

# City of Fort Lauderdale



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 5, 2020

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>

[www.fortlauderdale.gov/fltv](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/fltv)

[www.youtube.com/cityoffortlauderdale](http://www.youtube.com/cityoffortlauderdale)

Cable Television - Comcast Channel 78 and AT&T U-verse Channel 99

## 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 1:10 p.m.

## QUORUM ESTABLISHED

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

[20-0867](#)

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

### EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD (EAB) MEETING

**Virtual Meeting Thursday, October 15, 2020**

#### ***Communication to Commission***

*The Education Advisory Board, as part of a larger effort to engage our community in shaping the future of public education in the City of Fort Lauderdale, recommends that the Mayor and City commission:*

*1) Express support for the School Board of Broward County's current allocation of 2020 SMART bond dollars for critical and essential facility renovations at Bennett Elementary School, and*

*2) Support City staff and the EAB's continued collaboration with Bennett Elementary School and neighboring Fort Lauderdale communities to capture residents' preference for long-term facility and program enhancements.*

*Motion: Motion made by Vice Chair Amy Ellowitz and seconded by Ms. Tina Jaramillo. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.*

City Attorney Alain Boileau explained *Sunshine Law* restrictions preventing more than one member of the *EAB* from speaking in this forum. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Ruchel Coetzee, 1338 SW 4th Court, and EAB Member. Ms. Coetzee urged the Commission to approve bond funding for *Bennett Elementary School (Bennett Elementary)*, ensuring quality public education in the eastern area of the City.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on her perspective and support of the *EAB* recommendation.

Mayor Trantalis clarified this item relates to *Broward County School Bond* funding, commenting on the diverse student population of *Bennett Elementary* and the need to enhance educational programming and facility rehabilitation. He confirmed support of the *EAB* recommendation.

Vice Mayor Glassman commented on the *EAB*'s excellent work, citing examples, thanking them for their work and confirming his support of the *EAB* recommendation. He confirmed discussions with an incoming *Broward County School Board Member* regarding his support of addressing *Bennett Elementary*'s needs, including a new building.

Mayor Trantalis noted corrections to *EAB Meeting Minutes* related to this communication.

***BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT (BOA)  
VIRTUAL MEETING OCTOBER 14, 2020***

***Communication to Commission***

*Communication to the City Commission Motion made by Mr. McGinley, seconded by Mr. Reynolds: To have staff consider amendments to the fence code, taking into consideration new FEMA flood elevations and site screening. And to also include a clearer option regarding "architectural features" on top of fences. In a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.*

Mayor Trantalis explained the *BOA*'s motion to consider an increase to Unified Land Regulations (ULDR) fence heights.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Alfred Battle, Department of Sustainable Development Deputy Director. Mr. Battle confirmed Staff could study and evaluate *BOA* comments that include Federal Emergency Management

Agency (FEMA) requirements for elevations, expounding on details.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his perspective regarding the impact of fences in neighborhoods, expounding on related details. He requested Commission Members raise this topic with residents for feedback.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding the Code change approval process, Mr. Battle explained proposed changes would include resident input and require Planning and Zoning Board and Commission approval.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on her opposition to regulating properties. Further comment and discussion ensued.

### **CITY COMMISSION REPORTS**

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

In response to Commissioner Moraitis' request for an update regarding the implementation of new digital water meters (Project), City Manager Lagerbloom explained this Project could not be pursued through a public/private/partnership (P3) proposal and expounded on related details. Staff will pursue the Project through a competitive market process.

Raj Verma, Public Works Department Director, explained Staff efforts to move the Project forward. Staff is determining the model type to be used. The Project would begin in approximately one year within a section of the Imperial Point neighborhood.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding completing City responsibilities and readiness for its portion of the *Broward County Segment II and Sand Bypass Project*, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed it would.

Vice Mayor Glassman confirmed his upcoming attendance with Commissioner Sorensen at the *Las Olas Mobility Working Group Meeting* with *The Corradino Group, Inc., (Corradino)* on Friday, November 6, 2020 at 2:30 p.m.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding the four (4) to five (5) year timeline to complete Park Bond projects discussed at a recent Parks, Recreation and Beaches Advisory Board, Phil Thornburg, Parks and Recreation Director, explained his perspective regarding this

timeline. Understanding aspects of the projects is anticipated to take approximately six (6) months to one (1) year. There are four (4) phases (estimated at \$40,000,000 - \$50,000,00 each) to be completed over the four (4) to five (5) year timeline.

