

# City of Fort Lauderdale

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



## Meeting Minutes

**Monday, October 9, 2017**

**12:00 PM**

**Joint Workshop with Economic Development Advisory Board**

**City Commission Conference Room**

## **CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP**

***FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION***

***JOHN P. "JACK" SEILER Mayor - Commissioner  
BRUCE G. ROBERTS Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District I  
DEAN J. TRANTALIS - Commissioner - District II  
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***

**ROLL CALL**

**Present 5** - Commissioner Robert L. McKinzie, Commissioner Romney Rogers, Vice Mayor Bruce G. Roberts, and Mayor John P. "Jack" Seiler

**Excused:** Commissioner Dean J. Trantalis

**QUORUM ESTABLISHED**

**Economic Development Advisory Board Members Present:** Chair Jason Crush, Esq., Vice Chair Cary Goldberg, Steven Buckingham, Christopher "Kit" W. Denison (arrived at 12:11 p.m.), McKillop "Mick" Erlandson, PJ Espinal, Lonnie Maier, and Jordan Yates

**Economic Development Advisory Board Members Not Present:**

Mark Budwig, Dustin Robinson

**Also Present:** City Manager Lee R. Feldman, City Auditor John Herbst, City Clerk Jeffrey A. Modarelli, City Attorney Cynthia A. Everett

**No e-comments were submitted for this meeting.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Seiler called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS****BUS-1** [17-1242](#)

Discussion - Economic Development Advisory Board Role and Priorities

Mayor Seiler requested each Economic Development Advisory Board (Board) Member give a brief introduction and share their background.

Chairman Jason Crush, Esq., stated he is a land use and development attorney at Crush, P.A., explaining details of his legal practice. Chairman Crush discussed his experience with the Board and the Business Alliance's involvement. He noted the previous lack of Economic Development City Staff to pursue new businesses in the City that were actively sought by other local municipalities. Chairman Crush pointed out the need for the Board to advise the Commission on what the City can do to attract new businesses to the City.

Board Member Lonnie Maier stated she is the Vice President of Sales and Marketing of FiberNet Direct, a company providing custom, private

fiber-optic networks to a variety of business entities around the state. Formerly part of Florida Power and Light, FiberNet Direct has since been sold to Crowne Castle. She confirmed her experience as a member of the Economic Alliance since 1995 and her commitment to contributing towards the economic growth of the City.

Vice Chair Steven Buckingham, Buckingham Consulting LLC, stated he has worked as a consultant in the pharmaceutical industry for approximately 30 years in sales, marketing and managed care roles. He discussed his involvement in local civic associations and his service on other City Boards.

Board Member Jordan Yates described Louis Holdings, a supply chain management company assisting small and medium-sized enterprises with the creation of national and international brands and products. His goal is to reach out to small and medium-sized companies in the City to develop programs to succeed. This will also create thought leaders and program drivers for these companies.

Board Member Mick Erlandson, Sixt Rental Car, confirmed he is the Director of Properties for Sixt Rental Car USA headquarters in the City. He commented on his involvement with the Economic Alliance and the growth opportunities in the City.

Board Member PJ Espinal, owner of A Garden by PJ, gave a brief history of what she has observed in the City. She commented on her background in manufacturing and the disappearance of those jobs. She noted current job opportunities in the City are primarily limited to the areas of service and real estate. She stated the need to address lower and middle-income jobs in the City.

Board Member Christopher W. "Kit" Denison, owner of Denison Yacht Sales (Denison), commented on his history in the City and that Denison serves the employment needs of low and middle-income residents. His focus on the Board is economic development targeting in the boating industry.

Board Member Keith Costello, President, and CEO of First Green Bank, a community bank headquartered in Orlando, discussed his work in the City's community banking realm to assist local businesses. Board Member Costello commented on his involvement in the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce (GFLCC) as a former Chairman. He discussed his involvement with the City and to efforts to promote the Business Engagement Assistance and Mentorships (BEAMs) Program.

Board Member Cary Goldberg, Diversified Realty Development, discussed his lengthy personal and business history in the City, commenting on his frustration when the City loses out on economic opportunities to other cities. He discussed the Board's diversity of qualified business community members to address economic development issues in the City.

Mayor Seiler also commented on the Board's diversity and the City's previous broad approach to economic development in attracting large businesses. He discussed the importance of having a variety of businesses in the City, allowing economic diversity. He commented on the City's traditional industries, the marine industry, real estate development and tourism. He noted the need to go beyond the City's regular sectors, commenting on the increase in new startup businesses and the need to reexamine business opportunities. Mayor Seiler emphasized the need to think more broadly, i.e., healthcare, technology, and biotech. He commented on the importance of new business being in the right location and their compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods, i.e., traffic and parking concerns.

