

City of Fort Lauderdale



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

1:30 PM

City Hall - City Commission Chambers
100 North Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

Access Meeting Via:

<https://fortlauderdale.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

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City Commission Conference Meeting

FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION

DEAN J. TRANTALIS Mayor

STEVEN GLASSMAN Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District II

HEATHER MORAITIS Commissioner - District I

ROBERT L. McKINZIE Commissioner - District III

BEN SORENSEN Commissioner - District IV

CHRIS LAGERBLOOM, City Manager

JOHN HERBST, City Auditor

JEFFREY A. MODARELLI, City Clerk

ALAIN E. BOILEAU, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Trantalis announced details regarding the virtual format of this meeting, including how members of the public can view and participate.

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

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

Also Present: City Manager Chris Lagerbloom, City Clerk Jeffrey A. Modarelli, City Attorney Alain E. Boileau, City Auditor John Herbst (participated telephonically)

CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

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

Commissioner Moraitis requested a *Moment of Silence* at tonight's Commission Regular Meeting to recognize the two *Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)* Agents who tragically lost their lives during an incident today in the City of Sunrise. She thanked members of law enforcement for their work.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' questions regarding COVID vaccination (Vaccination) appointments, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the new State of Florida website for making an appointment at *Snyder Park*. City Manager Lagerbloom explained the three (3) ways to schedule a vaccine appointment with Broward Health at *Lockhart Park* via phone call, text, or the browardhealth.org website. Further comment ensued on the State of Florida receiving additional vaccines.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on details of a photo illustrating a skate park on Calvary Chapel Fort Lauderdale property located across from *Lockhart Park*, which is open to the public. She noted numerous

Pickleball Courts available in the City.

Commissioner Moraitis discussed resident input regarding the negative impact of *hot rod* car noise during weekend late afternoons along 31st Avenue in the Twin Lakes area of District 1. She requested an update regarding actions to address this nuisance. Interim Assistant Police Chief Francis Sousa explained law enforcement efforts. Two (2) motor units had been assigned over the past two (2) weeks, and results are pending. Action Plans to address Sunrise Boulevard, State Road A1A, and 31st Avenue have been completed and resulted in two hundred and two (202) citations. Mayor Trantalis cited examples of similar concerns along A1A in the Bahia Mar area and confirmed the need for increased law enforcement.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on student performance percentages in *Broward County Public Schools*. Broward County School Board (School Board) Superintendent Robert W. Runcie plans to ramp-up the *Summer School Program*, allowing students to catch-up and improve.

Zoie Saunders, Chief Education Officer, explained efforts to address this topic. Ms. Saunders explained efforts in coordination with Phil Thornburg, Parks and Recreation Director, *Broward County Public Schools*, *Florida Atlantic University (FAU)* and community partners to enrich the academic component of the *Summer School Program*. *FAU* will provide approximately forty (40) interns from its *Effective Teaching Strategies - Best Practices* area for one-on-one tutoring along with small group instruction to optimize student learning. This is being considered at two (2) locations. This concept could also benefit students in the *Parks and Recreation Department After-School Enrichment Programs*, similar to efforts with the *Parks and Recreation Department COVID Supervised E-Learning Program*.

Ms. Saunders confirmed conversations with the *Museum of Discovery and Science* regarding its new *Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Mobile*. The *STEM Mobile* would travel to various *Parks and Recreation Department Summer Learning Camps* for interactive, hands-on learning experiences.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Ms. Saunders provided an update on three (3) topics, *Joint Use Parks with Broward County Public Schools (Joint Use Parks)*, *Early Learning* and strategies for improving academic metrics.

A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at *Bennett Elementary School Park* on Friday, February 5, 2021 will commemorate the *Joint Use Park Agreement*. There will be individual planning sessions in March 2021 for nine (9) other schools identified as *Joint Use Parks* that will include the school community and surrounding neighborhoods. Ms. Saunders expounded on the collaborative process towards achieving goals.

