

City of Fort Lauderdale



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

3:00 PM

City Hall is Closed to the Public Workshop can

be accessed:

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CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP

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 3:07 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

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

OLD/NEW BUSINESS[20-0427](#)

COVID-19 Update:

1. Status of Current Openings and Closings
2. Lane Closures to Benefit Businesses and Restaurants
3. Status of City Facilities Openings/Closings
4. Fourth of July Planning
5. Parks and Recreation Summer Camps
6. Other Response Efforts

Mayor Trantalis explained the purpose of this Workshop. City Manager Chris Lagerbloom and City Attorney Alain Boileau would provide updates and answers to COVID-19 related questions and concerns.

City Manager Lagerbloom provided a Broward County (County) *Emergency Order (Order)* update. It allowed hotels, beaches and gyms to reopen with restrictions. He explained current details of beach restrictions, noting ongoing County discussions to relax beach restrictions beginning next week, Monday, June 1, 2020.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed beach vendor readiness to open on Monday, June 1, 2020.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding fifty (50%) percent

beach occupancy and distancing requirements, City Manager Lagerbloom explained Staff is successfully utilizing Mayor Trantalis' *Working Group Report (Report)* recommendations for *Phase-One Reopening*.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions regarding neighbor feedback for Maintenance of Traffic (MOT), City Manager Lagerbloom expounded on the end-to-end closure of NE 33rd street in the North Beach area of Galt Ocean Mile. City Manager Lagerbloom suggested modifying street closure time starting at 5:30 p.m. instead of 4:30 p.m.

City Manager Lagerbloom explained neighbor feedback and the current status of MOT operations allowing outside dining along Las Olas Boulevard. Neighbor input recommended implementing a MOT on the westbound parking lane of Las Olas Boulevard. Pedestrian and bicyclist feedback was positive.

Commissioner Moraitis confirmed positive feedback from North Beach business owners regarding the NE 33rd Street MOT. Area business owners have requested Staff assistance with providing hand-sanitizing stations.

Commissioner Sorensen discussed positive feedback received regarding the MOT closure of the westbound parking lane along Las Olas Boulevard, expounding on details. Approximately four (4) to five (5) restaurants utilized increased outside dining space.

City Manager Lagerbloom requested input regarding additional areas that could benefit from MOTs, noting Sunrise Lane wishes to participate in the next few weeks.

Vice Mayor Glassman discussed neighbor feedback on non-adherence to social distancing guidelines at Las Olas Boulevard restaurants. He inquired about the use of Las Olas Boulevard adjacent parking lots for expanded restaurant dining. City Manager Lagerbloom commented on Department of Health standards and related concerns. Staff is reviewing before implementation.

City Manager Lagerbloom explained details regarding enforcement of social distancing guidelines being addressed on a case-by-case basis. Staff is encouraged to act as ambassadors, educating the public. Further comment ensued.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the need to address social distancing guidelines, citing examples along Las Olas Boulevard and requesting

input from Commissioner Sorensen.

Commissioner Sorensen recommended virtual weekly meetings with *The Las Olas Association* business owners on social distancing guidelines. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed, noting the opportunity for City-wide expansion. Mayor Trantalis recommended starting with Las Olas Boulevard businesses. Further comment ensued.

Commissioner McKinzie commented on his perspective, questioning enforcement. City Manager Lagerbloom explained enforcement guidance. Further comment ensued on related challenges.

City Attorney Boileau expounded on enforcement of social distancing guidelines at businesses, citing examples and commenting on related details. Further comment ensued on enforcement challenges and details in the County *Order*.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on input from North Beach business owners, noting an upcoming 3:30 p.m. meeting on Monday, June 1, 2020. She confirmed Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility Department Director, would participate. Commissioner Moraitis requested Anthony Fajardo, Department of Sustainable Development Director, attend along with any additional Staff recommended by City Manager Lagerbloom.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on neighbor feedback regarding restaurant employees not wearing masks. City Attorney Boileau confirmed business employees should be wearing masks, explaining the exception for food preparation staff. Mayor Trantalis confirmed, expounding on his viewpoint.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' request, City Attorney Boileau provided an overview of the current status of County *Orders* and State *Executive Orders (Orders)*, expounding on details.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, City Attorney Boileau confirmed vacation rentals are not yet permitted, explaining details. Further comment ensued on details and exceptions, i.e., First Responders.

