

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 7, 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

BEN SORENSEN Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District IV

HEATHER MORAITIS Commissioner - District I

STEVEN GLASSMAN Commissioner - District II

ROBERT L. MCKINZIE Commissioner - District III

GREG CHAVARRIA, City Manager

DAVID R. SOLOMAN, City Clerk

ALAIN E. BOILEAU, City Attorney

PATRICK REILLY, Interim City Auditor

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the Commission Conference Meeting to order at 1:38 p.m.

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

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

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Commission Members Present: Commissioner Heather Moraitis, Commissioner Steven Glassman, Commissioner Robert L. McKinzie, Vice Mayor Ben Sorensen, and Mayor Dean J. Trantalis

Also Present: City Manager Chris Lagerbloom, City Clerk David R. Soloman, City Attorney Alain E. Boileau and Interim City Auditor Patrick Reilly

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COMMISSION

[22-0526](#)

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

***City of Fort Lauderdale Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB)
April 25, 2022***

Proposed Communication to the City Commission:

The Sustainability Advisory Board sends the following communication to the City Commission:

The Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) recommends that the City Commission consider taking the below actions to mitigate the potential for tree damage and canopy loss from subterranean termites. As the SAB learned on February 28, 2022, from Dr. Thomas Chouvinc of the University of Florida regarding the increasing spread of the Formosan subterranean termite and the Asian subterranean termite in South Florida and Fort Lauderdale, these termites are particularly destructive to our trees and buildings.

1) *Raise awareness in local communities. Some neighborhoods are more at-risk than others. Use the following University of Florida termite distribution map link to help target the message for those areas, <https://flrec.ifas.ufl.edu/termites-in-florida/termite-distribution/> .Owners and residents in these areas should be encouraged to conduct annual inspections of trees and structures for obvious signs of termite activity. Early detection is critical in catching early infestations and minimizing damage. Community awareness and understanding of the problem will reduce the potential damage to trees, structures, and properties. Investment in detection and mitigation of termite damage will reduce loss to tree canopy.*

2) *Establishing a program for inspecting trees on City-owned property. Trees on City owned properties, in parks, and lining streets are also at risk and may increase liability to the City if not addressed. City staff should be trained to look for signs of termite activity. Once termites are detected and identified, treatment can be applied by City trained and licensed staff or third-party licensed pest control companies.*

The SAB urges the Commission to immediately take these actions pertaining to subterranean termites.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Tamburri and seconded by Ms. Mazza to advance the above Communication to the City Commission. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Glen Hadwen, Public Works Department Sustainability Manager, discussed the genesis of the communication regarding termite infestation in city parks. The region is experiencing increased levels in termite infestation. The SAB provided two (2) recommendations for the City; bring awareness to residents and expand treatment within City parks and properties. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Phil Thornburg, Parks & Recreation Department Director, confirmed that there has been damage to trees in City parks and explained how staff currently addresses tree infestations.

Dr. Nancy Gassman, Assistant Public Works Director - Sustainability, remarked on how termites are weakening the center of the trees and if the infestations are not addressed, the City will start to lose a significant portion of the tree canopy and become hazardous in windstorms. The academic community is advocating for additional inspection protocols to capture the infestations early in the process. Further comment and

discussion ensued.

***Historic Preservation Board (HPB)
May 4, 2022 - 5:00 p.m.***

Communication to the City Commission:

Motion made by Mr. Marcus, seconded by Mr. Rosa:

The Historic Preservation Board is aware of potential ability for the property located at 1701 S. Andrews Avenue to be designated a potential historic landmark, and we are also aware the City Commission has begun conversations surrounding this property. Accordingly, the Historic Preservation Board is encouraging the City Commission to request this Board institute discussions surrounding designation of that landmark and furthermore, we would encourage the Commission to send notice to the owner to join this Board for those discussions.

In a voice vote, the motion passed 7-0.

