

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 1, 2022

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

DAVID R. SOLOMAN, City Clerk

JOHN HERBST, City Auditor

ALAIN E. BOILEAU, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 1:39 p.m.

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Commissioner Members Present: Vice Mayor Moraitis, Commissioner Glassman, Commissioner McKinzie, Commissioner Sorensen and Mayor Trantalis

Also Present: City Manager Chris Lagerbloom, City Clerk David R. Soloman, City Attorney Alain E. Boileau and City Auditor John Herbst

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Trantalis requested a Moment of Silence in remembrance of those who have lost their lives in the Ukraine conflict.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COMMISSION

[22-0215](#)

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

***BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT (BOA) MEETING
February 9, 2022***

Communication to the City Commission 9

Motion made by Mr. McTigue, seconded by Mr. McGinley:

To have staff consider how the City treats enclosed/partially enclosed shade structures for outdoor kitchens. In a voice vote motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Anthony Fajardo, Development Services Department Director. Mr. Fajardo explained the BOA's communication addresses the ability to interpret Code to allow installation of a thirty-six inch (36") to forty inch (40") counter height for an outdoor kitchen that would not violate the Code's requirement for a shade structure open on all sides.

Mr. Fajardo confirmed discussions with the Zoning Administrator that this could be done administratively. Further explanation and discussion ensued regarding confirmation by the Zoning Administrator upon his

return. Should this not be an option, Staff can return to the Commission with a proposed amendment to the Ordinance.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

CF-1 [22-0113](#)

Quarterly Investment Report for Period Ending December 31, 2021 - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Susan Grant, Finance Department Director, provided the Other Post-Employment Benefits Trust (OPEB Trust) Investment Report update for the fourth (4th) quarter of the fiscal year ending December 31, 2021. Quarterly and year-to-date performance was four (4) basis points above the benchmark. A negative return is the result of the rising interest rate environment because as interest rates go up, the value of the portfolio goes down. As interest rates rise and items in the City's short-term portfolio reach maturity, investments would be made in higher yield securities.

Richard Pengelly, Managing Director PFM Asset Management LLC, gave a brief market report. He commented on the impacts of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and upcoming testimony from Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell regarding the likelihood of raising short-term interest rates due to rising inflation. The City's portfolio largely consists of two-thirds (2/3) government backed securities, designed to withstand periods of high volatility.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

BUS-1 [22-0211](#)

Feasibility Study for Fort Lauderdale Aviation and Aerospace Training Program - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Zoie Saunders, Chief Education Officer. Ms. Saunders discussed background information associated with this Agenda item. The *Broward College Center of Applied Research (BCCAR)* conducted a *Feasibility Study for Fort Lauderdale Aviation Industry Training (Study)*. The *BCCAR* extensively engaged aviation industry leaders and educational providers towards supporting the aviation workforce, meeting industry demands and assisting in sector growth. Representatives of the *BCCAR* will present the *Study's* findings.

Ms. Saunders acknowledged Rufus James, Fort Lauderdale Executive (FXE) Airport Director, and his ongoing partnership, vision and assistance towards expanding aviation training opportunities.

Ms. Saunders introduced Russell McCaffery, Broward College Dean of Transportation Program, and Dr. Sean Gallagher of Broward College. Dean McCaffery spoke briefly about excerpts from the *Study's* forthcoming final report and remarked on the opportunities and needs in the area of aviation maintenance.

Dr. Sean Gallagher narrated the *Study* presentation.

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

Ms. Saunders remarked the purpose of the *Study* was to understand and confirm the extensive need and opportunities for technical aviation programming expertise, barriers to costs and space availability challenges. A working group was established three (3) years ago to assist in identifying a broader vision with a focus on the opportunity to launch an avionics program. Broward County Public Schools is very interested in being an education partner.

At the direction of the Commission, the next phase would look at implementation, planning and extensive coordination with various partners, including industry leaders and educational partners. The City could launch a steering committee to solidify partners and identify their expertise and resources to develop a comprehensive design and budget followed by pursuit of funding opportunities.

Mayor Trantalis confirmed the need for hiring in the aviation sector.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions regarding initiating a steering committee, Ms. Saunders confirmed she would organize those efforts. A steering committee would include representation from industry partners who would play an active role in technical aviation programming and cited examples. Educational partners would include Broward County Public Schools, Broward College and a number of other national aviation education providers with the desire to join the Florida market.

