

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 23, 2023

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

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 1:34 p.m.

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Commission Members Present: Commissioner John C. Herbst, 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

CONFERENCE REPORTS

CF-1 [23-0305](#)

Community Redevelopment Agency Report on the Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights (NPF) Community Redevelopment Area Projects, Community Benefit, and Local Contracting Requirements - (Commission Districts 2 and 3)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Clarence Woods, Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights Community Redevelopment Agency (NWPFH CRA) Area Manager. Mr. Woods reviewed the NWPFH CRA Report (Report) and noted Exhibits One (1) and Two (2) included modified dates. He requested Commission feedback regarding policy to improve the performance of the projects.

A revised copy of Exhibits One (1) and Two (2) are attached to these Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Woods remarked on Commissioner Beasley-Pittman's request to understand hiring policies and community benefits associated with NWPFH CRA projects. Exhibit One (1) lists NWPFH CRA projects over \$1,000,000, and hiring policies for those projects are included in the agreements. Exhibit Two (2) is the monthly status Report of projects and their progress.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Commissioner Beasley-Pittman said she would review Exhibit One (1) and provide questions and feedback thereafter.

Mayor Trantalis discussed concerns regarding the Comfort Suites Hotel

(Comfort Suites) project approved in 2019. Mr. Woods provided an update and confirmed a June 6, 2023, deadline for Comfort Suites to finalize its financing, followed by a deadline of thirty (30) days for groundbreaking. Staff has communicated with representatives of Comfort Suites, who indicated plans are substantially complete and close to finalizing their permits. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on concerns regarding this project's four (4) year delay. Mr. Woods said that Comfort Suites indicated it had spent \$1,500,000 to date. He noted that CRA Staff contacted the Development Services Department for a permitting update. Mr. Woods reiterated Comfort Suites indicated they can meet the June 6, 2023, deadline. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Beasley-Pittman's questions, Mr. Woods explained should Comfort Suites fail to meet the deadline, NWPFH CRA funding could be pulled and provide opportunities for other CRA project applicants. Commissioner Beasley-Pittman confirmed a comfort level with staying the course for an additional three (3) months.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, Mr. Woods reviewed additional NWPFH CRA projects approved by the CRA Board in 2019. The Rhythm 2.0 buildout is currently under construction, and Junny's Restaurant is reaching completion.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' inquiry, there were no additional questions from Commission Members.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

BUS-1 [23-0258](#)

City Sponsored Events 2nd Quarter 2023 - (Commission Districts 2, 3 and 4)

City Manager Chavarria provided an overview of City-sponsored special events for the Second (2nd) Quarter of 2023. He noted Staff provided a memorandum to the Commission listing the events and approved budget costs for each. City Manager Chavarria requested Commission feedback. Further comment and discussion ensued.

A copy of the Commission Memorandum is attached to these Meeting Minutes.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman remarked on her review of the events, corresponding applications, and the need for equitable funding. She cited examples and requested an explanation regarding how event

funding is determined. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the funding methodology used by Staff.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Phil Thornburg, Parks and Recreation Department Director. Mr. Thornburg discussed items considered by Staff to determine event funding, cited examples, and confirmed Staff reevaluates these annually. In Fiscal Year 2023, Parks and Recreation Department Staff were requested to reduce expenditures by approximately \$1,000,000. Mr. Thornburg confirmed increased costs associated with event operations.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman requested to work on a policy to increase event funding, ensuring equitability in each area of the City. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman recommended the Commission discuss event funding at upcoming Joint Workshops with the Budget Advisory Board. Mayor Trantalis confirmed. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the need for event applications to be fully completed to determine equitable funding and cited an example. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding having verified numbers for special event attendees, Mr. Thornburg that Staff completes applications for internal events.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman noted the need for additional funding for Carter Park Jamz and Summer Jamz events, and Mayor Trantalis noted the need to reallocate funding from other events. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman discussed the recent Commission resolution allocating \$150,000 for costs associated with the 4th of July Spectacular event on the beach. City Manager Chavarria confirmed that amount was part of the \$400,000 approved budget for that event. He confirmed Staff's ability to adjust funding for certain events, which are brought before the Commission for approval.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Commissioner Beasley-Pittman reiterated that the two (2) District 3 events in need of funding increases are Carter Park Jamz and Summer Jamz. She noted a Carter Park Jamz event was removed in March 2023 and suggested replacing it in June 2023. Mr. Thornburg confirmed the cancellation of the

March 2023 Carter Park Jamz event and efforts to add an event. The Summer Jamz event this year has a budget allocation of \$100,000. Further comment and discussion ensued.

