

# City of Fort Lauderdale

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## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 26, 2023

9:00 AM

Commission Prioritization Workshop

L.A. Lee YMCA/Mizell Community Center  
1409 NW 6th St., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

### **CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP**

*FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION*

*DEAN J. TRANTALIS Mayor*

*WARREN STURMAN Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District IV*

*JOHN C. HERBST Commissioner - District I*

*STEVEN GLASSMAN Commissioner - District II*

*PAM BEASLEY-PITTMAN Commissioner - District III*

*GREG CHAVARRIA, City Manager*

*DAVID R. SOLOMAN, City Clerk*

*D'WAYNE M. SPENCE, Interim City Attorney*

*PATRICK REILLY, City Auditor*

## CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m.

## QUORUM ESTABLISHED

**Commission Members Present:** Commissioner John C. Herbst (appeared via communications technology), Commissioner Steven Glassman, Commissioner Pamela Beasley-Pittman, Vice Mayor Warren Sturman and Mayor Dean J. Trantalis

**Also Present:** City Manager Greg Chavarria, City Clerk David R. Soloman, Interim City Attorney D'Wayne M. Spence, and City Auditor Patrick Reilly

## INTRODUCTIONS

Mayor Trantalis provided opening remarks.

Sheryl Woods, President and CEO, YMCA of South Florida, provided an overview of YMCA programs available to the community and examples of recent student educational opportunities. Ms. Woods confirmed this YMCA is here to serve the community and welcomes any opportunity to provide programs and services.

City Manager Greg Chavarria reviewed details and goals of the Commission Priorities and Goal Setting Session (Session).

Budget Advisory Board (BAB) Chair Brian Donaldson explained his participation in this Session as BAB Chair is to build the Fiscal Year 2024 Priorities (Priorities) into the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget (Budget). Chair Donaldson reviewed the BAB's 2024 Workshop dates.

City Manager Chavarria introduced a Strategic Communications Division video, which provided background and context to the Session.

## OLD/NEW BUSINESS

### **BUS-1** [23-0175](#)

Fiscal Year 2024 City Commission Prioritization Workshop - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Aricka Johnson, Office of Management and Budget-Structural Innovation Manager, reviewed the Vision Strategy Action Prioritization booklet included in the Session information packet.

***A copy of the Vision Strategy Action Prioritization (VSAP) booklet has been made part of the backup to this Agenda item.***

Luisa Agathon, Neighborhood Support Manager, provided an update on affordable housing and homelessness efforts and related accomplishments listed in the VSAP booklet.

Alan Dodd, Public Works Department Director, provided an update on infrastructure and resilience efforts and reviewed related accomplishments listed in the VSAP booklet.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Dodd explained that the utilities undergrounding program in the southeast area of Las Olas Isles would be completed in Fiscal Year 2023. Stormwater projects in the Edgewood and River Oaks neighborhoods are planned for completion in FY 2024. Staff will move forward with the solicitation for the Dorsey-Riverbend and Durrs stormwater projects.

Phil Thornburg, Parks and Recreation Department Director, provided an update on parks and public spaces and reviewed related accomplishments listed in the VSAP booklet.

Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility (TAM) Department Director, reviewed updates associated with transportation and related accomplishments included in the VSAP booklet.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the growth of plans and costs of LauderTrail. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Rogers confirmed Staff would reexamine the LauderTrail Working Group's plans to its initial intention to ensure its success.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions regarding funding for the Breakers Avenue project, Mr. Rogers said that the Breakers Avenue project had never been adequately funded. Staff is working with Broward County, through the Office of the County Administrator, to determine if there could be an exception to the transportation surtax funding process for the Breakers Avenue project. Staff had also requested federal and state funding but has yet to be successful.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on previous requests for federal funding for the Breakers Avenue project when Congressman Ted Deutch was in office, which was unsuccessful. In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding Staff reaching out to Congressman Jared Moskowitz regarding funding for this project, Mr. Rogers explained Staff prepares transportation project packets for Daphnee Sainvil,