Vice Mayor Moraitis discussed the aviation industry need. In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' question, Dr. Gallagher confirmed future opportunities for high schools to have an aviation programming certification program and remarked on anticipated goals. Further comment and discussion ensued on possible future locations and opportunities at Lockhart Park.

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on possible funding through the Department of Economic Opportunity.

Commissioner McKinzie confirmed his support of the concept and moving forward with formation of a steering committee. He commented on the need for caution with respect to locating this program on airport property, due to unanticipated legal obstacles. City Attorney Boileau commented on the need to address the numerous layers involved and leasing City land for use as a training facility.

Ms. Saunders discussed assembling the steering committee within three (3) to six (6) months to solidify design and determine resources each partner would bring to the table. She noted support for early stage foundational training in middle school and high school followed by hands-on experience with large engine equipment at a training center. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman confirmed his support of this concept, formation of a steering committee and utilizing two (2) or three (3) acres of land at Lockhart Parks as a location. He commented on the need for a general discussion about parking at the Lockhart Park site.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding the role of Broward County Public Schools, Ms. Saunders confirmed its interest in participating on the steering committee. She discussed the need to maximize aviation industry training efforts to benefit City residents and expounded on related details.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding interaction with the Broward County School Board (School Board), Ms. Saunders expounded on details including the School Board's appreciation of the City initiating this partnership and the *Study* to assist in identifying and pursuing the growth of aviation programming.

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on discussions with prior School Board Superintendent Robert W. Runcie regarding the availability of capital funding for operations, but not building a facility. She discussed the City's ability to be involved as a partner to fund building a facility. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the need for locally generated funding through partnerships or grants.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Dr. Gallagher confirmed there are currently eight (8) high schools that have an *Embry-Riddle Aeronautical Program*, including *Stranahan High School* and explained related details. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sorensen remarked that partnering with the School Board is critical along with their participation with the steering committee. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding foundational coursework in high school, transitioning to a training facility and educational models.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on synergy with military aviation drone operations and cited examples. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding related opportunities.

BUS-2 [22-0242](#)

Presentations of the Unsolicited Proposals for the New Water Treatment Plant - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis explained the Commission's previous review of the unsolicited proposals during *Shade Sessions*.

City Attorney Boileau clarified parameters regarding the presentations from the companies who have submitted their unsolicited proposals for a new water treatment plant (*WTP*).

Mayor Trantalis explained that at the Commission Meeting tonight, the Commission will rank the proposals and decide which unsolicited proposal would be selected. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the format to deliberate and discuss the proposals.

City Attorney Boileau confirmed the Commission could ask questions during this presentation but recommended reserving discussions for the Regular Meeting where this Agenda item was advertised.

Eva Arnaiz, *Aqualia* Team, 10809 SW 83rd Avenue, Miramar, narrated a slide presentation that provided an overview of the company and discussed its team's background, qualifications, experience and details of its unsolicited proposal.

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

Commissioner Sorensen remarked that nanofiltration plus ion exchange is the gold standard for water filtration.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Ms. Arnaiz explained that *Aqualia* does not have ion exchange as part of its water filtration system. She expounded on related details.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions, Ms. Arnaiz said *Aqualia* explained details associated with its rate structure and only

paying for water produced. Further comment and discussion ensued. *Aqualia* has built several water treatment plants in other parts of the world but not in the United States.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions, Omar Castellan, Public Works Department Assistant Director, explained *Aqualia's* proposal regarding nanofiltration as compared to the other proposals.

John Joyner, Managing Partner, Water Capital Partners and Kevin Chandler, Vice President *Suez Water*, narrated a slide presentation that provided an overview of *Suez Water* and discussed its team's background, qualifications, experience and details of its unsolicited proposal.

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

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions, Mr. Joyner explained how the *Suez Water (Suez)* proposal differs from the others. It has a holistic approach to address the water treatment plant and associated underground infrastructure. *Suez* would make attractive employment offers to City employees. City employees wishing to remain with the City would enter a leasing agreement and report to *Suez* while remaining City employees.