City Manager Chavarria confirmed Staff would return to the Commission with a policy recommendation for events. He reiterated Staff would also work with Commissioner Beasley-Pittman to reallocate event funding.

Commissioner Herbst remarked on the scarcity of events in District 1 and requested Staff address. Mr. Thornburg noted Staff added a Pre-Labor Day event in the Galt Ocean Mile area. Commissioner Herbst remarked on numerous upcoming District 1 special events in the next quarter.

BUS-2 [23-0277](#)

Communication Strategies and Practices - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Ashley Doussard, Strategic Communications (STRATCOM) Manager. Mayor Trantalis acknowledged and congratulated Ms. Doussard on the first *FTL Connect* magazine publication that will be mailed to City residences. Ms. Doussard acknowledged the team effort to produce *FTL Connect* and introduced Strategic Communications Staff.

Ms. Doussard showed a video illustrating current strategies and practices of the Strategic Communications Division for communicating with the public .

Ms. Doussard distributed a copy of a presentation entitled, *City of Fort Lauderdale Strategic Communications*, and narrated the presentation.

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

Mayor Trantalis commented on the importance of communicating correct information to residents on important topics such as seawall repair and replacement. Ms. Doussard explained Strategic Communications Staff efforts. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the previous Commission practice of the City holding Virtual Town Hall Meetings, City Manager Chavarria remarked on his understanding that those occurred during COVID. Mayor Trantalis remarked on his understanding of earlier efforts before COVID and for the Commission to consider reestablishing Commission Virtual Town Hall Meetings.

Ms. Doussard continued narrating the presentation and remarked on the success of the new Water Treatment Plant Telephone Town Hall Meeting produced by STRATCOM, informing residents of the facts and details of the project. City Manager Chavarria shared details about funding new STRATCOM methods and cited examples.

Commissioner Herbst remarked on STRATCOM's *Minute with the Mayor* and the definition of ceremonial purposes. Commissioner Herbst inquired about providing a similar opportunity to all Commission Members. In response to Commissioner Herbst's question, Interim City Attorney D'Wayne Spence explained that the Charter does not define actions from the Mayor's Office for ceremonial purposes, and the typical way of interpreting it would be to rely on the common use of ceremonial. Mayor Trantalis recommended rotating this opportunity with each Commission Member. City Manager Chavarria confirmed.

In response to Commissioner Beasley-Pittman's question regarding annual funding, Ms. Doussard explained salary savings were used to pay for the publication of *FTL Connect*. Costs associated with the new Water Treatment Plant Town Hall Meeting were charged to the Public Works Department for public outreach. Funding for the Major Projects webpage was funded from the STRATCOM budget. Ms. Doussard explained that the STRATCOM annual budget for advertising and marketing is \$65,000.

In response to Vice Mayor Sturman's questions, Ms. Doussard said that currently, no advertising revenue is produced from *FTL Connect*. City Manager Chavarria explained the efforts of other municipalities to offset costs for items such as postage with ongoing contracts with sponsors that support costs associated with the production of municipal publications. Staff would need direction from the Commission to pursue similar contracts. Commissioner Herbst remarked on his perspective regarding possible conflicts of interest related to vendors sponsoring publications. Further comment and discussion ensued.

City Manager Chavarria said Staff could review policies from other cities regarding recruiting sponsors for publication expenditures and present them to the Commission. Mayor Trantalis suggested Staff pursue revenue from the *FTL Connect* publication to offset costs without conflicts of interest.

In response to Commissioner Beasley-Pittman's questions, Ms. Doussard explained the approximate annual STRATCOM budget had

been \$2,500,000 since 2021. Ms. Doussard reiterated recent costs not factored into the STRATCOM budget, including the *FTL Connect* publication offset with unfilled salary positions.

CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

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

Each Commission Member discussed their activities with the Broward County Legislative Delegation during Broward Days in Tallahassee.

Commissioner Herbst remarked on a productive meeting with Representative Chip LaMarca regarding funding for a Galt Ocean Mile project, related support in the state Senate, and reinstating the City's portion of funding for the project. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Commissioner Herbst said \$500,000 is the requested amount from the state budget.