Government Affairs & Economic Development Manager, and the Breakers Avenue project was included. Commissioner Glassman recommended this topic be discussed during Mayor Trantalis' upcoming meeting with Broward County Mayor Lamar Fisher and Broward County Administrator Monica Cepero.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) timetable for the completion of Tunnel Top Park, Mr. Rogers noted discussions with FDOT personnel indicated mid-April 2023. Mayor Trantalis remarked on concerns related to the 15th Avenue Mobility Improvement Project (Project) and inquired about efforts to address traffic patterns on 15th Avenue when a permanent solution is implemented. Mr. Rogers explained Staff is working with the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for capital improvement funding to make those improvements permanent. He expounded on data collection efforts and cited examples. Commissioner Herbst commented on negative community feedback regarding the Project. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Beasley-Pittman's questions regarding the micro-transit program (Program), Mr. Rogers explained the related pilot Program was extended through the remainder of FY 2023. Staff is working towards long-term permanent funding that would include extending the Program's boundaries based upon ridership requests to maximize its efficiency. Staff has applied for grant funding from FDOT for Program operations to fund a pilot project exclusively for the Northwest area and is awaiting a response.

Daphnee Sainvil explained that outreach to Congressman Moskowitz would begin when the federal level appropriations begin. Funding for the Breakers Avenue Project will be included with other infrastructure and transportation funding requests.

City Manager Chavarria confirmed an upcoming meeting date with Broward County Mayor Lamar Fisher and Broward County Administrator Monica Cepero.

### **RECESS - BREAK**

Mayor Trantalis announced a short break at 10:02 a.m.

### **RECONVENE**

Mayor Trantalis reconvened the meeting at 10:16 a.m.

[23-0175](#)

Fiscal Year 2024 City Commission Prioritization Workshop -  
(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Ms. Johnson led a Commission Member interactive activity focused on what Commission Members believe are the City's strengths, aspirations, opportunities, and results.

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

Commissioner Glassman remarked on leveraging the beach as a major attraction for visitors and continuing coordinated efforts promoting tourism with the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Ms. Johnson expounded on aspects of the Commission's feedback during the interactive session that will serve as a framework for developing Priorities.

Each Commission Member discussed their perspectives regarding Priorities and the path forward.

Commissioner Herbst discussed neighbor feedback regarding the negative impact of homelessness on neighborhoods and cited examples. He noted this issue has been ongoing in District 1 and remarked on Staff and Police Department efforts.

Commissioner Herbst discussed neighbor concerns related to Airbnbs and the negative impact on residential neighborhoods. He remarked on preemption at the State level related to regulation and the need for continued dialogue with State representatives in Tallahassee.

Commissioner Herbst confirmed the need for continued development of parks in District 1 and remarked on related details.

Commissioner Herbst commented on the need to improve mobility on primary travel arteries in the City and in the downtown core.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on the consistent, broad nature of Priorities over the past five (5) years and the need to dig deeper. He discussed entertainment districts, the Himmarshee Entertainment District in particular. He recommended revisiting related ordinances to determine what works and what does not, along with a visioning process to enhance entertainment districts. Commissioner Glassman concurred with Commissioner Herbst's comments on the need for additional park space and addressing mobility concerns.

Commissioner Glassman expounded on homelessness initiatives and recommended improved communication with the community regarding Staff initiatives and efforts regarding homelessness to ensure an awareness of efforts.

Commissioner Glassman recommended stepping up regulation and ordinance enforcement to address items of concern to the community.

