

City of Fort Lauderdale

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

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

HEATHER MORAITIS Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District I

STEVEN GLASSMAN Commissioner - District II

ROBERT L. McKINZIE Commissioner - District III

BEN SORENSEN Commissioner - District IV

CHRIS LAGERBLOOM, City Manager

DAVID R. SOLOMAN, City Clerk

ALAIN E. BOILEAU, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

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

Also Present: City Manager Chris Lagerbloom, City Clerk David R. Soloman, City Attorney Alain E. Boileau

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COMMISSION

[22-0319](#)

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

*Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB)
February 9, 2022, 3:00 PM*

Communication to the City Commission

Communication 1 - Recommendation from EDAB to the Commission: Motion to recommend the City Commission to take positive action to extend the CRA with the statewide sunset provision to 2039 was made by Vice Chair Kuchova. The motion was seconded by Member Baron. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Trantalis said this was discussed in the Joint Workshop with the Northwest-Progress-Flagler Heights (NWPFH) Advisory Board earlier today, and there was a consensus to pursue an extension of the NWPFH Community Redevelopment Agency.

Communication 2 - Recommendation from EDAB to the Commission - That the City Commission direct the Government Affairs & Economic Development Division and Development Services to participate in the "Franchise Expo South 2022", being held at the Broward County Convention Center on September 9-10, 2022, was made by Member Baron and second by Vice Chair Kuchova. The motion passed unanimously.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Manager Lagerbloom

confirmed he would research the context of this request and advise the Commission. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Historic Preservation Board (HPB)
March 7, 2022

Communication to the City Commission

The Historic Preservation Board encourages the City to take the steps necessary to explore the State Division of Historic Resources Small Matching Grant for educational purposes in telling the story of Sailboat Bend Historic District and preserving known records and whatever other steps are deemed necessary and advantageous, as determined by the Historic Preservation Planner.

Trisha Logan, Principal Urban Planner, Development Services Department, explained details of grant eligibility. As a *Certified Local Government*, a grant match is not required. Staff has applied for this grant program in the past for *Architectural Resource Surveys*. This year Staff applied for the grant to prepare a *Strategic Historic Preservation Plan*. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed they will provide. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman expounded on his viewpoint, recommending the use of available grants to broaden historical preservation information and educational outreach.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

BUS-1 [22-0350](#)

City Auditor Recruitment - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

City Manager Lagerbloom explained cost details and other pertinent information included in the Agenda backup for recruiting efforts of the City Auditor position and requested Commission direction.

Vice Mayor Moraitis requested a review of the options for a long-term plan and a short-term plan. Further comment and discussion ensued. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the appointment of an Interim City Auditor until today.

Mayor Trantalis remarked that an item is on tonight's Regular Meeting Agenda for a short-term solution, and this discussion would focus on options for a long-term solution.

Commissioner Sorensen reviewed his understanding of the long-term process and recommended not outsourcing the position of City Auditor.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, City Manager Lagerbloom explained aspects of the timeline, costs, and details associated with both *Mosaic Public Partners (MPP)* and *Strategic Government Resources (SGR)* recruitment firms. City Manager Lagerbloom recommended working with *SGR* due to prior work with that firm and the reduced cost.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding the vendor response deadline, City Manager Lagerbloom remarked on the response rate, expounded on related details, and confirmed confidence in the ability of *SGR*.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, City Manager Lagerbloom explained options for an Interim City Auditor, including looking internally within the City Auditor's office or another Department, operating without a City Auditor for a short time, and the option of hiring a City Auditor. The Audit Staff would continue with the Office of the City Auditor's established work plan. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Megan Gaillard, Assistant City Auditor III, reviewed the qualifications of the existing Audit Staff. Further comment and discussion ensued on qualified individuals from existing Staff in other Departments, the creation of the City Auditor position and related details, and various options going forward, including using an external audit firm. The Human Resources Department would handle daily human resource-related functions in the Office of the City Auditor.

Ms. Gaillard confirmed the ability of the Audit Staff to meet deadlines and discussed the need to fill an Audit Staff position due to a recent retirement. She remarked on her commitment to continuing in her role until a permanent City Auditor is hired and expounded on related details. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sorensen recommended hiring an external auditor to assist with Audit Department Operations. Mayor Trantalis commented on the need and benefits of understanding Audit Department dynamics and possible delays. Further comment and discussion ensued on moving forward with the assistance of an outside auditor and details related to employment and termination of Audit Department personnel and redistribution of the Audit work plan.