Commissioner Herbst remarked on continuing discussions with Inter Miami and the potential for not having to pursue mediation.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman commented on her meetings during Broward Days focused on appropriations for affordable housing, education, and infrastructure with Florida State Representatives Darrell Campbell, Chip LaMarca, and Patricia Williams and Florida State Senators Rosalind Osgood and Jason Pizzo.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman remarked on a ride-along with City Manager Chavarria and provided an opportunity to share and exchange District 3 information. She discussed Circuit Transit implementation in District 3 and expounded on route details.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on the progress of the Broward County Solid Waste Working Group, efforts to find solutions for A1A lighting, completion of the Hendricks Isle seawall project, and stakeholder efforts to increase capacity at the Federal Highway/US1 and Gateway Shopping Plaza intersection.

Commissioner Glassman expounded on his concerns regarding legislation making its way in the Florida Legislature, including affordable housing that includes preemption caveats. He recommended Staff review and provide feedback. He expounded on his viewpoint regarding proposed legislation regarding Advanced Placement African American Studies (APAAS), education and universal vouchers, women's

reproductive rights, historic preservation, vacation rentals, public safety and open carry, property insurance, LGBTQ issues, and flying certain flags at municipal buildings. He remarked on community feedback from concerned residents and commented on other concerns related to additional anticipated state legislation. Commissioner Glassman requested updates from Daphnee Sainvil, Government Affairs & Economic Development Manager.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the need for the Commission to address issues that pertain to the City, such as zoning and home rule. He discussed his viewpoint and concern regarding the current affordable housing legislation and its caveats, which prevent the City from determining heights and setbacks, and cited examples. He recommended identifying several legislative concerns raised by Commissioner Glassman and scheduling a discussion at a future Conference Meeting.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on a previously adopted Resolution regarding women's reproductive rights and requested an update on APAAS. He reiterated his concerns regarding proposed state legislation and expounded on details.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman noted changes to the approach of the Broward County School Board (School Board) regarding the APAAS class.

In response to Commissioner Beasley-Pittman's questions, Daphnee Sainvil, Government Affairs & Economic Development Manager, commented on conversations while in Tallahassee with a representative of the School Board. The School Board will offer the APAAS course as an honors course rather than the advanced placement course. Other school districts are piloting it as an advanced placement course. Portions removed were included in interdisciplinary studies. Commissioner Glassman discussed concerns of school textbook publishers not wanting to do business in Florida, cited examples, and expounded on his viewpoint.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman remarked on the previous APAAS Walk-On Resolution presented at the February 21, 2023, Regular Meeting (Walk-On Resolution). She suggested adopting two (2) resolutions to address legislative concerns. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Interim City Attorney D'Wayne Spence commented on previous

Commission discussions and the resulting Walk-On Resolution (Resolution). He read pertinent sections and remarked on recipients. Separating the Resolution would result in one (1) resolution specifically addressing the exclusion of the APAAS to be directed to the Department of Education and Governor Ron DeSantis. The second resolution would address legislative and executive measures that affect education and be directed to whomever the Commission chooses.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his recollection that the APAAS resolution recipient would only be the School Board. Commissioner Glassman remarked on his disagreement.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Interim City Attorney Spence clarified the broader scope of education concerns would be addressed in a second resolution. Commissioner Glassman commented on the second resolution wording and confirmed he agreed with the first resolution. Mayor Trantalis remarked on his viewpoint and concerns. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' request for consensus regarding the Walk-On resolution, Commissioner Beasley-Pittman confirmed Section one (1) in the Walk-On resolution addresses the intent of her position regarding APAAS. She only supports including Section One (1) in the Walk-On resolution. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the intent of statements in Sections two (2) and three (3) of the Walk-On resolution and the recipients. Mayor Trantalis confirmed his support of the Walk-On resolution as presented, including Sections one (1), two (2), and three (3).

Interim City Attorney Spence reiterated the purpose of this type of resolution expresses the position of the Commission regarding legislation and includes to whom it is sent. Ms. Sainvil recommended sending it to the College Board, the Department of Education, and the Broward County Legislative Delegation.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Ms. Sainvil recommended sending the Walk-On resolution to the State Board of Education Chair, Tom Grady, the College Board, the Florida Department of Education, Commissioner of Education Manny Diaz, Jr., each member of the State Board of Education, and each member of the Broward Legislative Delegation.