Trisha Logan, Development Services Department Principal Urban Planner, provided details associated with the communication and confirmed that the property was identified as a potential historic landmark. A development application was submitted to demolish an existing structure and construct a new building on the corner of the same parcel. As part of the application process, historic preservation staff reviews for potential threats to potential historic properties.

Stephanie J. Toothaker, Esq., on behalf of Broward Health, discussed the work completed to date on developing a site plan and research done on the property. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Toothaker confirmed no demolition would occur prior to discussion with the Commission and Staff.

***Marine Advisory Board (MAB)
May 5, 2022***

Communication to the City Commission

Motion made by Ms. McGowan, seconded by Vice Chair Witten, to

submit [the attached communication] to the City as well as the fact that each member of the Marine Advisory Board will be communicating directly with the Army Corps of Engineers and any other elected officials they see necessary that might impact this subject. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Theodore Morley, MAB Chair, provided details and background related to their communication. Mayor Trantalis commented on the history of the area and why docking is not allowed along the walkway. In response to Vice Mayor Sorensen's question, City Manager Lagerbloom provided an update on staff's efforts to date and the potential for reshuffling vessels on the New River to accommodate all the interested parties in the area without allowing dockage along the walkway. Further comment and discussion ensued.

NEIGHBOR PRESENTATIONS

NP-1 [22-0387](#)

Holly Wilson - Sea Turtles

Not Present

NP-2 [22-0438](#)

LaRhonda Ware - Fire Department - Positive Comments

Mayor Trantalis recognized LaRhonda Ware, 417 NW 16 Avenue. Ms. Ware discussed an incident involving her child and Fire-Rescue Department's response. She thanked the Department for their efforts on that day and the days that followed.

NP-3 [22-0471](#)

Mary Fertig - Public Lands

Mayor Trantalis recognized Mary Fertig, 511 SE 26 Street. Ms. Fertig discussed that certain city parks are not currently zoned as parks and requested additional protection for public land. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding charter language, processes for petitions, and ballot referendums.

Phil Thornburg, Parks & Recreation Department Director, provided an update on the status of rezoning park land. In response to Commissioner Glassman's question on the timeline for rezoning all the parks not currently zoned as parks, Anthony Fajardo, Development Services Department Director, advised that he will check with staff and provide an update. Further comment and discussion ensued.

NP-4 [22-0553](#)

Elaine Wilson - Water Department

Not Present

NP-5 [22-0570](#) Fenel Antoine - 911 Dispatch and Emergency Services

Mayor Trantalis recognized Fenel Antoine, 1619 NW 14 Avenue. Mr. Antoine discussed his view of current 911 dispatch and emergency services and the need for the City to manage those services moving forward.

In response to Vice Mayor Sorensen's question, City Manager Chris Lagerbloom provided an update. Staff is exploring two (2) different options for managing emergency dispatch service. Further comment and discussion ensued.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

CF-1 [22-0495](#) Presentation - Actuarial Impact Statement - IAFF Requested Benefit Change - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Jeffrey Scott Bayne, International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 765 President, provided background on the item. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Bayne said there is a two-tier system, and all members pay the same amount into the pension system. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the information as stated in the memo attached to the agenda item.

Brad Heinrichs, Foster & Foster, stated that their firm's primary role is to inform the pension board of trustees what the annual funding requirements need to be for an actuarially sound pension fund. When collective bargaining parties negotiate, the parties will discuss pensions from time to time and the parties will ask for the actuarial impact of the requested change. Firefighters hired after October 2014 received a different tier of benefits versus those hired prior to that time. The firefighters are looking to make the benefits the same for both tiers. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding converting tier two (2) benefits into tier one (1) benefits and differences in costs for converting versus leaving as is.

City Manager Lagerbloom advised that this was an information only presentation and Commission comments should be handled within a closed-door session.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Mr. Bayne. Mr. Bayne provided updates to the plan this year, including gains experienced due to returns on investments and lowering the assumption rate. Due to input from City

Staff, the assumption rate was not lowered as far as previously proposed.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question on the next closed-door session for union negotiations, City Manger Lagerbloom responded that it will likely take place on June 21, 2022.