Vice Mayor Glassman commented on his perspective. Initial phases of Park Bond projects are anticipated to be completed in one (1) to two (2) years. The timeline is an agenda item topic of discussion at associated bi-weekly meetings and is closely tracked.

Vice Mayor Glassman commented on beach area neighborhood residents' request for specific information regarding the upcoming *Lauderdale Air Show (Air Show)*, including detailed logistical communications. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed *Air Show* representatives would provide information at tonight's *Regular Commission Meeting*.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding an update on the water main break in District 2 near the *Le Club Condominium* and *Bonnet House* and related street restoration, Raj Verma, Public Works Department Director, provided an update. Staff would address reprioritizing restoration of this area.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding responding to neighbors about street restoration due to numerous infrastructure projects throughout the City, Mr. Verma explained following completion of all underground work, the entire street would be repaved. Neighbors can contact the City regarding areas with no construction activity and Staff will follow-up for reprioritization. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question regarding a status update on *The Las Olas Garage* concerns, i.e., mesh screen rusting and lighting issues, City Manager Lagerbloom explained the City had rejected the mesh screening due to rusting. He is awaiting a response from the contractor. He explained aspects of lighting issues and related details. He would return with a recommendation to the Commission if the situation is not remedied.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his concern and perspective. City Manager Lagerbloom commented that the technology used was not state-of-the-art and related details.

Ben Rogers, Department of Transportation and Mobility Department Director, provided an update. *Community Redevelopment Agency*

(CRA) Staff is pursuing negotiations with the vendor under the warranty period, expounding on technical lighting details and remedies. Discussions are ongoing regarding the next steps to address lighting and rusting mesh issues. Further comment ensued.

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed Staff is pursuing the lighting and rusting mesh through warranties. The work has not been accepted and will not be accepted until these items are successfully addressed. Vice Mayor Glassman confirmed the need to correct these two (2) issues.

Vice Mayor Glassman requested an update on the ability for Boards and Committees to continue meeting virtually. City Attorney Boileau explained Mayor Trantalis executed an *Emergency Declaration* addressing the expiration of *Governor DeSantis's Executive Order* regarding the quorum waiver. The City and other municipalities' have the ability to waive quorum requirements under the City's current *COVID State of Emergency*. The Commission and Boards and Committees can continue to meet virtually.

Vice Mayor Glassman commented on input from Boards and Committees, reflecting increased member participation when meeting virtually and member desire to continue.

Vice Mayor Glassman discussed the need for an *Emergency Response Substation (EMS)* along the *Las Olas Boulevard Corridor*. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed this is an important subject, expounding on related details and the need for future funding. Vice Mayor Glassman confirmed the need for this to be addressed due to unacceptable *EMS* response times.

Vice Mayor Glassman requested an update on proactive resident communication measures to address expected eight (8) to ten (10) inches of rainfall. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed Staff is executing a plan, expounding on efforts in flood-prone areas. Communications would go out to residents, including the request to report clogged storm drains.

Commissioner Sorensen concurred with Vice Mayor Glassman, requesting residents be informed of City contact information for them. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed residents should contact City Customer Service at 954-828-8000. He also explained details warranting *911 Emergency Services*, citing examples.

Commissioner Sorensen requested an update regarding access at the

*Points of America* area. Mayor Trantalis explained neighbor area concerns, expounding on related details. A title search is ongoing to determine who owns the underlying land and whether the City holds any easements. This would determine who has the ability to regulate the use of the area and whether a gate could be installed. City Attorney Boileau confirmed, expounding on efforts to determine who holds the rights. Further comment and discussion ensued. Mayor Trantalis requested Commission Sorensen keep him updated on this subject. Commissioner Sorensen confirmed.

Commissioner Sorensen requested status updates on a new *Police Station Headquarters (Police Headquarters)* and the search for a new Police Chief. City Manager Lagerbloom commented on efforts to acquire property for a new *Police Headquarters*, including activities and negotiations with the landowner. Design and renderings are anticipated in the next ninety (90) days with an anticipated groundbreaking in Spring 2021. He expounded on details, including additional City operations at the same site. City Manager Lagerbloom explained Police Chief recruitment efforts, stating interviews are anticipated shortly. A detailed update for the Commission is anticipated at the November 15, 2020 Commission Meeting.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's request regarding the process for hiring a new Police Chief, City Manager Lagerbloom explained details and the role of the Commission. City Manager Lagerbloom said he would assemble an interview panel. The final decision would be his and would include Commission engagement. He expounded on the related process.

