

# City of Fort Lauderdale

*City Hall  
100 North Andrews Avenue  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301  
[www.fortlauderdale.gov](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov)*



## Meeting Minutes - APPROVED

**Tuesday, April 12, 2016**

**6:30 PM**

**Joint Workshop with Budget Advisory Board**

**City Commission Conference Room**

## **CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP**

### ***FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION***

***JOHN P. "JACK" SEILER Mayor - Commissioner  
DEAN J. TRANTALIS Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District II  
BRUCE G. ROBERTS - Commissioner - District I  
ROBERT L. McKINZIE - Commissioner - District III  
ROMNEY ROGERS - Commissioner - District IV***

***LEE R. FELDMAN, City Manager  
JOHN HERBST, City Auditor  
JEFFREY A. MODARELLI, City Clerk  
CYNTHIA A. EVERETT, City Attorney***

The City Commission's Joint Workshop with the Budget Advisory Board was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Seiler.

**ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL**

**Present: 4** Mayor John P. "Jack" Seiler, Vice Mayor Dean J. Trantalis, Commissioner Bruce G. Roberts, and Commissioner Robert L. McKinzie

**Not Present: 1** Commissioner Romney Rogers (Excused)

**Budget Advisory Board** Chair June Page, Vice Chair Bryson Ridgeway, Josias Dewey, McMullen, Frederick H. Nesbitt, Drew Saito, Bob Oelke, Johnnie Smith

**Also Present:** City Manager Lee R. Feldman, City Auditor John Herbst, City Clerk Jeffrey A. Modarelli and Assistant City Attorney, Budget Manager Laura Reece

No public comments were submitted by email for this meeting.

**16-0429 Business Updates - June Page, Budget Advisory Board (BAB) Chair**

June Page, Budget Advisory Board (BAB) Chair, gave the Commission an update to the Commission regarding business updates.

**Police Headquarters**

Chair Page addressed the Commission giving the Budget Advisory Board's opinion on the presentation of the proposed Police Headquarter Plan stating although they did not know the cost per square foot, one opinion was not to rebuild the headquarters at its current location due to the flooding issue.

David Orshefsky, member of the Budget Advisory Committee, commented the study's scope of services was very limited and narrow on both aspects of the existing facility and the cost to replace it. Additionally, the architect did not look at pieces of property adjacent or other possible sites. Mr. Orshefsky stated widening the scope of the study may yield a broader perspective as to another location.

City Manager Feldman commented any time a critical facility is built, it must be built two feet above the base flood elevation. Commissioner Roberts concurred stating this was done with the City's Fire Stations. Further discussions ensued on expanding the scope of the study to include a possible new location to reduce the cost of structured parking, the need for clarification on the size of the parcel and other detailed questions that the architect did not address. Discussions ensued on the need for flexibility in the expansion of the Police Department due to the expected growth in population, and the need for more specifics from the architect to move forward.

### **Stormwater Fees and Tidal Events**

Chair Page discussed the issue of stormwater fees and proposed changes to the way stormwater fees are calculated using the "hard surface methodology." Ms. Page also noted a sticking point on tidal influences and charging people who live in the areas affected by tides. City Manager Feldman stated stormwater drainage is going to be a substantial funding issue facing the City in the long run. An alternative method of calculating the basis for stormwater fees was discussed. City Manager Feldman stated how they were currently calculated. The alternative method would be the "hard surface" approach and base the number of trips they add to the road. City Manager Feldman expounded on this approach. City Manager Feldman stated they would be exploring making stormwater fees more equitable in the early summer. This will allow commercial and multifamily housing to take up a larger share of the stormwater burden and keeping the single-family rates the same. Further discussions ensued on this topic regarding rain events, tidal events, and imposing a surcharge on those areas that experience tidal events.

Vice Mayor Trantalis noted the need for the City not to siphon off funds from the stormwater drainage to balance the City's budget. The current Board has been unanimous and very aggressive in improving the City's infrastructure stating the City needs to do this sooner rather than later. The Budget Advisory Board has no problem with changing the methodology for how stormwater fees are calculated and reapportioning the fees to those who do not currently pay them. However, the Budget Advisory Board does have a problem with special assessments noting the Board could not give the Commission a unanimous opinion as it is hard to go to taxpayers and ask for an increase in fees. Ms. Page commented on continuing to take money out of certain funds and not putting any money into infrastructure. The City will begin to get some push back if you go to the taxpayers and request a special assessment for items that should have been covered by fees already paid by the public.