CF-2 [22-0540](#)

Presentation of the COVID-19 Impact Study on Fort Lauderdale Businesses - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Sarah Spurlock, Nighttime Economy Manager, provided background to the agenda item and introduced the city's consultant, Jon Stover, Jon Stover & Associates. Mr. Stover gave a presentation titled *The COVID-19 Impact Study*. Mr. Stover reviewed business sales indicating a steep drop in the spring of 2020, and cumulative monthly sales returning to pre-pandemic levels in early 2021. Small businesses generally fared worse than medium and large businesses over the course of the pandemic. Mr. Stover continued the presentation and provided additional study details on how different businesses fared through the height of COVID-19 and the recovery phase.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the hospitality industry and their workforce numbers, Mr. Stover commented that workforce shortages and increased expenses impacted their slower recovery. Further comment and discussion ensued on current hotel rates, occupancy and customer spending.

Mr. Stover commented on lower-than-average international visitation to the city due to border closures and limited international flights, but domestic tourism heavily increased due to the same factors. Mayor Trantalis commented on several factors as to why international visitation is still struggling. Mr. Stover reviewed several economic recovery support strategies as laid out in the presentation.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding expansions of large shopping areas such as Dania Pointe, Mr. Stover responded that it has a lot to do with placemaking. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on her viewpoint regarding the importance of large shopping areas having variety and being in the middle of dense populations.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question regarding how the Galt area small businesses fared better than other areas, Mr. Stover

responded that the area customer base is more local versus other areas that are more destination based.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

BUS-1 [22-0455](#)

City Hall Options - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

City Manager Lagerbloom commented that this Agenda item is before the Commission based on conversations the Broward County Board of Commissioners had at their Commission Meeting regarding the Joint Governmental Center Campus (JGCC). The City Commission requested different options for a new City Hall separate from the proposed JGCC.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Ken Krasnow, Colliers International. Mr. Krasnow provided a presentation on the JGCC projected milestones/costs, City needs and JGCC alternatives.

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

Mr. Krasnow commented on the timeline and updated project shared costs of \$828,000,000 (\$356,000,000 being the City's share) for the JGCC if everything goes to plan. The city would occupy eight (8) floors within the main building for office space and would need approximately one hundred and fifty thousand square feet (150,000') of usable space.

Mr. Krasnow reviewed the following three (3) alternatives to the JGCC and their corresponding estimated costs:

- Build on City-owned land
- Build on privately owned land
- Purchase of a building(s)

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question, Mr. Krasnow responded that a parking garage is not included in the estimated cost for Option Two (2), 121 E Broward Blvd, as the city already would utilize the existing parking garage across the street.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding Option Three-A (3a), 110 E. Broward Blvd, already being under contract, Mr. Krasnow advised there is an ability to purchase the property via a joint venture. The property was built in the 1980s but recently renovated.

Mayor Trantalis commented on a conversation he had recently at the U.S.

Conference of Mayors regarding the JGCC with the Hunt Company. The company's opinion was the JGCC cost estimate was inflated. The current cost estimate is not affordable to both the County and City. The company estimated it could build a new city hall at the current location of the existing city hall for about \$600 per square foot, significantly less than the JGCC estimates. This option would require demolishing the current city hall and being displaced for about two (2) years. Further comment and discussion ensued on the options presented.

City Manager Lagerbloom requested Commission input on moving forward. Mayor Trantalis confirmed there is Commission consensus not to move forward with the JGCC based on the estimated costs. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding the condition of the existing city hall parking garage, City Manager Lagerbloom advised that it is structurally sound, and the city would continue to have it properly maintained.

Further comment and discussion ensued on scheduling a Joint Workshop with the Broward County Board of Commissioners to discuss the JGCC. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed that he would work with Broward County to come up with a date for a Joint Workshop.