In response to Commission Sorensen's question regarding a \$1,000,000 - \$2,000,000 reserve fund for an *EMS Response Station* north of the river, City Manager Lagerbloom explained funding details planned for an *EMS Substation* south of the *Henry E. Kinney Tunnel*, as close to *Federal Highway* as possible. Budgeted funding was used for acquiring land. Additional funding needs to be identified for construction. Further comment ensued. No area was identified north of the *New River*. City Manager Lagerbloom acknowledged Vice Mayor Glassman's previous comments regarding the need for an *EMS Substation* north of the *New River*.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen, City Manager Lagerbloom provided an update on the *Fiveash Water Treatment Plant (Fiveash)*. To begin *Fiveash* replacement construction in 2025, it would require a nine percent (9%) water utility rate increase over three (3) consecutive



years or a one-time thirty percent (30%) adjustment increase. This water-utility rate increase would be sufficient to issue a \$450,000,000 bond debt as identified in the *Carollo Report*. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the pursuit of parallel paths, engaging with a private partner or writing a scope of work for a private partner. He expounded on related financial details and his perspective moving forward. The Public Works Department is actively writing a scope of work for an Owner's Representative, a large engineering firm representing City interests for design, bidding and construction oversight.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's request for an update on the *South Ocean Drive Bridge Project (Project)*, located in Harbor Inlet, City Manager Lagerbloom commented on neighborhood outreach, confirming the *Project* is Surtax eligible. Mr. Verma concurred, expounding on related details. Surtax funds will be used for the *Project*, anticipated to start in April 2021. This timeline provides adequate time to comply with *Broward County Surtax* funding requirements.

Mayor Trantalis discussed *Fiveash* related to the abandonment of maintenance items on tonight's *Commission Regular Meeting Agenda* due to the decision to fully replace *Fiveash*. He expounded on the Commission decision that the City would maintain ownership and management of *Fiveash*.

Mayor Trantalis commented on impending anticipated rainfall and related flooding concerns negatively impacting several neighborhoods. He explained Commission action to aggressively address stormwater needs and expounded on related efforts.

Mayor Trantalis discussed items related to the recent election and his perspective, citing examples of negative behavior.

Mayor Trantalis provided an update on *Joint Government Center (Government Center)* discussions, commenting that any changes to current proposed plans need to be addressed now. *Broward County (County)* is pursuing efforts to build a raised railway bridge through the City above *Broward Boulevard* and the *New River* to accommodate *Coastal Link* which would impact the *Government Center*. Mayor Trantalis explained the associated negative impact on traffic patterns and the *Government Center* adjacent location. He discussed his efforts advocating for a railway tunnel in lieu of a raised railway bridge, expounding on the reasoning. Mayor Trantalis confirmed his position to not move forward with the *Government Center* with the currently



proposed raised railway bridge, stating the City would pursue a separate *City Hall* building in an alternate location. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commission Sorensen's questions, Mayor Trantalis explained parties to these discussions include the *County, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Brightline* and the City. Mayor Trantalis expounded on related details, noting the negative impact on the City. He commented on his advocating for an alternate solution, an underground railway tunnel. Further comment and discussion ensued on the reduced cost of a bridge and the opportunity to pursue federal funding for an underground railway tunnel.

Commissioner Sorensen concurred with Mayor Trantalis' comments regarding the proposed bridge, noting his support of having a *Government Center* with the *County*.

Commissioner Moraitis requested a presentation for a full understanding of what is currently being proposed. She noted the recent passing of an amendment allowing the *County* to pursue its project locations without local municipal approval.

Vice Mayor Glassman concurred with Commissioner Moraitis' comments on the need for a presentation, noting similar railway related aspects at the *Miami-Dade County Government Center*. Further comment ensued.

Mayor Trantalis commented on an article referencing Commissioner McKinzie. He provided Commissioner McKinzie an opportunity to respond. Commissioner McKinzie explained he was unaware of the article. Mayor Trantalis commented on efforts to address homelessness needs.

Mayor Trantalis asked a question regarding a recent incident at the *African American Library*, Commissioner McKinzie did not respond. Mayor Trantalis commented on the incident.

## **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

### **BUS-1 [20-0872](#)**

Discussion of Holiday Lighting Events and Downtown Countdown Event - (Commission Districts 1,2, 3 and 4)

City Manager Lagerbloom provided a brief overview of this item, explaining this item addresses holiday celebration events this year due to COVID.

Phil Thornburg, Parks and Recreation Director, requested Commission direction regarding managing *Light-up Events* around the City during the holiday season.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on her perspective, including COVID social distancing concerns related to residents gathering in one area while attending the *New Year Countdown*. She recommended smaller *Light-up Events* around the City, i.e., one in each District and lighting up the entire City simultaneously. Commissioner Moraitis commented on related details, including additional Staff for event monitoring.