Ms. Saunders provided an *Early Learning* update. A letter of support has been sent requesting expansion of the *Head Start Program* for *Early Learning*. Staff is reviewing possible grant prospects to extend further *Early Learning* opportunities. This includes collaboration with *Broward County Schools* to create a bridge between daycare centers and kindergarten.

Ms. Saunders explained the collaborative effort among the *Education Advisory Board (EAB)* and City and County organizations to address academic metrics and strategies focused on measuring equitable learning outcomes regardless of family income or zip code. The goal is a collaborative effort supporting learning outcomes.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's request, Ms. Saunders confirmed she would email Commission Members a summary of education initiatives, including topics discussed and a listing of the schools planned as *Joint Use Parks*.

Vice Mayor Glassman noted that the tennis courts at *Sunrise Middle School* had not been used in many years. He requested Ms. Saunders pursue using these tennis courts for Pickleball. Ms. Saunders confirmed and noted efforts of Mr. Thornburg.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on the numerous contributions and value Ms. Saunders provides in furthering education in the City. Commissioner Moraitis commended and thanked City Manager Lagerbloom for his innovative creation of the *Chief Education Officer* position and noted positive input from colleagues.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question regarding the recently received unsolicited proposal for the *Fiveash Water Treatment Plant (Fiveash)*, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the Finance Director and the Financial Advisor are reviewing the most recent *Fiveash* unsolicited proposal. If the unsolicited proposal is viable, it will be presented to the Commission in a *Shade Meeting*.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' request for an update regarding an unsolicited proposal for the *One-Stop-Shop*, City Attorney Boileau explained there had been no additional contact beyond the conceptual proposal provided and noted the need for further details. Mayor Trantalis recommended a Conference Meeting to allow discussion and input. Further comment and discussion ensued. City Manager Lagerbloom noted a meeting later this week on this topic and would confirm the need for further information.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question regarding the process for Code amendments in the *Historical Sailboat Bend District*, Christopher Cooper, Deputy Director of the Department of Sustainable Development, provided an update. There was a question and answer session with the *Historic Preservation Board (HPB)* regarding associated Code amendments. The next steps will entail Staff bringing recommendations to the *HPB* for a vote, followed by a presentation to the *Planning and Zoning Board (P&Z Board)* for approval. It would then come before the Commission for consideration. Mr. Cooper confirmed a meeting with the *Sailboat Bend Civic Association* tomorrow, February 3, 2021.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's questions, Mr. Cooper confirmed these efforts have been ongoing for the past two (2) to three (3) years. Mr. Cooper reiterated the procedure for *HPB* Code amendments. The amendment goes to the P&Z Board between the *HPB* and the Commission for approval. Further comment ensued. Vice Mayor Glassman expounded on his past and ongoing efforts regarding this topic. He noted his clarification of related details with the community.

Vice Mayor Glassman echoed Commissioner Moraitis' earlier comments regarding the tragic events earlier today in the City of Sunrise involving two (2) FBI Agents.

Vice Mayor Glassman confirmed the upcoming last *Las Olas Mobility Working Group* meeting on Thursday, February 11, 2020 and before plans are presented to the Commission at the February 16, 2021 Conference Meeting, followed by placement on a March 2021 Commission Regular Meeting Agenda.

Vice Mayor Glassman requested a concise logistical outline regarding the construction schedule in and around *Holiday Park* addressing impacted areas and activities and ingress and egress details. City

Manager Lagerbloom confirmed.

Vice Mayor Glassman noted the need to provide residents with information on the *Parks Bond* website regarding the *Holiday Park* footprint, ice sheets and renovations at the War Memorial Auditorium, the proposed parking garage under consideration and the YMCA planned in the future. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's request for information regarding the Interim Chief of Police and hiring, City Manager Lagerbloom provided an update. The national search conducted several months ago for the permanent Police Department Chief position did not result in a sufficient number of candidates. City Manager Lagerbloom recommended terminating that process and starting again with a professional search firm specializing in this type of recruitment. An individual not wishing to apply for the permanent Police Department Chief position would be appointed Interim Police Chief.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding revising policy related to nepotism, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed review of that topic will be independent of a search process, expounding on related details.