In response to Commissioner McKinzie's question, Mr. Joyner explained *Suez* would be responsible for costs associated with water pipe repairs. The *Suez* proposal includes costs of operating and maintaining the water distribution system. Mr. Joyner explained related investments in the water distribution system.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding *Suez's* timeline for being operational, Mr. Joyner noted an estimate of July 2026 and expounded on details.

Mark Janay, Chris Morss and Michael Albrecht, representing *IDE Technologies (IDE)*, narrated a slide presentation, provided an overview of the company and discussed its team's background, qualifications, experience, and proposal details.

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

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding a seventy percent (70%) rate increase that has been circulating, Mr. Albrecht said that does not relate to *IDE's* proposal. *IDE* would not control water rates.

The City would control water rates. City Manager Lagerbloom recommended addressing that topic during deliberations on the related Agenda item at tonight's Regular Meeting.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding *IDE's* starting price point, Mr. Albrecht noted it is on a total value basis and has a fixed one percent (1%) inflation factor over the next thirty (30) years. He noted that the \$3.30 price would decline if a higher inflation rate were used. The one percent (1%) increase per year is fixed and not based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Mr. Janay explained factors associated with arriving at the \$3.30 per thousand-gallon price related to project costs, including the capital cost of replacing *Fiveash* and annual built-in operating costs.

Sean Miller, Senior Vice President of Business Development *Next Spring Investments*, narrated a slide presentation providing an overview of the company and discussed its team's background, qualifications, experience and proposal details.

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

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions, Mr. Miller said *Next Spring's* timeline for being operational is estimated in 2026 and commented on details. Regarding water off-take, there is an assumption that the rate would continue to grow at one percent (1%) per year, and there would be no guarantees or minimum payments unless the City's demand dropped below thirty (30) million gallons per day (MGD).

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding limited experience building municipal water treatment facilities, Mr. Miller explained *Next Spring's* expertise. He explained the complexity and operability of membrane technology, which is straightforward and similar to its management of power plant water treatment.

Mr. Miller expounded on *Next Spring's* experience building highly complex projects within a specified budget in a short time frame in Broward County.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding *Aqualia's* projected timeline for completion, Ms. Arnaiz said mid-year 2026 is the anticipated date to be operational.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding the *IDE* team's projected timeline for completion, it was noted approximately three (3) years, or mid-year 2025, from the time a notice to proceed is received.

Mayor Trantalis noted rankings of these four (4) unsolicited proposals would take place at tonight's Commission Regular Meeting.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Dennis Ulmer, 1107 NW 11th Place. Mr. Ulmer commented on concerns related to the water rate structure affordability, security, and the need for the *WTP* to be under City control. He remarked on requiring a private entity operating the water plant to improve and ensure security continuously.

Mayor Trantalis recognized John Roth, 333 Sunrise Drive. Mr. Roth discussed his viewpoint regarding aspects related to *Fiveash* replacement. He concurred with the Infrastructure Task Force Advisory Committee's (ITFAC) recommendation to move forward with a request for proposal (RFP) to replace *Fiveash* and expounded on related details.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Peter Partington, 1521 NE 53rd Street, ITFAC Vice Chair and former City Engineer. Mr. Partington said he did not favor the unsolicited proposal regarding takeover of the City's entire water system and recommended a thorough understanding of what is included in the scope of the unsolicited proposals and whether demolition of the *Fiveash* is included. He commented on related details and made recommendations.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions regarding the ITFAC's recommendation to utilize an RFP process, Mr. Partington explained his viewpoint and support of pursuing unsolicited proposals due to the associated shortened timeline and the importance of quickly replacing *Fiveash* due to the amounts spent on its maintenance.

City Manager Lagerbloom commented on efforts to address water treatment plant security and researching grant availability.

CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

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

Vice Mayor Moraitis remarked on her early departure from the February 15, 2022, Commission Regular Meeting due to Walk-On Resolutions presented that she had not had an opportunity to review.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' question, Mayor Trantalis explained related Walk-On Agenda item procedures. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding ensuring adequate time for Commission Member review of Walk-On Agenda items.