Commissioner Glassman urged the Development Services Department to consider requiring public participation for all development projects and ensuring neighborhoods are aware of proposed developments. He confirmed that ensuring waterways are clean and usable by the public is a Priority.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman discussed District 3 Priorities, including affordable housing. Important community education and awareness of affordable housing opportunities and information are available via internet broadband infrastructure, which the District 3 community needs. Commissioner Beasley-Pittman cited examples and confirmed an important Priority is to ensure the availability of broadband infrastructure in District 3.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman explained that District 3 is a food desert without easy access to quality food, and a top District 3 Priority includes addressing this issue. She cited examples of possible solutions, including big box stores coming to the area in mobile food units as an alternative to a brick-and-mortar store.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman remarked on the need to improve the slow economic development in District 3. She inquired about pending development and asked about delays.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman concurred with previous remarks regarding the need for additional greenspace and specifically discussed related needs in District 3.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman agreed with Commission comments related to the need to address all aspects of homelessness. She remarked on the need to recognize and address the mental health component associated with homelessness.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman said an additional District 3 Priority includes developing a cultural and entertainment district in the Sistrunk Corridor area.

Vice Mayor Sturman reviewed District 4 community Priority talking points: 1) enacting a public-private partnership (P3) ordinance; 2) a Charter revision defining public lands for a public purpose; 3) defining a smart growth policy addressing neighborhood compatibility, aging and failing infrastructure, failing roads and the need for more parks and open spaces; and 4) protecting the environment, promoting healthy waterways, implementing an Urban Forestry Master Plan to protect and enhance wildlife habitats, and preparing for sea level rise.

Vice Mayor Sturman said he concurred with Priorities discussed by Commission Members addressing homelessness, traffic improvements, and the need for additional park space.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the consistent nature of Commission Priorities. He confirmed the need to continue with the initiatives discussed that Staff presented earlier and the need for increased focus. Mayor Trantalis remarked on prior efforts to regulate Airbnbs impacting the quality of life in neighborhoods. He discussed the need for a new City Hall and his positive perspective regarding a recently submitted P3 proposal. Mayor Trantalis discussed his goal for Commission agreement to move forward with the construction of a new water treatment plant in the next twelve (12) months.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the progress of the commuter rail system between Miami and West Palm Beach and the need for continued funding efforts with Broward County and the State of Florida for a tunnel for the New River Crossing (Tunnel) in place of a bridge. He confirmed a meeting with County leadership on February 4, 2023, to work towards securing local and federal funding for the Tunnel project. Mayor Trantalis explained that the Federal Department of Transportation had indicated a funding cycle opening in March 2023 that could provide significant funding for the Tunnel. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis discussed ongoing Priorities, including maintaining waterway cleanliness, addressing affordable housing needs, needs of the homeless and related wrap-around services.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on micro-unit projects around the country addressing homelessness and suggested Staff research. Mayor Trantalis noted the challenge relates to a location for micro-units. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis confirmed the need to focus on diversifying the economy and continued coordination with outside organizations, including the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance. He expounded on ongoing efforts to

address Priorities. Further comment and discussion ensued.

### **RECESS - LUNCH**

Mayor Trantalis recessed the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

### **RECONVENE**

Mayor Trantalis reconvened the meeting at 11:37 a.m.

#### [23-0175](#)

Fiscal Year 2024 City Commission Prioritization Workshop -  
(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Ms. Johnson reviewed the five (5) overarching Commission's Fiscal Year 2024 Priorities (Priorities): 1) Housing and Homelessness; 2) Infrastructure and Resilience; 3) Parks and Public Spaces; 4) Transportation; and 5) Economic Development and Diversification. Ms. Johnson narrated details associated with implementing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Priorities (Priorities).

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

In response to Vice Mayor Sturman's question, Chris Cooper, Development Services Department Director, explained Staff has been pursuing the process of rezoning public spaces to parks for the past six (6) months and approximately eight (8) to ten (10) have been done. There are approximately eight (8) additional public spaces coming before the Commission, and anticipated to be completed by early Summer. Vice Mayor Sturman confirmed District 4 has additional public spaces to be added to that process.

