

# City of Fort Lauderdale

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



## Meeting Minutes - Draft

**Tuesday, January 5, 2016**

**1:30 PM**

**City Commission Conference Room**

## **City Commission Conference Meeting**

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

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

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

**Mayor Seiler called the City Commission Conference Meeting to order at 1:37 p.m.**

## **ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL**

**Present:** 5 - Mayor John P. "Jack" Seiler, Vice-Mayor McKinzie, Commissioner Bruce G. Roberts, Commissioner Dean J. Trantalis and Commissioner Romney Rogers

## **Quorum Established**

**Also Present:** Assistant City Manager Stanley Hawthorne, City Auditor John Herbst, City Clerk Jeffrey A. Modarelli, City Attorney Cynthia A. Everett and Sergeant At Arms Sergeant W. Auguste

No public comments were submitted by email for this meeting.

## **CITY COMMISSION REPORTS**

### **Events and Matters of Interest**

*The Mayor and members of the Commission announced recent and upcoming events and may raise matters of interest or concern.*

Mayor Seiler acknowledged the outstanding Holiday efforts of the City Staff and wished everyone the best for 2016.

### **Crime Trends**

Commissioner Rogers raised the issue of rising crime in his District specifically in the areas of car thefts, burglaries, and home break-ins. Discussion ensued on how to assess and analyze crime trends in those neighborhoods affected using proactive remedies based on that analysis. Mayor Seiler raised the issue of repeat offenders. Commissioner Trantalis discussed the need for residents to protect themselves proactively by being sure to lock their vehicles, not leaving valuables in sight in vehicles, and activating and consistently utilizing alarm systems in their homes. Discussion ensued on the use of school resource officers and the City's interaction with the school board to partner on addressing the issue of rising crime.

### **Neighborhood Housing**

Commissioner Rogers requested from the City Attorney's Office a memorandum update on the status the of neighborhood housing issues, how they interact, who has jurisdiction, and how much the City can and cannot do to address neighborhood housing issues.

### **Beach Replenishment**

There was discussion over the delivery of sand to the beaches for the beach nourishment project specifically addressing the routes the contractor is using to deliver sand to the beach. Discussions ensued among the Commission members concerning this topic.

### **Flakka**

Commissioner Rogers noted police officers in his district had said the Flakka problem is almost nonexistent as a result of the police officer who went to China which resulted in the Chinese government agreeing to shut down the export of one of the drug's component.

### **Crescent House**

Commissioner Trantalis requested an update on Crescent House's compliance with the Special Magistrate rulings for the City. Commissioner Trantalis noted the Special Magistrate's code ruling is being appealed, and the deadline for compliance with the zoning issue is in February 2016. Commissioner Trantalis raised the issue of filing for injunctive relief on the code issue because one of his constituents was recently robbed in the vicinity of Crescent House. The goal is to eliminate sources of crime in the Crescent House neighborhood. City Attorney Cynthia Everett agreed to provide an update with recommendations to the Commission to address this issue.

### **City Hall Security**

Commissioner Trantalis asked City Manager Feldman when the two metal detectors will be implemented at City Hall. City Manager Feldman said this security procedure would be implemented at the January 20, 2016 City Commission Meeting.

### **Bahia Mar**

Commissioner Trantalis requested information from City Manager Feldman regarding whom he had retained to do the independent economic analysis for the developer's proposed leases. City Manager Feldman stated the firm Fishkind & Associates, based in Port St. Lucie, Florida, had been retained for a real estate analysis, market research, and impact assessments of the proposed development's project and leases. It was noted that Fishkind & Associates are experts in this area.

### **Water Main Breaks**

Commissioner Trantalis asked City Manager Feldman what was being done to address the aging water and sewer infrastructure. City Manager Feldman noted there are five components to the City's water system: 1) water supply issue; 2) treatment transmission system; 3) collections system for sewage; 4) treatment of sewage; and 5) a capacity issue. Discussions ensued on this topic focusing on the City's infrastructure needs as it relates to current and future development.