Ms. Gaillard remarked on coordination with the outside vendors for the *Aquatic Center* and the *Fort Lauderdale Police Headquarters* and confirmed no concerns or delays.

Vice Mayor Moraitis discussed the involvement of Tarlesha Smith, Assistant City Manager and Human Resources Director, and remarked that no hiring or firing of Audit Staff personnel should happen until a new City Auditor is in place.

Commissioner McKinzie discussed his viewpoint. He recommended an executive search for a new City Auditor to fulfill the needs of the City and maintaining current Staff through the transition. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner McKinzie's question, Brian Donaldson, Budget Advisory Board Chair, concurred with Vice Mayor Moraitis' comments that a new City Auditor should have the opportunity to evaluate Audit Staff. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Ms. Gaillard discussed Audit Staff and related details. Ms. Smith, Assistant City Manager and Human Resources Director, commented on concerns related to personnel decisions and expounded on additional information. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Glassman concurred with Commission Member comments regarding no personnel decisions should be made until a permanent City Auditor is in place. He remarked on an outside individual managing the Audit Department. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the management of employees.

Ms. Gaillard commented on Charter requirements, and City Attorney Boileau remarked on the role of the Human Resources Department. Further comment and discussion ensued on personnel challenges.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' questions, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the ability to hire an outside firm to act as Interim City Auditor. Vice Mayor Moraitis noted the need to proceed with that option until a new City Auditor is appointed. Ms. Gaillard explained details associated with Audit Staff working both remotely and in the office.

Commissioner Glassman and Commissioner McKinzie commented on their perspectives. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Sorensen concurred with Vice Mayor Moraitis' recommendation to hire an outside firm to act as Interim City Auditor.

City Attorney Boileau noted the Annual Audit Plan and related ongoing audit work. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis commented on concerns about bringing in an outside firm to act as Interim City Auditor, recommended Ms. Gaillard be appointed Interim City Auditor, and commented on related advantages. He said the Commission will decide a course of action at tonight's Commission Regular Meeting.

BUS-2 [22-0356](#)

Redistricting Report and Map Options Prepared by Florida Atlantic University - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis provided a brief overview of this Agenda item addressing the redistricting of the four (4) City Commission Districts.

Mike Stamm, Adjunct Faculty Member - Director of Urban and Regional Planning, Florida Atlantic University (FAU), narrated the presentation entitled, *Florida Atlantic University - Map Alternatives for the City of Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting - 1st Reading, illustrating City district map alternatives*. He reviewed the qualifications of the FAU team, redistricting parameters, the 2020 population, 2023 population projections, and the redistricting map alternatives.

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

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Mr. Stamm explained *communities of interest* relate to items such as neighborhood civic associations to assist in making redistricting decisions. He commented on efforts to maintain the entire area of a neighborhood association in one district.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' questions regarding the last redistricting process based on *2010 Census* data, Mr. Stamm explained that FAU was not involved and that City Staff handled that redistricting process.

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on concerns about including growth data in redistricting maps. Mr. Stamm noted the significant amount of population growth in the City since 2020. Should population growth data not be included in this redistricting process, the degree of change in the 2030 process would be extreme. Vice Mayor Moraitis expounded on her

viewpoint, including the need for consistency and the impact of redistricting being disruptive. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner McKinzie's question, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed working towards a mid-April deadline for submitting redistricting maps.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Mr. Stamm confirmed confidence in the redistricting calculations that were straightforward and included *American Community Survey (ACS)* per person, per household ratio information with modifications for things such as assisted living facilities.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding a downside to one district representing the majority of the beach and the majority of downtown, Mr. Stamm explained it is the preference of the Commission and said redistricting is a mathematical exercise.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding the beach area and the downtown being *communities of interest*, Mr. Stamm confirmed.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, City Attorney Boileau said according to the City Charter, a Commission Member must reside in the district he represents. Redistricting maps take effect upon Commission approval.