Commissioner Herbst concurred with comments regarding a P3 ordinance and the need for a more robust ordinance than the current Ordinance, including a reasonable standard timeframe for submission of competing P3 proposals in addition to requiring a financial analysis, a business plan, and a pro forma for all P3 submissions. He expounded on his perspective and reiterated that any entity coming forward with a proposal for the use of public land would need to have a fully vetted business plan, concept, and market analysis.

Commissioner Herbst echoed Mayor Trantalis' comments regarding the need for a new City Hall. He shared his vision with City Manager Chavarria for a design-build project for an L-shaped building abutting the existing parking garage to allow continuity of operations adding two (2) floors to the parking garage to accommodate additional Staff



consolidated from other locations. He remarked on the need to build a functional building versus an iconic building to meet the needs of the residents and the employees at the lowest cost possible using local contractors. Commissioner Herbst said there would be no benefit to using a P3. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Herbst remarked on the need for the completion of the Police Department Headquarters, currently \$40,000,000 over budget, and re-examining the design for a building that meets the functional needs of Police Officers and residents versus being iconic. He noted the need to ensure Police Department Headquarters has adequate space to bring back City 911 Emergency Services that has been an ongoing discussion.

Commissioner Herbst commented on current Charter terminology related to leases versus licensing of public property and confirmed the need for the Charter Revision Board to meet and address related Commission concerns.

Commissioner Herbst discussed the need for Police Officers, particularly road patrols, and Public Safety Aides to handle the administrative aspects related to addressing the needs of the homeless. He remarked on concerns related to non-emergency response time.

Commissioner Herbst concurred with Commissioner Glassman's remarks regarding the Circuit micro-transit service and the importance of expanding its footprint to include the Galt area. He said it is time for the City to fund this service with the assistance of the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Herbst concurred with Mayor Trantalis' viewpoint regarding the need for a tunnel for the New River Crossing and expounded on his perspective.

Commissioner Herbst discussed SE 15th Avenue and his viewpoint that the road should be restored to its prior condition.

Commissioner Herbst discussed extending the life of the Northwest-Progresso Flagler Heights (NWPFH) CRA and remarked on related details. Extending the sunset date by several years would allow the CRA Board to adopt a more deliberate approach to spending down the remaining NWPFH CRA dollars, and he would defer to the District Commissioners Beasley-Pittman and Commissioner Glassman. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman concurred with Commissioner Herbst's recommendation and explained her perspective in support of extending the sunset of the CRA.

Commissioner Glassman commented on his understanding related to a plan to morph the CRA into another agency. Mayor Trantalis noted most CRA funds had been allocated, and efforts are ongoing to recover funds previously allocated to projects that have not yet moved forward. Commissioner Herbst noted that as those efforts continue, the need for time to determine how those dollars would be targeted. He confirmed that the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) had been established so that those recovered funds would go into the EDC. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, Clarence Woods, NWPFH CRA Manager, said that the sunset date for the NWPFH CRA is November 2025. He confirmed efforts to ensure approved and funded NWPFH CRA projects are completed before sunset. He remarked on continued NWPFH CRA project submissions and anticipation that project funding allocations are anticipated to continue until the sunset of the NWPFH CRA. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the need for a path to continue NWPFH CRA funding of projects west of Andrews Avenue. He commented on recent conversations with a developer who recommended a tax abatement program for building affordable housing projects outside the CRA but in areas in need of more economic development. He requested an inventory of the remaining NWPFH CRA funds and previously approved projects that still need to be completed. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman requested the opportunity to address the items discussed by Commissioner Herbst and remarked on related concerns, including his opposition to value engineering the Police Department Headquarters, and restoring SE 15th Avenue to its original condition. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on prior efforts for a new City Hall in conjunction with the County for a Joint Government Center.