Commissioner McKinzie discussed reordering Conference Meeting Agenda items, allowing the public to address Commission business items before Commission Reports.

Commissioner Sorensen reiterated Commissioner Moraitis and Vice Mayor Glassman's earlier comments regarding the tragic events taking place earlier today in the City of Sunrise. He inquired what the City could do to assist. City Manager Lagerbloom explained details of support provided at *Broward Health Medical Center*. Further comment ensued.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on work with School Board Member Sarah Leonardi and efforts to utilize *School Bond* funding to improve the condition of schools. He discussed the needs of *Stranahan High School* and explained efforts to address. *AECOM, Inc.* is the Project Manager for Stranahan High School. City Auditor John Herbst confirmed he is now a member of the *School Bond Oversight Committee (Oversight Committee)*. The *Oversight Committee* has meetings every couple of months. City Auditor Herbst will monitor *Oversight Committee* efforts and keep the Commission updated. Efforts include significant steps for *Stranahan High School* with more to accomplish.

Ms. Saunders confirmed conversations School Board Member Sarah Leonardi and community leaders regarding the adjusted scope of work for the *Stranahan High School Cafeteria*.

Commissioner Sorensen explained aspects about the number of students attending *Stranahan High School* and building a cafeteria to accommodate all students.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's request for a summary of City schools that are part of the *School Bond* rehabilitation process, Ms. Saunders confirmed and expounded on related details. *Bennett Elementary School, North Fork Elementary School* and *Stranahan High School* are the three (3) schools engaged in public discussion.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's request for an update regarding a timeline for an *Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Substation* off Federal Highway, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the City owns the property. The existing building would need to be demolished. The Commission would be presented with a funding request for construction and sufficient staffing. A budget amendment is anticipated in the next sixty (60) to ninety (90) days for *EMS Substation* design. Costs associated with construction and staffing will be part of the budget process. He would update the Commission as necessary.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on upcoming discussions regarding closing the Beach Access Gate at the *Points of Americas Condominium*. Mayor Trantalis concurred and requested scheduling this topic at the March 3, 2021 Commission Conference Meeting. Further comment and discussion ensued on law enforcement mitigation efforts and related details. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed he would provide the Commission with a law enforcement activity report.

Mayor Trantalis thanked City Manager Lagerbloom and Staff for coordinating vaccination efforts at *Snyder Park*, commenting on its smooth operation.

Mayor Trantalis commented on the importance of acknowledging February as *Black History Month* and recognizing the contributions of the African-American and Caribbean communities.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the need for Commission discussion

regarding the upcoming *Spring Break* holiday. Commissioner Moraitis commented on her understanding of this topic. City Manager Lagerbloom explained Staff is addressing this topic as done in the past, under normal conditions. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis provided a brief update regarding the pursuit of the *Florida East Coast Railway (FEC)* tunnel concept and said discussions have accelerated. Mayor Trantalis and City Manager Lagerbloom will attend meetings with *The Boring Company* at a tunnel recently completed in Las Vegas and at *The Boring Company's* California locations. The head of construction for *FEC* will be in attendance. Mayor Trantalis noted the anticipated costs are significantly lower than initially discussed.

Commissioner Sorensen concurred with Commissioner McKinzie's earlier recommendation to reorder Conference Agenda items. Comment and discussion ensued.