Mayor Trantalis suggested Commissioner Glassman identify additional legislative topics to be discussed at a future Conference Meeting.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding urgency related to other legislative actions, Ms. Sainvil confirmed she would provide an update to the Commission.

Ms. Sainvil discussed proposed affordable housing legislation that includes Broward County (County) being unable to restrict the height of such development below the highest allowed height for commercial or residential development in its jurisdiction within one (1) mile of the proposed development or three (3) stories, whichever is higher. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Anthony Fajardo, Assistant City Manager, explained the details of the affordable housing legislation. Mayor Trantalis discussed sending a letter to Governor DeSantis regarding Commission concerns related to height and density. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the best way to communicate the Commission's position.

Mr. Fajardo remarked on the ability of Staff to generate an illustration from the City's geographic information system (GIS) showing the impact of this proposed legislation on residential neighborhoods. Ms. Sainvil recommended Mayor Trantalis write a letter to Governor DeSantis and attach Staff's GIS illustration to communicate the City's position.

Commissioner Herbst confirmed he would support a letter from Mayor Trantalis and recommended including acceptable alternatives.

In response to Vice Mayor Sturman's question regarding delaying legislative action, Ms. Sainvil remarked on new Senate and House rules that make it challenging to pass floor amendments and explained related details. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Ms. Sainvil provided an update on additional legislation, including vacation rentals, open carry of guns, and historic preservation.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, Ms. Sainvil said the open carry legislation was amended and said she would return to the Commission with an update on the amendment. She discussed her understanding of proposed legislation, SB 1346 and HB 1317, and SB 1018 and HB 859 (Bills), related to historic preservation that she sent to Staff to review. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding how these Bills would affect the City's status as a Certified Local Government (CLG) under the Florida Division of Historical Resources, Mr. Fajardo noted his

understanding of the opinion of Trisha Logan, Historic Preservation Officer, that these Bills would make it easier to demolish historic structures. Mr. Fajardo said he would confer with Ms. Logan to determine the impact of the Bills on the City as a CLG. Commissioner Glassman remarked on his viewpoint that these are preemption bills.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding other preemption bills, Ms. Sainvil discussed sovereign immunity, and the Senate bill sponsor indicated it would not move forward. Ms. Sainvil said she would provide a full report on the status of all proposed legislation next week.

Mayor Trantalis confirmed that a Walk-On resolution regarding APAAS would be brought forward at tonight's Regular Meeting. He would write a letter to Governor DeSantis regarding the City's position on affordable housing legislation and noted that Ms. Sainvil would provide updates on other preemptions that require urgency.

Mayor Trantalis discussed his perspective regarding the ability to influence other legislative items of concern.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Interim City Attorney Spence explained information included in Commission Resolution 21-0184 urging all Florida municipalities to join in the effort to safeguard and promote access to reproductive health care and abortion rights. Commissioner Glassman discussed his understanding of other proposed legislation on that subject, which falls under the Florida Constitution's privacy provision and the Florida Supreme Court has upheld. Mayor Trantalis said he would support an additional resolution on this topic reiterating the Commission's position. Commissioner Beasley-Pittman remarked on the need to review the Resolution 21-0184, and Interim City Attorney Spence explained aspects of the Resolution. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on his opposition to HB 007 and SB 300 and support of HB 1033 and SB 1076. In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Ms. Sainvil provided an update on this legislation. In answer to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Sainvil explained SB 300 and HB 107. Commissioner Glassman discussed his concerns and noted a follow-up resolution to Resolution 21-0184 would need to include support for HB 1033 and SB 1076. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding support, Commissioner Beasley-Pittman had no comment at this time.

Commissioner Glassman discussed his opposition to any legislation negatively impacting the LGBTQ community. Mayor Trantalis said he would write personal correspondence on this topic, expounded on his experience and viewpoint, and encouraged Commission Members to address this topic as they deem appropriate. Commissioner Glassman noted the need for the City to state its position.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding the status of HB 99 and SB 266 related to education that removes gender, race, and equity education, Mayor Trantalis noted this topic is under the purview of the State Board of Education.

Vice Mayor Sturman remarked on the need for balance when the Commission voices its position on tangible items that impact the City versus social issues, and the need to be aware of timing and strategy.