Commissioner Glassman pointed out that one redistricting map alternative was not an option because District 2 did not include his place of residence. Mr. Stamm said FAU's redistricting maps did not factor in Commission Members' places of residence. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding redistricting map alternatives and proposed modifications.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding public workshop comments on redistricting, Mr. Stamm explained Staff forwarded public comments to the *FAU* team. Comments included the need to keep neighborhood associations together. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding shifting populations and modifications to the proposed redistricting map alternatives to achieve equal populations in each of the four (4) districts.

Mayor Trantalis recommended Mr. Stamm work individually with each Commission Member to address their concerns.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Mary Peloquin, 2510 NE 12th Court, *Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations* President, and on behalf of the *Coral Ridge Association*. Ms. Peloquin confirmed the preference to not split the *Coral Ridge Association* or any other neighborhood associations into separate districts.

Mayor Trantalis recognized William Brown, 112 N. Birch Road, and *Central Beach Alliance (CBA)* President. Mr. Brown commented on his perspective regarding the timeline associated with redistricting recommendations and acknowledged efforts of *FAU* and Commission Members to meet redistricting goals.

Mayor Trantalis recognized James LaBrie, 1514 NE 20th Street. Mr. LaBrie explained his opposition to dividing neighborhood associations.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Jacquelyn Scott, 1626 SE 1st Street, *Colee Hammock Homeowners Association* President. Ms. Scott remarked on the history of *Colee Hammock* redistricting and related details, including the importance of *Colee Hammock* remaining in District 4.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Melinda Bowker, 511 SE 5th Avenue, *Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association* President and *Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations (CFLCA)* Treasurer. Ms. Bowker concurred with Ms. Peloquin's earlier remarks and confirmed a unanimous *CFLCA* vote opposing redistricting dividing neighborhood associations.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Troy Liggett, 707 NE 17th Court, and *Middle River Terrace Neighborhood Association* President. Mr. Liggett discussed opposition to dividing neighborhood associations when redistricting and remarked on the impact of future development and population growth.

Commissioner Glassman commented on the worthwhile efforts of Mr. Liggett related to this topic and recommended Mr. Stamm review. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mr. Stamm remarked on considering the public comment and additional direction. Further comment and discussion ensued on efforts not to split the *Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association*, related redistricting map challenges and possible modifications.

Mr. Stamm explained the goal is to minimize the degree of change and keep neighborhood associations intact while maintaining population equity among the four (4) districts. The *FAU* team will review direction given and will return with recommendations.

Mayor Trantalis recommended deferring Agenda item PH-2 related to this subject on tonight's Regular Meeting Agenda.

City Attorney Boileau explained that based on today's discussion, there is a need to allow *FAU* Staff sufficient time to analyze and produce redistricting alternatives for Commission consideration and approval. He commented on deadlines to submit redistricting maps to the *Broward County Supervisor of Elections (Supervisor of Elections)*.

City Attorney Boileau explained two (2) procedural options regarding the Agenda item PH-2, *Public Hearing - First Reading of an Ordinance Establishing Geographical Boundaries of the Four City Commission Districts (Ordinance)*. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding *FAU's* efforts to update redistricting map alternatives and related timelines and deadlines.

City Manager Lagerbloom recommended calling a *Commission Special Meeting* on Tuesday, April 12, 2022, for the *First Reading* of the Ordinance, followed by the *Second Reading of the Ordinance* on Tuesday, April 19, 2022. Further comment and discussion ensued, and there was Commission consensus on this recommendation.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, City Clerk Soloman commented on Staff's contact with *Supervisor of Elections* Staff.

CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

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

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on her letter of resignation effective in November 2022. She noted the need to modify the exact date to allow District 1 candidates to qualify in June 2022 for the *November 8, 2022, Special Election*.

City Attorney Boileau confirmed he would advise on the related resignation date. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the interpretation of the Charter and the extension of Commission Member terms from three (3) years to four (4) years. City Attorney Boileau

discussed details of related Charter amendments and said Florida Statute dictates related details. Eighteen (18) months included in the Charter remain a factor. If less than eighteen (18) months remain in a Commissioner Member's term, a Commission Member would be appointed. If more than eighteen (18) months remain in a Commission Member's term, a Special Election is necessary.