[21-0105](#)

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

Planning and Zoning Board (P&Z Board)
Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Communication to the City Commission

Motion made by Mr. Shechtman and seconded by Ms. Fertig, to request the City Commission work with the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to prioritize a new project [to study pedestrian/bicycle improvements for crossing the New River at either Andrews Avenue bridge or the 3rd Avenue bridge] to be considered for funding through the Florida Department of Transportation Work Program Development process.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility (TAM) Department Director. Mr. Rogers confirmed Staff outreach to Broward County regarding pedestrian accommodations on bridges and said they have upcoming design work for the *SE Third Avenue Bridge*. Broward County is open to incorporating pedestrian-related recommendations into its plan and will be tasked with identifying, evaluating cost estimates for *SE Third Avenue Bridge* pedestrian and bicycle improvements. Mr. Rogers confirmed he would work with Jay Shechtman, Planning and Zoning Board Member, to pursue pedestrian and bicycle safety efforts for the *SE Andrews Avenue Bridge*.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question, Mr. Shechtman explained this topic arose in response to previous discussions about a *Broward County School Board* proposal for a pedestrian bridge over the *New River*, which the Commission chose not to pursue. A follow-up letter was sent to the *Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)* to consider adapting existing bridges crossing the *New River* to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety access. In 2019, *FDOT* concurred based on the City prioritizing this initiative with the *Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)*. The P&Z Board was updated and identified a significant need for improved bridge safety and accessibility across the *New River*. Mr. Shechtman requested the Commission make this a priority with the *MPO* to allow *FDOT* consideration.

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed there would be engagement with the *MPO* to determine if the *MPO* could make this project request a priority under the program. Further comment and discussion ensued.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

BUS-1 [21-0179](#)

Mayor's Appointments to the Election Board to Certify the Results of the Election of the Employees' Recommended Appointee to the Civil Service Board - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Jerome Post, Human Resources Department Deputy Director, explained details of *Article Six (VI) of the City Charter* addressing this topic. This Agenda item requests Mayor Trantalis to appoint two (2) Commission Members to the *Civic Service Election Board (Election Board)*.

Mr. Post explained when the election is held, anticipated in the next three (3) weeks, members of the *Election Board* will certify the election by counting votes and monitoring the election and providing written certification of election results to the Commission.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding the amount of work required from a Commission Member, Mr. Post said the work is minimal and involves one meeting.

Commissioner Moraitis and Commission McKinzie agreed to serve as Commission Members for the *Election Board*.

BUS-2 [21-0180](#)

AECOM Parks Bond Update - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Phil Thornburg, Parks and Recreation Director, discussed details of *Parks Bond* public outreach to obtain public comment regarding projects.

Joe Webb, AECOM Program Manager, narrated a presentation entitled *Fort Lauderdale Parks and Recreation Bond Master Plan Design & Implementation Program* that provided an overview of the *Parks Bond* program.

A copy of the slide presentation is in the backup to these Minutes.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding resident suggestions regarding purchasing additional properties as Park sites, Mr. Thornburg confirmed those suggestions should be included in the general comments section of the Parks Bond web portal, www.ftlparksprojects.com. Residents can also call Mr. Thornburg's office.

Vice Mayor Glassman commented on the public engagement phase and discussed resident feedback. He encouraged improving direct engagement with residents, i.e., outreach to neighborhood associations and the Fort Lauderdale Council of Civic Associations during their meetings, requesting they meet with neighborhood associations that are holding meetings in the months of February and March. Mr. Webb concurred, commenting on related efforts. Further comment ensued. Vice Mayor Glassman commented on his public engagement efforts and work with *Colliers International (Colliers)*.

Commissioner Moraitis concurred with Vice Mayor Glassman's comments regarding public outreach and work with *Colliers*. She confirmed related discussions at the recent District 1 Pre-Agenda Meeting. AECOM will be at a March 2021 District 1 Pre-Agenda Meeting and Civic Association Presidents would be invited to provide a final round of input.

Mayor Trantalis thanked Mr. Webb for AECOM efforts and commented on benefits of *Parks Bond* projects.

BUS-3 [21-0181](#)

Fort Lauderdale Urban Core Presentation - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis recognized Ken Krasnow, *Colliers International, Inc., (Colliers)*. Mr. Krasnow narrated a presentation entitled *Downtown Fort*

Lauderdale Market Overview. The presentation is an annual update on the state-of-the-market opportunities and the impact of recent economic drivers.