BUS-2 [22-0527](#)

Strategic Government Resources (SGR) Discussion on Auditor Recruitment - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

City Manager Lagerbloom stated the purpose of this agenda item and that there is a representative from *Strategic Government Resources (SGR)* prepared to present and discuss the City Auditor recruitment process.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Doug Thomas, *SGR's* Executive Vice President of Recruitment & Leadership Development. Mr. Thomas provided the qualifications of *SGR* and himself. He provided an overview of the recruitment process, position search timeline, position profile and commission priorities for the position.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question on the timeline, Mr. Thomas provided a comprehensive timeline, estimating a ninety (90) day window to obtain interested individuals. The consultant screening process would follow, creating a list of semi-finalists. The finalist process would include a formal interview with commission interaction.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question on the next steps, Mr. Thomas

requested commission feedback on the major challenges and opportunities, as well as attributes of the ideal candidate. Mayor Trantalis requested that Mr. Thomas reach out to each Commission member individually. Mr. Thomas confirmed.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question regarding residency requirements, City Attorney Alain Boileau explained there is no City Charter requirement for the City Auditor to reside in the City. Commissioner Moraitis commented that it should not be a requirement. Further comment and discussion ensued.

BUS-3 [22-0554](#)

Discussion on Future Development of Lockhart Park - (Commission District 1)

City Manager Lagerbloom requested to continue this conversation at the next Commission Conference Meeting and explained related details. He confirmed receipt of an anticipated report from *Inter Miami* containing the initial estimated value of improvements located on the south portion of the site. Upon review of the diagram, it was determined the cost does not match Exhibit Four (4) included in the Comprehensive Agreement. In meetings with team leadership, discussions included the possibility of seeking an appraiser to provide an estimated value of the improvements on the south portion of the site to determine compliance with the Comprehensive Agreement. Outstanding building fees are attached to the project and a determination is needed regarding which group is responsible for paying those building fees. There were discussions regarding parking needed on the site. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the need for additional time to work on these items between now and the next Commission Meeting.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions as to whether a site plan will be forthcoming, Inter Miami delivered a site plan that matches a cost, but does not match the site plan depicted in the comprehensive agreement.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Bruce Quaily, 3090 NE 46 Street. Mr. Quaily provided his comments on the need for additional greenspace in the city.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Juan Hurtado, 16360 NW 5 Street, Pembroke Pines. Mr. Hurtado supports constructing a skate park on the property and the benefits that go along with having a skate park. Commissioner Moraitis noted community support received for building a skate park.

Commissioner Moraitis discussed the importance of Inter Miami building

out the public space portion as set forth in the comprehensive agreement. Mayor Trantalis noted what has already been built out on the property for the benefit of the community. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the football field programming, Phil Thornburg, Parks & Recreation Department Director, advised that anything scheduled for the football field goes through Inter Miami. The city does not have access to the football field for recreational programming. Further comment and discussion ensued.

BUS-4 [22-0555](#)

City Manager Recruitment - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis noted that the Commission should decide today on an Interim City Manager. In response to Mayor Trantalis' request for recommendations, Vice Mayor Sorensen provided his comments on the importance of consistency and appointing an internal interim city manager as soon as possible. Vice Mayor Sorensen recommended Greg Chavarria, Assistant City Manager, to be appointed as Interim City Manager. Commissioner Glassman and Mayor Trantalis concurred with Vice Mayor Sorensen's recommendation. Further comment and discussion ensued on the process for selecting a permanent City Manager.

In response to Vice Mayor Sorensen's question, Commissioner Glassman confirmed his preference to appoint Mr. Chavarria as the permanent City Manager. Vice Mayor Sorensen concurred with Commissioner Glassman's recommendation.