Mayor Seiler commented on the broader approach to economic development in the City, citing examples and stating the entire region benefits from new business opportunities in the area. It is important to focus on key business with the assistance of the Board's expertise to determine unexplored businesses. Mayor Seiler discussed an email received after addressing a recent international entrepreneurial group at The Marriott Harbor Beach Hotel. The email communication was from a solar energy company from the Netherlands concerning possible business opportunities in the area. Mayor Seiler discussed the ability for the region to be the leader in the country for both solar and water energy.

Mayor Seiler recognized Anthony Fajardo, Director of Sustainable Development. Mr. Fajardo announced the format for this Joint Workshop would be a discussion among the Board and Commission. He introduced members of the City's Economic Development Staff who are available to answer questions. Mr. Fajardo turned the presentation over to Chairman Crush.

Chairman Crush confirmed the purpose of this Joint Meeting is to determine what the Commission would like the Board to pursue. He suggested each Commissioner ask questions to the Board, state what is important, what they would like the Board to pursue and communicate and on what type of timeline, i.e., monthly, quarterly. Chairman Crush cited possible examples such as reviewing projects and new businesses.

Board Member Goldberg spoke about the manner in which businesses navigate the City, their expectations, the City's outreach and their subsequent decision to locate elsewhere, citing the example of the Florida Atlantic University Research Park. He discussed the need for the City's website to drive business opportunities and provide information about the resources businesses can access to assist them in pursuing opportunities in the City. Board Member Goldberg discussed the need for better communication from the Commission, City Management, and Staff to provide collective resources to the Board to assist in providing an opportunity to address solutions for these businesses.

Vice Mayor Roberts said the need is two-fold, getting businesses interested in the area and keeping the positive momentum.

Mayor Seiler commented on the methods the Commission is mandated to follow and the importance of getting information to the Commission to allow their involvement. He discussed the issue of communication, confirming the need for Economic Development City Staff to be linked-in and improve their efforts to get the Board involved from inception.

Commissioner Rogers discussed identifying the 4th leg of the stool in addition to tourism, marine, and real estate development, allowing better communication and the ability to proactively create a theme. Vice Mayor Roberts concurred there are additional legs. Board Member Goldberg concurred, stating that a large percentage of the population does not work in the marine, tourism and real estate industries. A significant percentage of work is done in small unrelated businesses. Chairman Crush commented these small businesses tie into those three major industries.

Vice Mayor Roberts commented the Miami Fort Lauderdale area is among the fastest growing in the country and this is projected to continue.

Vice Chair Buckingham commented on the need to understand the Commission's desire for the Board's mission. He asked about the Commission's position on investing funds into a business already in the City versus using resources to attract new businesses. Vice Mayor Roberts responded on his desire to focus on both.

Commissioner Rogers concurred with Vice Mayor Roberts noting the need to grow and nurture existing businesses and the importance of being strategic in identifying, prioritizing, attracting and pursuing what businesses will benefit the City.

Vice Chair Buckingham discussed efforts in a North Carolina city and its success in attracting BMW, resulting in huge economic development. He stated other incentivized businesses in this city were financially unsuccessful, stressing the importance of developing a mechanism to hold incentivized business accountable. Commissioner Rogers and Mayor Seiler discussed how business incentives are managed in the City.

Mayor Seiler commented on the importance of being a swift, responsive community, acknowledging this has been lacking. He stated Staff needs to focus on the retention and expansion of businesses and be more responsive with the ability to respond instantaneously. Mayor Seiler commented on the positive effects of the leadership at the Chamber, the Alliance of Fort Lauderdale (Alliance) and Broward Workshop (Workshop).

Board Member Keith Cobb acknowledged the successes of BEAMS work with the Chamber and Business First, commenting all could be better. Board Member Cobb discussed the work put together by the Chamber in conjunction with the help of City Manager Feldman to work on resolving issues regarding the building permit progress, commenting on the positive feedback.

Board Member Cobb discussed business creation and the need to attract entrepreneurs, i.e., Think Tanks, and Shark Tanks, that would serve to build and fund businesses. Mayor Seiler asked if this a role the Board could play by teaming up with the right entities.

Board Member Maier responded they are willing to do so, commenting on the willingness of Florida Atlantic University's Research Park (Research Park) to meet with the City and the Board to discuss this opportunity. She commented the Research Park is looking to expand beyond Boca Raton. Discussions continued on other area colleges with incubator programs and the need for outreach in this area.

Vice Mayor Roberts commented on the ability for entrepreneurial programs to work together in a manner similar to the ongoing relationship with the Chamber, the Alliance and the Workshop.

City Manager Feldman asked the Board about structural obstacles in the City that hinder these entrepreneurial efforts, i.e., ULDR and the licensing process. The goal is to foster an environment where entrepreneurs can function optimally and eliminate stumbling blocks.

