denison family, founders of *Broward Marine*, towards the birth, growth and success of the City's marine industry.

Mayor Trantalis commented on the *November 11, 2021 Veterans Day* event at *Lieutenant Alexander Ramsay "Sandy" Nininger's Statue* along the *Riverwalk*.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the commencement of holiday season events.

Mayor Trantalis requested an update regarding traffic issues at the *Chick-fil-A* in District 1 and a *Starbucks* in District 4. Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility (TAM) Department Director, explained work with *Chick-fil-A* and *Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)* to

redesign the drive-through, adding an approximate fifteen(15) car capacity. He explained details of the process to implement and noted limited options.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions regarding Staff awareness of the impact of drive-through businesses on roadways, Chris Cooper, Department of Sustainable Development Deputy Director, said Staff would review and evaluate aspects of drive-through businesses. Staff will review Code to consider enhancements going forward.

Commissioner Sorensen requested significant latitude regarding approval or denial of drive-through businesses. City Attorney Boileau said a review of the Code is needed and changes would need to be codified.

City Manager Lagerbloom remarked Code needs to be changed to allow latitude. Mr. Rogers noted Code changes would apply to everyone.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding discussions with *FDOT* to address traffic concerns on Federal Highway at *Trader Joe's*, Mr. Rogers said he would consult Staff and provide an update. City Manager Lagerbloom commented on the need for a redesign due to existing traffic light infrastructure.

Commissioner Sorensen reiterated the need for a change to Code to address drive-through businesses causing traffic backups. City Manager Lagerbloom concurred.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' request for the status of leaf blowers, Commissioner McKinzie confirmed readiness to present on this topic. City Manager Lagerbloom said this topic would be scheduled for the next Commission Conference Meeting.

Mayor Trantalis said the *Protein Skimmer Pilot Program (Pilot Program)* was completed and inquired about the next steps. City Manager Lagerbloom explained Staff is reviewing *Pilot Program* data. The *Pilot Program* provides an opportunity to respond to specific, targeted events. City Manager Lagerbloom commented on future funding. Further discussion will take place at an upcoming Commission Conference Meeting. Mayor Trantalis requested a report on the results of the *Pilot Program* and the need for public comment to determine future direction. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' inquiry, City Manager Lagerbloom

said *2021 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act)* funding replaced lost revenue. There are additional guidelines for other uses, and Staff will review *2022 CARES Act* funding to determine the ability to use for waterway projects.

Mayor Trantalis requested an update on housing the homeless. City Manager Lagerbloom commented on the success of providing temporary housing for the homeless. If continued, additional funding would come from the General Fund.

City Manager Lagerbloom explained input from *Community Court* judges regarding utilizing *Community Court* to its full extent to address homelessness. He discussed his understanding of anticipated *Community Court* orders that would include offenses allowing an individual to be released on their own recognizance.

City Attorney Boileau commented on challenges related to homeless individuals who do not wish to participate in *Community Court* and discussed related details. He noted certain violations cannot be processed in *Community Court* and must proceed to state court.

Mayor Trantalis concurred on the need to fully utilize *Community Court*.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the City's new and improved website.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

City Manager Lagerbloom updated the Commission on positive discussions with *The Boring Company*. He anticipates presenting an interim agreement to the Commission followed by a comprehensive agreement.

City Manager Lagerbloom requested direction for the modified site plan concept for the *Pier 66 (Project)*. The *Project* has a north and south parcel. The south parcel (*The Sails*) would require Code changes because modified building renderings for *The Sails* exceed PDD Zoning District permitted heights. Comment and discussion ensued on the height.

City Manager Lagerbloom explained that *The Sails Project* modified site plan, currently being circulated for community input, include building heights just below the *Federal Aviation Administration* maximum allowable height of five hundred feet (500').

City Manager Lagerbloom requested Commission input regarding Staff addressing Code amendments related to this PDD Zoning.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his perspective and negotiations to meet community needs.

Commissioner Sorensen discussed the importance of community feedback and confirmed openness to consideration and discussion of zoning options.

Mayor Trantalis commented on the need for traffic count information for the existing site plan and the modified site plan and remarked on court mandates associated with this topic.

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on neighborhood feedback and the process. Mayor Trantalis noted neighborhood review and feedback are in the early stages.

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed a majority vote is needed to change an Ordinance, and a PDD approval requires a supermajority.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' question, Mr. Cooper explained existing approved PDDs for 3000 Alhambra Street and *The Towers Apartments* off Las Olas Boulevard.

In response to Commission Sorensen's question, City Attorney Alain Boileau explained the details of the court mandate related to the previous *Pier 66* owner's legal challenge under the *Bert J. Harris Act*. A previous Commission denied the project, and the court suspended that denial. The current developer, *Tavistock Group (Tavistock)*, inherited property rights from that court decision.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' question, Anthony Fajardo, Department of Sustainable Development Department Director, confirmed there is no other way to approve the modified site plan buildings at the heights requested. He commented on possible concerns with density and explained PDD criteria Staff would analyze and present to the Commission for objective consideration.

Commissioner Glassman confirmed his willingness for further discussion. He summarized a similar situation on the beach, which included discussion and debate of benefits of varying aspects of site plan designs, citing examples and expounding on his viewpoint.

City Manager Lagerbloom said the Staff would pursue two (2) parallel paths and return to the Commission following additional community feedback.

City Manager Lagerbloom announced the upcoming shade meeting would be held in the 7th Floor Conference Room.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting to order at 3:41 p.m.