Commissioner Glassman discussed public safety and the need to activate and staff a Police Department Substation in Oceanside Park and expounded on related details. He concurred with Commissioner Herbst's recommendation for additional Police Officers and Public Safety

Aides. Commissioner Glassman discussed the need to improve historic preservation incentives and is a Priority.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman remarked on the need to address public safety and law enforcement, including efforts to build better relationships with neighbors and addressing ongoing concerns regarding the 911 Emergency Service response times. Mayor Trantalis concurred and recommended this be included as a Priority. These items merit discussion as a Conference Meeting Agenda item to include neighbor participation to understand their perspectives, ideas, and recommendations.

Ms. Johnson recapped her understanding of the top six (6) Priorities based on Commission Member input, including housing and homelessness, infrastructure and resilience, public places, transportation and traffic, public safety, and economic development.

Vice Mayor Sturman commented on his support of the Priorities discussed and expounded on his support of a tunnel for the New River Crossing that would transform the community. He remarked on his perspective regarding rising construction costs for the new Police Headquarters and discussed the possibility of decreasing project costs. Mayor Trantalis remarked on Staff's efforts to keep costs in check.

City Manager Chavarria said since receipt of the cost estimate for the Police Headquarters, Staff has been evaluating value engineering in addition to a construction audit with the Office of the City Auditor towards reducing project costs. Staff is in the final phase of negotiations with the goal of bringing the contract before the Commission at the February 7, 2023, Regular Meeting. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Mayor Sturman concurred with Commissioner Herbst regarding increasing Police Officers and use of Public Safety Aides. He remarked on opportunities to increase public safety, including implementing a better Police presence downtown and adding a third person to the Fire-Rescue Department vehicle to improve efficiency. Vice Mayor Sturman discussed his support of the Circuit and other options to improve mobility, including the river trolley. He confirmed support for moving forward with an improved P3 Ordinance.

Vice Mayor Sturman recommended prioritizing an Urban Forestry Master Plan and implementing tree canopy aesthetics that provides shade addressing heat-related concerns and other environmental needs. He discussed the need for Priorities to include the rezoning of public lands as parks. Vice Mayor Sturman confirmed his support of Commissioner

Beasley-Pittman's District 3 Priorities to increase opportunities for the community, including broadband internet.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding an update on the deferred Tree Ordinance, Mr. Cooper explained Staff is taking the Tree Ordinance back through the Planning and Zoning Board process, and it would be presented to the Commission.

Ms. Johnson reviewed Commission Member Priorities updates based on today's Commission Member input.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding the State Statute allowing a twenty-one (21) day to one hundred-twenty-day (120) day range for responses to an unsolicited proposal at the discretion of the City Commission, Interim City Attorney D'Wayne Spence confirmed. Commissioner Glassman commented on his positive viewpoint regarding the flexibility allotted to the Commission in the State Statute. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Mayor Sturman recommended Interim City Attorney Spence provide an overview and detailed explanation of the P3 process to inform the Commission regarding what is allowed. Interim City Attorney Spence confirmed.

Mayor Trantalis requested the Office of the City Attorney distribute the State Statute and the City's Ordinance related to unsolicited proposals to all Commission Members, followed by scheduling a Conference Agenda item to discuss salient points, including the response timeframe. Interim City Attorney Spence confirmed.

Commissioner Herbst noted other Florida municipal P3 ordinances could be used as a good model and requested they be provided to Commission Members. He remarked that Miami-Dade County's P3 Ordinance that had been referenced as a good model. Commissioner Herbst requested Staff prepare a matrix of municipal P3 ordinances. Commissioner Glassman requested a list of projects approved by the Commission to date, including the response timeframe set by the Commission.

In response to Interim City Attorney Spence's question, Mayor Trantalis recommended including three (3) municipal samples. Commissioner Herbst suggested the additional samples be from cities with large, robust, diverse economies, i.e., Tampa and Orlando. Interim City Attorney Spence confirmed.

Ms. Johnson continued the review of Commission Priorities.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 12:32 p.m.