Board Member Denison noted the improved changes in the Department

of Sustainable Development about fast-tracking the permitting process, noting there are still issues. He cited the development of Pier 17 and issues relating to another boatyard, commenting on the need for a team approach for entrepreneurs relocating to the City. There is still a perception of difficulty in dealing with the City that needs to change to project the image that the City is willing to embrace new businesses. Mayor Seiler noted City Manager Feldman's efforts to change this perception. Board Member Denison commented on his booth at the Boat Show that is set up to illustrate business opportunities offered in the City.

Board Member Goldberg responded to City Manager Feldman's question regarding specific infrastructure impediments to fostering business growth, i.e., the availability of an environment attractive to a qualified base of employees to settle, including good schools and the need for a mass transit system. He discussed the lack of connectivity between the major employment hubs in the City, stating entrepreneurs and millennials desire this amenity. Mayor Seiler commented on focusing on what the Commission and Board can impact and accomplish, not what they will be unable to change, expounding on specifics.

Mayor Seiler discussed the need for the Board to focus on the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) areas of the City, noting the restrictions imposed on CRA membership that allows a smaller window into possibilities. Mayor Seiler recommended the Board supplementing the CRA Advisory Boards' efforts.

Commissioner Rogers concurred with Mayor Seiler's suggestion, confirming the need to add another layer of focus and attention to ensure consistent, thorough communications between and among Staff, the Board, the CRA's, and the CRA Board. This will allow all to be on the same page in achieving economic and business goals.

Mayor Seiler discussed possible economic opportunities the Board could refer in the CRA area, discussing the availability of CRA funds that need to be spent by a specific date.

Board Member Goldberg discussed previous CRA presentations, stating developers are cautious about their involvement due to the high level of vacancies caused by previous CRA developers or perhaps some other type of disconnect. Commissioner McKinzie responded with examples of recent developments in the Northwest Progressive Flagler Heights (NWPFH) CRA. He noted redevelopment began in the eastern portion of the NWPFH CRA and is moving west, commenting this area is at the tipping point. He commented on the integral part BEAMs can play in the

in the progression and marketing of District III at major events in the City, i.e., the Air Show and the Boat Show. Commissioner McKinzie commented on specific examples of progress made in the NWPFH CRA.

Mayor Seiler commented on large-scale incubator/accelerator programs for businesses he viewed while on a trip to Medellin, Colombia, that could be replicated in the City's CRAs with the assistance of the Board.

Commissioner McKinzie noted the CRA Board just approved a small incubator business in the NWPFH CRA that can be used as a model. Mayor Roberts suggested the stewardship of the Board as part of an advisory team with the assistance of local universities and colleges. Board Member Goldberg commented that this is similar to venture capital programs in Boston and a group entitled Mass Challenge.

Commissioner McKinzie discussed the importance of Staff quickly responding to inquiries. This will be the key to accomplishing these goals.

Board Member Yates discussed the importance of establishing a pipeline and a standardized step-by-step process for how the Board deals with businesses entities looking for various types of information at each stage. Mayor Seiler agreed a clear-cut pipeline and procedure is necessary.

Board Member Erlandson discussed companies not having the necessary resources from the City to get information and the need for a clear chain of command about the process. Addressing this will prove very helpful. He also commented about specific infrastructure, including education and transportation, noting the lack of public awareness about the Wave and the need to get the word out on BrightLine. Board Member Erlanson also discussed the inquiry about the ability to shuttle Sixt Rental's employees from the BrightLine to Sixt Rentals. BrightLine responded to inquiries with concerns regarding City permitting. Board Member Erlandson commented on the opportunity for the City to cut red tape on this issue.

In response to Mayor Seiler's question about doing a Concierge type shuttle service on a broader scale, City Manager Feldman stated there is a Concierge type arrangement in the building division, expounding on Concierge services going through the economic development process.

In response to Mayor Seiler's question about having a point person facilitating Board Member Erlandson's concern, City Manager Feldman



stated the Department of Neighbor Support is the correct point of contact. Mayor Seiler noted the need to make this information widely available to the public. In response to Mayor Seiler's question, Board Member Erlandson confirmed this information was not available. Chairman Crush commented that Staff is doing better at directing calls.

Board Member PJ Espinal requested clear cut instructions to allow for a roadmap for the Board to provide the requested action.

Board Member Maier asked if the Commission supports the Board bringing up messaging ideas and if the Board should bring these ideas to the Commission for approval. Mayor Seiler confirmed there was a consensus for the Board to bring these to the Commission.

Mayor Seiler commented on meetings with other Advisory Boards and Committees that have served to clear up numerous issues, miscommunications, perceptions and concerns. He noted the need for a strong Board, noting Board members are selected due to their expertise.