Vice Mayor Sturman confirmed plans for monthly Neighborhood President Meetings (NPM) in District 4 and requested that District 4 communities provide input for discussion. The first District 4 NPM will be held on the last Wednesday in March 2023. District 4 is planning a Town Hall Meeting in April 2023. He will be attending the upcoming League of Cities Meeting in Washington, DC, with Commissioner Beasley-Pittman and City Manager Chavarria.

Mayor Trantalis recessed the Meeting at 4:02 p.m.

Mayor Trantalis reconvened the Meeting at 4:12 p.m.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on a recent constructive meeting with the Fort Lauderdale Downtown Development Authority. He discussed the success of this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade held on the barrier island and recommended it be returned to the Downtown area. Mayor Trantalis noted the need to reconsider the number of special events on the beach. Commissioner Glassman concurred, and City Manager Chavarria confirmed special events on the beach is scheduled for discussion at the first Commission Conference Meeting in April 2023. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis remarked on the recent ribbon cutting for Poinciana Crossing, the latest affordable housing project in the City, and discussed continuing affordable housing efforts with Broward County.

Mayor Trantalis discussed Florida Department of Transportation requests for community input on ways to reroute traffic going east on

Sunrise Boulevard and north on Federal Highway near the Gateway. He remarked on FDOT's proposal for an overpass eliminating the intersection and commented on his recommendation for an underpass.

Mayor Trantalis commented on outreach from the Village of Lazy Lake to begin a conversation about annexation and its favorable tax base. He remarked on conversations with Interim City Attorney Spence, who indicated that Lazy Lake is not contiguous to the City and discussed working with the County to address this obstacle. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis discussed forming a Homeless Advisory Committee and requested Commission Member input. Vice Mayor Sturman confirmed his support and noted the benefit of community members providing ideas and solutions.

Commissioner Beasley-Pittman, the Commission's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee and Continuum of Care representative, said forming a Homelessness Advisory Committee (HAC) would provide good opportunities and conversations. Further comment and discussion ensued on establishing the committee for a specified period to determine its productivity before installing it as a permanent committee, the process moving forward, and details related to the makeup of a HAC.

Commissioner Herbst commented on the cost and burden of an additional board or committee on Staff and remarked on the current number of boards and committees. He asked if homelessness could be under the umbrella of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee. Commissioner Glassman remarked on his favorable viewpoint of putting it under Affordable Housing . Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recommended consideration of what could be accomplished through a HAC. City Manager Chavarria said Staff could present the potential purpose, goals, and mission of a HAC. In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Manager Chavarria said the HAC would fall under the Neighbor Support Division, which focuses on homeless mitigation and support.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the input from residents who own docks and seawalls who would like to incorporate decorative tile or landscaping. Mr. Fajardo explained items included in the Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR). He remarked on the need to be careful about penetrating the seawall due to potential structural damage and the ability to access and view the condition of a dock and seawall, especially those

connected to City-owned seawalls. Commissioner Glassman recommended further study to make an informed decision. Further comment and discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

[23-0346](#)

City Manager Report - Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance Leadership Trip to San Diego

City Manager Chavarria updated the Commission on his recent trip to San Diego, California, with Staff and members of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Business Alliance. The trip focused on instituting best practices, initiatives, and programs to address affordable housing and economic development, transportation, health care, and cultural arts. City Manager Chavarria expounded on related details.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, there were no questions from the Commission.

Interim City Attorney Spence requested Commission clarification concerning the Inter Miami mediation process, specifically, who will represent the City. Mayor Trantalis remarked on earlier input from Commissioner Herbst indicating that his negotiations with Inter Miami might be nearing an agreement.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, Commissioner Herbst commented on outreach from Inter Miami, who indicated they were desirous of concluding negotiations before mediation. Commissioner Herbst noted his meeting with Daniel Leon of MasTec who works directly with Jorge Mas and is authorized to negotiate with the City. They discussed ideas for bridging the gap, and that progress has been made. Should these details be amenable to both sides, the mediation process could be avoided. Commissioner Herbst confirmed his preference to reach a negotiated settlement and work collaboratively to find a solution that is amenable to both parties.

Mayor Trantalis recommended discussing this topic at the next Conference Meeting.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Interim City Attorney Spence explained no Commission action was taken on this topic, only Commission direction.

City Manager Chavarria confirmed Staff applied for earmark funding for projects at the federal level.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.