In response to Vice Mayor Sorensen's question, City Attorney Boileau advised that an interim would not have a contract and would be like an at-will employee. Vice Mayor Sorensen reiterated his preference to appoint Mr. Chavarria as the permanent city manager. In response to Vice Mayor Sorensen's question regarding the opportunity to retain Tarlesha Smith, Assistant City Manager - Human Resources Director, as an Assistant City Manager or Deputy City Manager, City Attorney Boileau responded with options. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Chavarria responded that he greatly wants to be the next city manager and is thankful to the Commission for their recommendation. Further comment and discussion ensued on the process moving forward.

CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Moraitis commented on her positive community meeting regarding the Galleria proposed redevelopment. She noted community feedback wanting the mall property to be renovated and revitalized, but a few outstanding details need to be addressed.

Commissioner McKinzie noted his resignation from the Commission to allow for a Special Municipal Election on November 8, 2022. In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding seating new Commission Members, City Attorney Boileau noted that according to Charter requirements, the swearing-in of new Commission Members would be one (1) week following the election. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman commented on the many improvements of the Fort Lauderdale Aquatics Center and the excitement surrounding those improvements. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the International Swimming Hall of Fame buildings, Commissioner Glassman noted the interim agreement approved by the Commission. The Commission is awaiting the comprehensive agreement for consideration.

Commissioner Glassman noted a letter from the Fort Lauderdale Woman's Club (FLWC) and their request for assistance with needed roof repairs.

Commissioner Glassman commented on a City Attorney memo regarding the De Novo Hearing set for 500 Hendricks Isle. He requested clarity on whether the Commission will move forward with the hearing, noting related issues to items contained in the memo. In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding what happens if you go past one hundred eighty (180) days and no action is taken, City Attorney Boileau advised that the state statute is silent on any penalties for violation. He commented on the developer's anticipated legal action and recommended not moving forward with the hearing. Further comment and discussion ensued on whether to move forward with the hearing.

In response to Vice Mayor Sorensen's question regarding water slides and bounce houses at the American Beach Party Special Event, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed that the location of these amenities changed. The number of these amenities is similar to those used at previous events.

Vice Mayor Sorensen noted Nilda Comas' unveiling of her Mary McLeod Bethune Statue in Washington, D.C., on July 13, 2022. There is an

opportunity for the City to potentially participate by having a representative speak and provide funding.

Mayor Trantalis recognized William Riddle, 1311 NE 18 Street. Mr. Riddle provided background details related to the culmination leading up to the event in Washington D.C. and the funding request of \$5,000. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding how the funding would be used, Mr. Riddle explained that it would go towards ceremonies held in Washington D.C. and Fort Lauderdale. City Manager Lagerbloom discussed the process of moving forward with funding. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Vice Mayor Sorensen's question on FLWC's request for assistance with roof repairs, City Manager Lagerbloom discussed details regarding funding associated with both the FLWC and Delta House roof repairs. Further comment and discussion ensued on funding opportunities.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question about a new statute giving improved flexibility for enforcement of noise issues, City Attorney Boileau noted it is more of an operational issue for Police. He advised that Governor DeSantis signed legislation dealing with ATVs, doughnuts, and burnouts, making them unlawful on City streets.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the Ordinance related to panhandling, City Attorney Boileau advised that Staff is working on the Ordinances with outside counsel and will bring them back to Commission for consideration. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis requested an analysis of how much Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) funding is used for events. He requested a Commission discussion regarding how to use the remaining CRA funds.

Commissioner Glassman concurred and commented on recent Agenda items increasing funding associated with the Finally Friday Special Events on Sistrunk Boulevard. In response to Commissioner Glassman's question about whether this event is an allowable expenditure of CRA funds, City Attorney Boileau said they would review and update the Commission. Commissioner Glassman remarked on funding differences for events held on the beach and in the CRA. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the suspension of

events on the *Las Olas Parking Garage* rooftop, Phil Thornburg, Parks & Recreation Department Director, clarified it is not a suspension of events. The intent is to be more selective when reviewing events for approval. Staff recommends limiting the renting out of this space to larger, recurring events with a City-wide impact versus other requests. Further comment and discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

None.

ADJOURN

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the Commission Conference Meeting at 5:28 p.m.