A copy of the slide presentation is in the backup to these Minutes.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding discrepancies in overall multifamily market indicators related to under-construction inventory listed in the presentation and Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) Staff information, Mr. Krasnow explained tracking differences related to inventory moving from one category to another. *Colliers* primarily tracks multifamily projects larger than twenty-five (25) units. DSD Staff tracks all multifamily inventory. A meeting is planned with DSD Staff to coordinate and synchronize an improved tracking system. Further comment ensued and examples were cited.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Mr. Krasnow explained aspects of the presentation's *Central Business District (CBD)* and its relation to the *Downtown Regional Activity Center (Downtown RAC)*. Mr. Krasnow confirmed *Colliers* would work with DSD Staff to align and define geographic boundaries.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Jenni Morejon, President and Chief Executive Officer, *Fort Lauderdale Downtown Development Authority (DDA)*. Ms. Morejon discussed her support regarding the recognition and attention given to the *Urban Core* by the Commission and Staff. She also concurred with the work of *Colliers*, expounding on her positive perspective regarding dialogue with the DDA and efforts towards charting a course for the next twenty (20) years.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding planned residential units in the *CBD* meeting or exceeding demand, Mr. Krasnow confirmed demand would be exceeded in the short term. Mr. Krasnow explained details related to events impacting demand and short term expectations. Should trends continue, opportunities for additional office space are anticipated.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding affordable housing at the *Riverwalk City Garage Site (City Garage Site)*, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the Commission did not move forward with the previous project at this location. Further comment ensued.

Mayor Trantalis commented on discussions with Broward County Commissioner Dale Holness regarding the opportunity to build a World Trade Center building to accommodate international trade offices at the

City Garage Site. Mayor Trantalis explained his perspective regarding building affordable housing at this location. Further comment ensued on future opportunities and a timeline to address the *City Garage Site*.

Commissioner Moraitis discussed opportunities in the *Uptown Area*. Mayor Trantalis commented on the history of development in the *Uptown Area*.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

Rachel Williams, Housing and Community Development Manager, provided an update regarding receipt of *Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* paperwork to fund the *Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program*. City Manager Lagerbloom has executed the *Grant Agreement*. *CDBG Program* funding for \$1,600,000 should be received soon. There was an amendment to the *CDBG Annual Action Plan (Amendment)* to utilize this funding for housing reentry and rental assistance for families impacted by COVID. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed an email to Commission Members will be sent for review and comment on the *Amendment*.

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed details regarding the forward movement of a *Department of Economic Opportunity* grant opportunity for \$10,000,000 to address stormwater infrastructure that included a site visit. Should this grant be allocated, it would address stormwater work in the *Durrs Neighborhood* and *Dorsey-Riverbend Neighborhood*. A decision is expected sometime in the Spring.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question on another funding prospect, City Manager Lagerbloom explained an additional loan option that provides an opportunity to pay less money to do more work.

City Manager Lagerbloom reported the City earned its *43rd Consecutive Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting* from the *Government Finance Officers Association*.

City Manager Lagerbloom provided an update on recognizing *President's Day* as a paid City Staff holiday and explained related details. He recommended recognizing *President's Day* in 2022, and there was Commission consensus.

City Manager Lagerbloom updated the Commission on efforts to create harmony with residents and *Salt 7*, a new restaurant at 500 East Las Olas Boulevard.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed Broward County had restored \$44,000 in *CARES Act* funding related to COVID enforcement efforts.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's request, Ben Rogers provided a status update on plans for *Cordova Road* south of the seawall near *SE 17th Street*, noting Staff is seeking feedback from neighbor associations prior to moving forward. Further discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis announced Education Advisory Board Chair Allen Zeman confirmed the rescheduling of the *Bennett Elementary School* tour to 4:00 p.m. on February 11, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the Commission Conference Meeting at 4:07 p.m.