Vice Mayor Roberts commented on Envision Uptown efforts, the ULI Study, upcoming changes to land use zoning, and rejuvenating the City's main corridors, including Commercial Boulevard and Oakland Park Boulevard east of Federal Highway.

Vice Mayor Roberts discussed the need to proactively communicate work being done to address infrastructures issues related to sea level rise that could impact businesses coming to the City. Board Member Costello and Chairman Crush concurred, commenting on concerns relating to sea level rise and modifications to the fifty-percent rule regarding alterations to structures.

Mayor Seiler suggested the Board determine its five priorities that the Commission agrees are consistent with the goals of economic growth for the City.

Commissioner Rogers discussed the importance of the partnering aspect and the resulting synergy created, citing the example of the Envision Uptown effort. He noted opportunities that will result from the Board broadening the base of the CRA and Envision Uptown.

Board Member Goldberg noted the need for conversations with the Commission about funding resources available to the City's Economic and Business Development Group for items such as website design and marketing to make economic development efforts more efficient, whether done by Staff, the Commission or the Board.

Mayor Seiler deferred to City Manager Feldman who discussed the need to vet and examine programs and their ability to achieve the stated goals, citing the measurement being Return on Investment (ROI).

Vice Mayor Roberts noted that after the Board's submission of their five priorities, there needs to be an evaluation of available resources to implement the priorities and necessary budget adjustments. He also discussed Neighbor Support not having resources for additional responsibilities relating to being the point of contact for economic development as discussed earlier.

Mayor Seiler commented on beginning with a small budget. Vice Mayor noted the ability to reallocate funds. Board Member Costello discussed the opportunity to partner with small banks and other businesses who desire to promote businesses, entrepreneurships and CRA opportunities.

Mayor Seiler suggested the Board host an Economic Development Reception, inviting the Chamber, the Alliance, and the Workshop (Groups). A reception would provide an opportunity to connect, interact and inform the Groups about the Board's efforts, resources, and availability to provide large and small businesses, entrepreneurs and CRAs with additional resources to meet the collective goals of increased economic development in the City. Vice Chair Buckingham concurred on the benefits of a reception, noting the Alliance has reached out to the Board in the past and have attended their meetings as speakers to engage the Board about working together.

Board Member Denison emphasized the value of Board Member Yates' recommendation for a pipeline that will be one of the five priorities. He noted the pipeline needs flexibility, commenting that things can happen very quickly. Board Member Goldberg noted the importance of having clear lines to avoid duplicative work done by the Groups to maximize everyone's time.

Board Member Yates discussed BEAMs and public/private partnership efforts that could be tied in with local banks for support of a reception which would lessen the burden on the City. He noted all stakeholders have an invested interest in the success of all other businesses throughout the City.

Board Member Yates recommended having top level companies and their executives or their new business development managers attend the reception to interact with members of the Group and the Board.

Chairman Crush commented on the willingness of members of the Board to contribute to the funding of the reception.

Board Member Goldberg raised the issue of Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport's (FXE) opportunity for growth opportunities related to aviation economic development, noting FXE is at a national/global level. Vice Mayor Roberts recommended evaluating the possibility of taking the management position of the out of the current chain of command and establishing an Aviation Authority, similar to Boca Raton. The salary would be commensurate with the economic drivers of the airport. Board Member Denison also noted the importance and success of the Free Trade Zone at FXE. Further comments about FXE businesses reacting to opportunities provided by the Free Trade Zone ensued.

Commissioner Rogers commented on the Board's assistance in determining the correct business mix in all areas of the City.

Board Member Yates commented on the need for mapping the City to identify where businesses and key industries merge, commenting on the importance of visibility for similar established businesses. This would enable building synergy in these areas and would serve as a guide for locating businesses.

Mayor Seiler commented that the Alliance has done a County map and it can also be done on a local level. Board Member Yates commented this mapping could be done with a broad brush based upon Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and categorized business taxes. Chairman Crush commented on the GIS map, noting the City's Historic Preservation interactive map providing these tools. He recommended the City's GIS map have this same interactive ability. Further discussions ensued on this topic. Mayor Seiler requested the Economic Development Staff share the Alliance's interactive map with the Board.

Mayor Seiler commented on the need for the City to address higher education being actively involved with the Board, including Broward College and Florida Atlantic University. He discussed the numerous types of higher education that result in better opportunities and a balance towards increased economic growth.

City Manager Feldman spoke about the need to also focus on cultural aspects of the City and its impact on economic growth opportunities, expounding on enhancing the City's cultural assets and commenting on specific opportunities.

Mayor Seiler asked about the timeline for the Board to respond back to

the Commission. Chairman Crush confirmed they would meet, digest the information and feedback from this Workshop and respond back to the Commission by the second week in November.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Seiler adjourned the Commission Workshop with the Economic Development Advisory Board at 1:45 p.m.