City Manager Lagerbloom commented on discussions with County Administrator Bertha Henry on the status of summer youth activities that include a County Working Group effort to develop guidelines. Staff is moving forward with summer youth activity registration to allow these activities when permitted.

Mayor Trantalis discussed an email from *Extreme Sports*, requesting a reopening update. City Attorney Boileau provided an update on *Orders* that permit professional sports. Facilities like *Extreme Sports* are treated as amusement parks, explaining requirements that include submission of a plan for approval by the Mayor.

City Attorney Boileau said County *Order* now permits opening dog parks and dog beaches. He is working to conform a new City *Emergency Declaration (Declaration)* with the latest County *Order*. Mayor Trantalis concurred. Further comment ensued.

Mayor Trantalis read from the Governor's *Executive Order* regarding amusement parks, citing requirements and related details. Further comment ensued, including use of face masks on the beach. Masks must be worn on the beach unless there is an ability to social distance six (6) feet or part of a family unit.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question regarding houses of worship, Mayor Trantalis explained efforts of a *Faith-Based Community Working Group* resulted in a set of protocols that would be sent to each Commission Member.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question regarding doubles tennis, City Attorney Boileau confirmed only singles tennis is currently permitted. Further comment and discussion ensued. Commissioner McKinzie commented on his viewpoint.

Commissioner Moraitis explained discussions at the *Broward League of Cities* on topics including additional education opportunities outside the public school system and an area business campaign entitled *I Love Local*.

Commissioner Moraitis requested input addressing forward-thinking homelessness funding. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed robust case management, expounding on details.

Hal Barnes, Neighbor Support Manager, provided an update on homeless sheltering, explaining individual case management efforts and citing related details.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Barnes confirmed outreach efforts to homeless individuals in *Stranahan Park*, the *Salvation Army* facility and other areas, expounding on details. Approximately one hundred nine (109) hotel vouchers have been utilized. Extra funding is

needed for an additional fifty (50) to one hundred (100) vouchers. Comment and discussion ensued on funding sources, including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program funding and donors. Commissioner McKinzie commented on his perspective.

Mr. Barnes confirmed the approximate cost per homeless client is \$5,000, stating approximately \$500,000 had been budgeted. Further comment and discussion ensued on funding sources.

Commissioner McKinzie expounded on his perspective and concerns regarding funding for homelessness and using taxpayer dollars. He noted the necessity to target other needed economic areas. City Manager Lagerbloom explained specific sources of funding addressing homelessness that include Federal CDBG funding focused on COVID-19 efforts. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis commented on State Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funding for homelessness. He requested Commissioner Moraitis, as Commission representative for the *Broward League of Cities*, address the need for contributions from other County municipalities, noting homelessness originates in all areas of the County.

Mayor Trantalis explained County municipalities having the ability to apply for homelessness funding at State and Federal levels. Commissioner Moraitis concurred.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question, City Manager Lagerbloom said the City received approximately \$900,000 - \$1,000,000 in HOPWA funding. As a first response to COVID-19, State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program funding was less than \$200,000.

Rachel Williams, Housing and Community Development Manager, expounded on funding details from CDBG, SHIP and three (3) streams of HOPWA allocation funding.

In response to Commissioner McKinzie's questions, Ms. Williams explained funding relief for businesses and rental and mortgage payment assistance from the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Small Business Program Incentive. Ms. Williams noted additional details related to homelessness funding. There are U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) opportunities for rental assistance in addition to SHIP funding opportunities for rental and mortgage assistance. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Williams explained details

regarding HOPWA funding guidelines and proper channels for addressing homelessness, i.e., the need for an exit strategy into a HOPWA Program.

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' question, Ms. Williams explained details of the \$1,500,000 CDBG funding received, expounding on details. Further comment and discussion ensued on homelessness funding.

Mayor Trantalis commented on the County's recent receipt of federal CARES Act Provider Relief Funds, recommending City Manager Lagerbloom request related funding assistance from the County to augment homelessness funding. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed.