Vice Mayor Moraitis requested clarification about what the City Auditor can investigate without Commission approval. City Attorney Boileau said he sent each Commission Member a memo delineating the powers and the authority of the City Auditor to conduct investigations. He cited City Charter Section 4.14 and related subsections outlining the City Auditor's authority to conduct audit investigations.

Mayor Trantalis commented on Commission discussion in 2004 related to the Office of the City Auditor's role.

Vice Mayor Moraitis said had she remained at the February 15, 2022 Commission Regular Meeting, she would have supported City Auditor Herbst's investigation.

Vice Mayor Moraitis asked whether procedurally the Commission is allowed to close and reopen Commission Meetings as done on February 15, 2022 without being noticed and remarked on the technology available to include her in the discussions surrounding the termination of City Auditor Herbst.

Commissioner McKinzie reiterated his suggestion made during the February 15, 2022, Commission Regular Meeting to conduct a review of the City Charter. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman remarked that the position of the City Auditor is under the purview of the City Commission and noted the need for City Manager Lagerbloom to provide input regarding moving forward with a process to fill that position.

City Manager Lagerbloom explained the options available moving forward. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding moving forward with a national search using a consultant, appointing an interim City Auditor and related details.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' question about having a current City employee occupying the interim City Auditor position, City Auditor Herbst explained his recommendation to appoint Megan Gaillard, Assistant City Auditor III. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman noted that Colleen Lockwood, Middle River Terrace Neighborhood Association President and Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations President, is stepping down. He thanked Ms. Lockwood for her years of service to both organizations.

Commissioner Glassman commented on City Manager Lagerbloom's memorandum of February 25, 2022, regarding The Parker's eligibility for historic designation and remarked on options. He requested a Staff presentation and expounded on related aspects.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Anthony Fajardo, Development Services Department Director, provided an update on Federal Courthouse historic designation efforts. He commented on a forthcoming Commission memorandum outlining historical designation efforts and next steps. The General Services Administration (GSA) is not subject to local historical designation but indicated they would not impede historical designation.

Commissioner Glassman noted federal language with respect to historic structures. Mr. Fajardo confirmed and said the memorandum addressed that language. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman requested resuming discussions and reviewing paid family leave.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding an update on the Joint Government Campus, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed an upcoming meeting with the County's outside counsel to review the request for proposal (RFP). Mayor Trantalis commented on his concern regarding progress and noted correspondence from Alan Cohen, Assistant Broward County Administrator. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding use of funding from the *American Rescue Plan* for communications technology, City Manager Lagerbloom said he would research and provide an update.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding the cryptocurrency analysis, Mr. Herbst said Megan Gaillard, Assistant City Auditor III, is researching and will provide a Commission update at the next Commission Meeting. Mr. Herbst said cryptocurrency is not a recognized legal tender, expounded on this viewpoint and recommended

the City abandon efforts to utilize.

Commissioner Sorensen remarked on a new *Romero Britto* sculpture in *Hardy Park* and discussed a date for its dedication. Further comment and discussion ensued on scheduling a date.

Commissioner Sorensen and Commissioner McKinzie discussed the need to address inconsistent neighborhood solid waste (trash) pickup services and related issues throughout the City. City Manager Lagerbloom commented on a nationwide driver shortage and commented on Staff's efforts. Further comment and discussion ensued on trash and recycling pickup, and landscaping debris collection and removal.

Commissioner Sorensen remarked on a recent article regarding shooting iguanas and emphasized that it is illegal to discharge any firearm or air rifle in the City and the need for messaging to residents on this topic. City Attorney Boileau confirmed.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on diversity hiring within the Fire-Rescue Department and his understanding there is a required swim test that is part of applicant hiring. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed he would review and provide the Commission with an update.

Commissioner Sorensen suggested looking at internal firefighter recruitment from other City departments. City Manager Lagerbloom discussed additional training opportunities for employees and noted specific applicant entry requirements in police and fire-rescue union contracts. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the availability of highly qualified candidates and creative ways to ensure reducing limiting barriers.

Commissioner McKinzie discussed the Melrose Park street lighting Agenda item, related history, community engagement, the need for additional information from Staff regarding lighting details, and his viewpoint.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed that following this Conference Meeting, there would be a *Shade Meeting* and an update on union negotiations.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 5:43 p.m.