Commissioner Glassman remarked on the cost-saving benefit of having Special Elections coinciding with midterm elections. City Attorney Boileau confirmed and explained details regarding the need for a quorum. Further comment and discussion ensued on vacant Commission seats, resignation dates, election qualifying dates, primary dates, swearing-in dates, and previous situations related to this topic.

Commissioner Glassman commented on the progress made by the *Solid Waste Working Group* and confirmed he would provide a forthcoming Commission update. He thanked Staff for its Historic Preservation Planning Sessions for a more resilient Fort Lauderdale and *BTactical Lake Ridge Workshops* along NE 15th Street, an pilot program of the *Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)*.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions regarding moving up the swearing-in date for Commission Members, City Attorney Boileau confirmed it would be a substantive change requiring an update to the Charter and a review of the process. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding making the process as seamless as possible.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's request, City Manager Lagerbloom provided an update on the public, private partnership (P3) replacement of the *Fiveash Water Treatment Plant*. After approval of special counsel at tonight's Regular Meeting, the kickoff meeting would include a working group meeting with the selected vendor.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's request, City Manager Lagerbloom said he did not have an update on the *Joint Government Campus* and commented on possible action by the Broward County Commission today.

City Attorney Boileau provided an update on legal aspects of the *Joint Government Campus*. Buchanan Ingersoll was the law firm hired to provide comments regarding the request for proposal (RFP) for the *Joint Government Campus* and it is prepared to provide related feedback. Associated work product is being held until the issue related to the City

being equitably represented is resolved. Afterward, Buchanan Ingersoll is prepared to provide Broward County and the City with its RFP commentary. Further comment and discussion.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding possible financial support towards events surrounding the *USS Fort Lauderdale*, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed an upcoming meeting with the Budget Office and will report back to the Commission. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding determining a funding amount.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding the *New River Tunnel Crossing*, City Manager Lagerbloom said there had not been any movement since the discussion on the possible pre-development of two different concepts for a tunnel and a bridge.

Mayor Trantalis commented on an upcoming meeting with a tunnel contractor that indicated a lower cost. Further comment and discussion ensued on efforts to move forward.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding Broadview and the possibility of affordable housing, City Manager Lagerbloom provided an update. The Commission approved action allowing transfer to the *Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale (HACFL)*. Related efforts are in progress, and there are multiple years of due diligence and permitting the *HACFL* needs to pursue.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's questions regarding a possible tunnel to the beach, City Manager Lagerbloom commented on details related to the proposed interim agreement before the Commission for approval. The interim agreement would allow continued work to identify the tunnel path and related geotechnical work necessary to determine a final price, which would lead to a comprehensive agreement. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding costs to the City for work done under the interim agreement.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding the federal courthouse, Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility Director, explained details of a conversation with the federal courthouse Project Manager who indicated they are moving forward on schedule. Mr. Rogers remarked on an Exchange Agreement anticipated to come before the Commission sometime in July 2022, allowing the start of critical aspects related to the project including relocating utilities and discussions related to the City building a parking garage. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding the related process and items on hold until the General

Services Administration (GSA) receives Exchange Agreement approval from the U.S. Congress.

City Manager Lagerbloom provided an update on the *Fort Lauderdale Police Department Headquarters (Headquarters)* and confirmed it is moving forward. He commented on meetings with *Moss* and the Police team. The *Headquarters* groundbreaking is on target for the Fall. Critical decisions regarding the radio tower will need to be decided. Further comment and discussion ensued regarding options for the relocation of the radio tower location, including a study initiated to assess the possibility of relocating the radio tower to a downtown building. City Manager Lagerbloom remarked that construction costs for this project as well as additional upcoming projects exceed anticipated expenses, and discussions are ongoing to reduce those expenses.

Mayor Trantalis noted that in recognition of *Autism Awareness Month*, the City will be lit up blue on April 7, 2022, and remarked on a related public service announcement he participated in with Dan Marino.

Mayor Trantalis commented on developing an initial program to identify costs associated with the City's locally preferred option for a tunnel for the *New River Crossing*, efforts to lower tunnel costs, input from members of the *Broward County Commission*, and the need to partner with Broward County.

Mayor Trantalis announced he would provide an update on the trip to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, at the next Commission Meeting.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 4:44 p.m.