City Manager Lagerbloom noted Staff is building a Small Business Loan Program (Program) that would come before the CRA Board and the Commission for approval. Following approval, small business loan assistance advertising could begin.

City Manager Lagerbloom recommended not going forward with the usual *Fourth of July* beach event plans. As an alternative, he suggested three smaller simultaneous fireworks displays at Mills Pond Park, Holiday Park and the rooftop of the City Hall Parking Lot or Riverwalk Center. The majority of County municipalities are foregoing hosting a Fourth of July display.

Vice Mayor Glassman noted his concerns related to the recommended alternative fireworks venues. In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding crowd control at these three (3) sites, City Manager Lagerbloom explained surrounding areas would be closed. Messaging would recommend residents enjoy the fireworks displays from where they are and would not be a "come to" event. The alternative would be foregoing the *Fourth of July* celebration. Discussion ensued on the cost of the fireworks display, estimated at approximately \$90,000.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding adjacent coastal cities plans to host *Fourth of July* fireworks displays, City Manager Lagerbloom commented on the anticipated positions of Pompano Beach, Hollywood and Deerfield Beach to forego fireworks displays.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on her perspective. Should the Commission decide to move forward with a *Fourth of July* fireworks displays, there should be a fireworks display in District I.

Commissioner Sorensen noted his concerns, recommending foregoing fireworks this year. Commissioner McKinzie concurred, explaining his viewpoint.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the positive community impact of a *Fourth of July* celebration as recommended by City Manager Lagerbloom. Further comment and discussion ensued. Mayor Trantalis recommended a Commission decision on this item at the upcoming June 2, 2020 Commission Regular Meeting.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding implementing a solid *Emergency Response Plan* in conjunction with moving forward with business expansion plans, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding a formal request to the County for homeless hotel vouchers, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the formal request had been prepared. County Administrator Henry is aware of its imminent arrival.

City Manager Lagerbloom explained the response from the County when inquiring about this topic. Further comment and discussion ensued. Commissioner Sorensen confirmed he would follow-up with the County.

Commissioner Sorensen said the Broward County *Continuum of Care Board* indicated the County is awaiting a plan from the City regarding exiting homeless hotel clients.

City Manager Lagerbloom noted Ms. Williams's earlier discussion of this topic. Staff has formulated a plan. Ms. Williams explained the requested plan had been sent to the County, noting a meeting with the County last week. Further comment ensued. Mayor Trantalis commented on his viewpoint regarding the County's inaction on this topic.

Commissioner Sorensen discussed his previous recommendation for Commission Member interaction with members of the County Commission.

Commissioner McKinzie discussed his viewpoint, choosing to forego this suggestion. Vice Mayor Glassman concurred with Commission McKinzie's position.

Further comment and discussion ensued on engaging County Commission Members.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding replicating Las Olas Boulevard MOT plans this weekend beginning on Friday, May 29, 2020, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed.

Commissioner Sorensen requested input from Vice Mayor Glassman regarding a MOT closure on East Las Olas Boulevard from Seabreeze Boulevard to State Road A1A. Vice Mayor Glassman explained negative neighbor feedback.

Commissioner Sorensen inquired about resuming activities in *Oceanside Park*, i.e., the Farmers Market. City Manager Lagerbloom explained the County has not yet authorized these types of activities in *Phase-One Reopening*. These types of activities are anticipated in *Phase-Two Reopening* or *Phase-Three Reopening*. Special Event applications would not be brought forward to the Commission until *Phase-Two Reopening*.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, City Manager Lagerbloom commented on less than anticipated progress with Suntex Marina project coordination.

Mayor Trantalis reiterated the purpose of this meeting. The Suntex Marina project and plans for additional COVID-19 related Commission Workshop Meetings would be discussed at the upcoming June 2, 2020 Commission Regular Meeting.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding an email received noting the use of beaches behind private condominiums along Galt Mile, comment ensued on current County guidelines and anticipation of additional beach guidelines later in the week. Mayor Trantalis confirmed upcoming guidelines would be a topic of discussion at the June 2, 2020 Commission Regular Meeting.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding allowing 30-minute free parking on Himmarshee Street for restaurant take-out order pickup, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed, stating Staff would address appropriate signage.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 4:58 p.m.