### **Poinsettia Heights Truck Traffic**

Commissioner Trantalis requested the City review the option of preventing large trucks from traveling through the 18th Street corridor of the Poinsettia Heights neighborhood noting it is an imposition to the residential neighborhood and suggesting both 13th Street and 26th Street are available for truck traffic.

### **Governor Scott's Visit**

Mayor Seiler noted Governor Rick Scott would be in the City on Wednesday, January 7, 2016 for a speaking engagement. He noted that Fort Lauderdale was ranked the best city in the State to find a job. Mayor Seiler also noted that the State of Florida is doing well economically. It was noted that transportation and vacation rentals are topics that Mayor Seiler would like to discuss with the Governor.

### **Martin Luther King Day Parade Routes**

Mayor stated the goal is to have the Martin Luther King Day parade be a long-term success. To achieve this goal, Mayor Seiler raised the point it was important for all parades to stay on schedule to avoid lengthy shutdowns of the main thoroughfares in the City, especially Broward Boulevard. City Staff confirmed the street closures will be rolling and will open up after the last float had passed. Mayor Seiler asked City Staff to ensure appropriate police assistance and detours are in place to adequately address the rolling street closures. Mayor Seiler stated it was important to keep the parade compact and to flow efficiently thus alleviating the impact of the rolling street closings. Staff indicated that they will work with parade marshals to ensure the parade flows in an efficient

manner. Mayor Seiler requested police signage be displayed in advance to inform the general public about the street closings.

### **Panhandling in the City**

Mayor Seiler noted that Broward County and many cities within the County had passed panhandling ordinances noting panhandling has created a strain on the City from a safety perspective for all involved. It was agreed the City needs to enforce its panhandling ordinances.

### **Converting Shipping Containers for Housing**

Mayor Seiler discussed the possibility of converting shipping containers into housing in the City as has been done in other places such as the Netherlands, London, and New Zealand. He stated there may be code issues and requested the City's Affordable Housing Advisory Board look into the possibility of converting shipping containers into housing as a possible option for the City.

## **CONFERENCE REPORTS**

### **CF-1 [15-1633](#) Central Beach Master Plan Public Improvement Projects Update**

Commissioner Trantalis asked City Manager Feldman and City Attorney Everett if the three million dollars spent before the December 1, 2015 termination of the Developer's Agreement with Recreational Design and Construction, Inc. (RDC) for the Aquatics Center could be reimbursed. City Attorney Cynthia Everett said she would look into this issue and give the Commission her opinion.

## **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

### **BUS-1 [16-0064](#) Discussion of General Employees' Retirement System (GERS) Investment Policy**

Mayor Seiler noted the General Employees' Retirement System (GERS) investment policy is impacted by the City Commission's decisions and noted concerns he had received from City Staff and the public. He requested this item be put on the agenda. City Auditor John Herbst informed the Commission that the GERS had recently elected to expand its portfolio of private equity investments approving a contract with a private investment firm and making a commitment of ten million dollars.

City Auditor Herbst gave a general overview of private equity investments noting the challenge with private equity firms is unlike other investments, i.e., they are very illiquid (there is a long lock-up period) as well as the a lack of transparency about the actual amount of fees paid. City Manager Feldman elaborated on the private equity firm's investment policy and discussion ensued. City Auditor Herbst noted that transparency is an important investment policy factor.

Mark Darmanin, Chairman of GERS, discussed the points raised stating GERS is working on a new investment policy and has two proposed investment policies both of which have private equity allocations.

Rich Dahab, GERS Investment Consultant, addressed the Commission regarding the use of private equity firms and the changes over the last 30 years. He stated private equity firm investments is a piece that has come into play to reach desired goals. Mr. Dahab said

that after a thorough analysis, there was a recommendation and conclusion that these private equity investments both reduce the overall long-term risk of the fund as well as increases the rate of return opportunity. Discussions ensued regarding questions and concerns from the Commission, City Manager Feldman, and City Auditor Herbst.

**BUS-2** [16-0034](#) DDA Request to Lease Huizenga Plaza

After speaking with Chris Wren, Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Commissioner Trantalis said he is concerned that the leasing of Huizenga Plaza is a methodology to raise funds. He expressed concern should the DDA need to sell the property as it is important to keep the open space that Huizenga Plaza provides. Commissioner Trantalis asked Chris Wren about the financial needs of the DDA that initiated this process and questioning if there are other alternatives to shore up the DDA budget.