Vice Mayor Trantalis asked Chair Page if the Budget Advisory Board had come to any decisions on giving an opinion as to how the City should begin to allocate the funds from stormwater, sewage, etc. collected when they propose their budget recommendations. Chair Page confirmed they would give an opinion at that time.

Mayor Seiler asked for confirmation from the Budget Advisory Board it was in unanimous agreement the City should change from the current method to the "hard surface" approach for charging stormwater fees. Chair Page confirmed they would support this and confirmed there was no consensus on adding in a special assessment for tidally influenced properties.

Bob Oelke, Budget Advisory Board member, stated they voted for a change in the methodology from the impervious method currently used to the "hard service" method and a bifurcated methodology to apply to City-wide rain events for dealing with stormwater that comes from rain. For tidal events, it would be an additional cost for those in the area east of U.S. 1.

There was a discussion among members of the Budget Advisory Board as to the exact wording of the motion. Vice Chair Bryson Ridgeway confirmed the agreement to bifurcate though not on the net value. Mr. Oelke, stated as an example, east of U.S. 1, there is a historical coastal pitch that is different and was not tidally influenced like Las Olas Isles. Hence, the change in methodology from impervious to "hard surface" was unanimous. The way to approach the bifurcation methodology and how to assess the experts' determination where the tidally influenced areas are located was discussed as there is some difficulty in effectively assigning or allocating the costs for tidal events. As the study proceeds, the Budget Advisory Board requested the City or its consultants consider that issue and attempt to address it directly.

Mr. Oelke followed up stating the important discussion was how to ensure the money raised east of U.S. 1 is used for tidal issues as opposed to other areas of the City. Those funds raised east of U.S. 1 should be used to protect an additional threat they are facing, which the rest of the City does not face, and how best to allocate those funds within the stormwater system.

### **City Sludge Plant**

The current state of City's Sludge Plant was addressed by Chair Page. Chair Page commented due to the way in which it was presented to the Budget Advisory Board by the experts; the Board agreed unanimously the property should be sold.

Vice Mayor Trantalis requested an explanation of the function of the sludge plant. City Manager Feldman stated the sludge plant is the former compost plant located on Route 441 in the City of Dania Beach. The City of Fort Lauderdale owns approximately 22 acres and comprises a sludge drying pit. Also, one of the City's meter shops is operated at this location noting the meter shop is soon to be relocated. Commissioner Roberts commented he would like to use a portion of the 22 acres as a training facility for driving for all City employees utilizing City vehicles in their job functions. He also raised the possibility of using a portion of the Police Department's Fleet Facility to this location.

David Orshefsky, Budget Advisory Board member, raised the issue of the valuation of this site noting there are areas on the property that cannot be developed but may have value as rental property areas. Additionally, Mr. Orshefsky stated it is industrial dirt which the City could investigate under the jurisdiction's land development regulations to generically ascertain what kind of square density footage is available on this property for use as an industrial site stating this has not been done. Mr. Orshefsky also stated the lowest vacancy rates in the country are for industrial sites. This could be a valuable source of rental property for an industrial application as it is located adjacent to major thoroughfares. City Manager Feldman stated this valuation was done by the appraisers. However, Mr. Orshefsky stated the appraisal was not presented to the Budget Advisory Board only the opinion of value. Chairman Seiler requested the Budget Advisory Board receive an updated report from the Police Station architects and a copy of the Opinion of Appraisal on the City's Sludge Plant to enable them to advise the Commission appropriately.

City Manager Feldman confirmed for Vice Mayor Trantalis that the plant itself is abandoned and is not used. There is a small building on the western side which needs to be relocated, and this is in process. The second piece is a sludge pit that is used for drying, and the City would need an easement for access to it located on the SW corner of the property. The balance of the acreage is vacant or wetlands. Comments ensued on the northern edge which contains power lines. City Auditor Herbst noted moving vehicles out to this location was determined in previous years as impractical from a location perspective.