Commissioner Rogers stated should the City decide to move forward with the Leavitt Foundation's programming for Esplanade Park (the goal being of enhancing Riverwalk) it then becomes significant to program Huizenga Plaza also. He said the goal is to have Huizenga Plaza remain open space as a park and not selling it for development. Commissioner Roberts noted the good relationship between the DDA and the City in the past and the need for assistance from the DDA for other items important to the City.

Mayor Seiler noted three important things regarding this issue: 1) the fact that it is currently open space and it needs to remain open space regardless of who owns, manages or leases the property; 2) it is part of the City's Riverwalk, despite the fact that it is operated by a different entity, noting the Riverwalk would not be what it is without the open space of Huizenga Plaza; and 3) the DDA has been a good partner. Mayor Seiler stated the goal was to move toward the common ground for the right dollar amount in the right period of time and suggesting this be explored further. Vice-Mayor McKinzie asked Chris Wren the assessed value of the property and the option of having the City purchase the property in order to preserve it as an open space.

Mr. Wren explained the reason for the needed funding and the DDA's long-term strategic plan was outlined in his letter to City Manager Feldman. He stated he did not want to move forward without the input of the City Commission.

Discussions ensued among the Commission regarding the DDA and moving to it to the next level with the City's increased participation and other possible opportunities.

**BUS-3** [16-0032](#) Informational Presentation Parks and Recreation Department

Carl Williams, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City, gave the Commission an informational update on completed and ongoing projects taking place in the City's Parks and Recreation Department specifically highlighting the Clean Team and the Child Care Food Program. Discussions, questions, and comments regarding the City's Parks and Recreation Department on these two programs ensued among the Commission and Mr. Williams.

***A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.***

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**COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY MEETING - 2:30 P.M.  
OR AS SOON THEREAFTER AS POSSIBLE**

**BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

**BD-1**      [16-0048](#)      Board and Committee Vacancies

Discussions ensued among the Commission about upcoming Board appointments. City Clerk Jeffrey Modarelli read the following individuals' names that the Commission is considering for future Board appointments: Gustav Schmidt, Chad Scott, Alena Alberani, and Brittany Storm.

**BD-2**      [16-0050](#)      Communications to the City Commission

Discussion ensued among the Commission regarding the following two items communicated by the Parks, Recreation, and Beaches Board:

The Parks, Recreation, and Beaches Board requests to have an integrated approach to the development of the Aquatic Center and for the board to be more involved including a joint workshop with BRAB regarding all plans and stages of development.

The Parks, Recreation and Beaches Board, being fully advised of all economic impacts of the land, formerly known as the One Stop Shop, feels the development of the property as a park is vital to the long-term needs and success of the downtown area and is consistent with the current designation.

**CITY MANAGER REPORTS**

**MGR-1** [16-0038](#)      Beach Place Security Plan Status

City Manager Feldman updated the Commissions on the Beach Place Security Plan Status noting that calls for service were down. He requested Commissioner Trantalis not bring this matter back on a quarterly basis but instead to alert the Commission if calls for service increase.

Commissioner Trantalis asked City Manager Feldman to convert the status update to the previous format, and he will distribute it to the Commission via memorandum. City Manager Feldman noted that the change in the management company for Beach Place had contributed to the improvements. The Commission agreed to have City Manager Feldman continue to monitor this item and will inform the Commission any changes.

**EXECUTIVE CLOSED DOOR SESSION - 4:30 P.M.  
OR AS SOON THEREAFTER AS POSSIBLE**

[16-0071](#)

The City Commission will meet privately pursuant to Florida Statute,  
Section 286.011(8) concerning:

*Antonio Grant v. City of Fort Lauderdale, et al.*  
*Case No.: 15-61128-CIV-GAYLES/TURNOFF; and*

*Judith Donato v. City of Fort Lauderdale*  
*Case No.: CACE 14-024440(18)*

Mayor Seiler adjourned the City Commission Conference Meeting at 4:47 p.m.