Mayor Seiler confirmed he was in agreement with the Budget Advisory Board's recommendation on the City's Sludge Plant taking the minimum amount of acreage for the City's fleet and vehicle areas, a land bank for wetlands, and move every acre the City does not need off the books.

### **Metropolitan Transportation Organization (MPO) Recommendations Regarding Proposed Surtaxes**

Chair Page stated the MPO presented the proposed transportation sales tax and the infrastructure sales tax to the Budget Advisory Board. The Budget Advisory Board recommended the infrastructure sales tax rather than the transportation sale tax. Mayor Seiler noted the City Commission passed a resolution endorsing the infrastructure sales tax on Tuesday, April 5, 2016. Commissioner Roberts updated the Budget Advisory Board on the recent MPO Meeting regarding the proposed local

infrastructure and transportation surtaxes. Commissioner Roberts stated that 70 percent of the municipalities wished to go forward with an infrastructure sales tax.

Commissioner Roberts also stated the County Commission authorized County Commissioner Ryan to bring to the MPO Board Meeting a concept of a 70/30 percent split on the proposed transportation surtax noting it passed the County Commission 7-1 vote.

City Auditor Herbst gave his input regarding how the apportionment of the funding should be structured, who is in control of allocating the funds for projects, and noting the County would not be bound by the recommendations of the municipalities. It was also noted the Oversight Committee capacity would be as an advisory committee recommending where the money should be allocated. The County would make the final decision as to where these funds are spent. Further discussions ensued on the municipalities' agreement with the language of the interlocal agreements, bonding issues, and the need for the municipalities' support to pass the proposed transportation sales tax on the November ballot and other thoughts and concerns by the attendees.

Vice Mayor Trantalis stated the City needs to come up with its source of funding to address its infrastructure needs, and the city needs to distill its immediate needs and intermediate infrastructure needs.

Mayor Seiler left the meeting at 7:15 p.m. turning over the meeting to Vice Mayor Trantalis.

### **Departmental Budget Reviews**

Chair Page stated in two weeks the Budget Advisory Board will move into departmental budget reviews. The review process will change somewhat as City Manager Feldman will hear the departmental budget reviews first and request the departments to list their top five "asks." The thought process being the Budget Advisory Board can hear what the departments are asking, and if they have concerns over the top five "asks," the Budget Advisory Board will come to the Commission. This will streamline the process for both the departments and the Budget Advisory Board. It was also noted the Budget Advisory Board is still in the process of digesting different studies, and there is another workshop for the Budget Advisory Board in June.

City Manager Feldman thanked the Budget Advisory Board for all their hard work and good feedback in vetting the City's new ideas and projects. Vice Mayor Trantalis requested an update as to the next charge being given to the Budget Advisory Board from now until the next meeting with the Commission. City Manager Feldman stated the Budget Advisory Board has a work plan for every month of their meetings and will continue to work through the budget process along with the City Manager's Office. This will include the Police Station Study and the appraisal on the Sludge Plant site for further discussion.

Commissioner Roberts requested the Budget Advisory Board advise the Commission on what the City needs to do to fund adequately and address the City's current infrastructure needs' issues (including seawalls) including possible current alternatives and into the future.

Chair Page requested a place to start. Vice Mayor Trantalis noted in June the Commission will be presented with the recommended City-wide ordinance for the heights of seawalls. Once this is established, the next task will be to determine who is in compliance and how to get everyone else in compliance. There will be a cost associated with a City-wide implementation of raising the protective seawall areas for those communities on the water. This is the next big question on the horizon as it has been noted that by 2050, the City could see a sea level rise of two feet. The items in need of

attention in this realm include sources of funding, the full range of the construction costs, etc.

City Manager Feldman noted the next City Commission Agenda would contain an item to prepare a Stormwater Master Plan for the City at a cost of \$8,000,000 to complete \$140,000,000 to \$250,000,000 worth of improvements.

Commissioner Roberts emphasized for the Budget Advisory Board there are many aspects of the City's infrastructure that need to be dealt with going forward and requested the Budget Advisory Board to assist in developing solutions and recommendations for financing these costs in the City. It was noted the Budget Advisory Board will need to address the normal budgetary process of annual recurring budget items and the second set of thinking for capital infrastructure needs and possible funding sources such as bonds, and an increase in millage rates.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD and the City Commission Workshop, Vice Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.