Commissioner Sorensen noted input from Luke Moorman, President and Chairman of the Board of the *Las Olas Association*, on a limited format for a *Twelve Days of Christmas* event along *Las Olas Boulevard*. Mr. Thornburg said this had not been discussed and explained details of what was under consideration. Further comment ensued on the plan to avoid crowds. City Manager Lagerbloom expounded on his perspective to provide a festive atmosphere without a large formal event attracting crowds.

Commissioner Moraitis explained her perspective to encourage outdoor dining in conjunction with outdoor event lighting, expounding on details. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mr. Thornburg discussed having multiple small night events to draw business patronage. Commission Moraitis confirmed her support of this recommendation and the need to keep plans simple.

Mayor Trantalis discussed a recommendation of Genia Ellis, President & Chief Executive Officer of *Riverwalk Fort Lauderdale Inc. (Riverwalk)*, to have a holiday float.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on having small events within each District.

Vice Mayor Glassman reiterated his previous recommendation for a one night light-up for the entire City, citing examples and expounding on his perspective and the need for safety measures. Further comment ensued on additional options and the need for a decision due to the timeline.

Mayor Trantalis recommended a coordinated one (1) light-up for all holiday events. Further comment and discussion ensued on District

events and scheduling.

In response to Vice Mayor Glassman's question, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed December 2020 Commission Meeting dates as December 2, 2020 and December 15, 2020. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mr. Thornburg confirmed Staff would work with each Commissioner for a coordinated one (1) night light-up event in each District. Staff would reassess the *Downtown Countdown* event to ensure adherence to social distancing. He would coordinate with City Manager Lagerbloom or the Commission. Further comment ensued on *the Olaf Holiday Beach Display*.

City Manager Lagerbloom summarized plans moving forward, confirming mask requirements and six (6) foot social distancing safety measures. He indicated the possibility of closing down one street or one lane along Sistrunk Boulevard for the *Light-Up Sistrunk* event in District 3. No other streets related to light-up events would need to be closed.

Commissioner Sorensen requested signs noting mask wearing requirements along *Las Olas Boulevard*. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question about safety measures for the *Exotics on Las Olas* event, Mr. Thornburg confirmed Staff and the *County* are reviewing and would update Commissioner Sorensen.

## **BUS-2** [20-0892](#)

### **City's Carbon Footprint - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

City Manager Lagerbloom provided a brief overview of this item, updating the Commission on efforts to reduce the City's Carbon Footprint.

Dr. Nancy Gassman, Assistant Public Works - Sustainability Director, narrated the slide presentation illustrating City efforts towards the *2011 Sustainability Action Plan (SAP)* to reduce *greenhouse gases*.

***A copy of this slide presentation can be found in the backup to these meeting minutes.***

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Dr. Gassman explained details regarding geothermal systems.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding a goal to make the entire vehicle fleet *green*, Dr. Gassman explained there is no current specific goal. Improvements are made on an annual basis. Hybrid technology is not available for all types of fleet vehicles.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question regarding meeting specific *green building requirements* for new construction and *SAP* goals, Dr. Gassman explained it is voluntary. She expounded on efforts of other municipalities.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's requests, Dr. Gassman reviewed policy opportunities. She said Staff would review and make recommendations to the Commission.

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the presentation would be added to the City's website and a copy would be emailed to each Commission Member.

Commissioner Sorensen recommended review, consideration and discussion of efforts of other area municipalities. Mayor Trantalis concurred, expounding on his perspective. Mayor Trantalis requested Staff present Building Code Ordinance recommendations related to achieving reduced carbon footprint goals.

Commissioner Moraitis commented on her position to see incentives instead of regulations. Vice Mayor Glassman concurred with Mayor Trantalis's comments. Mayor Trantalis commented on his support of incentives. He requested Dr. Gassman bring recommendations forward.

**BUS-3** [20-0898](#)

Unified Direct Procurement Authority (UDPA) Follow-up -  
(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

City Manager Lagerbloom provided a brief overview of this Agenda item, noting it was a placeholder for a follow-up discussion to the October 20, 2020 *City of Fort Lauderdale and Broward County Unified Direct Procurement Authority ("UDPA") Meeting to review the Joint Government Center Campus ("JGCC") Design Presentation*. He is working with Alan Cohen, Assistant Broward County Administrator, to determine the next *UDPA* meeting date anticipated for December 15, 2020 or December 16, 2020.

City Manager Lagerbloom acknowledged earlier discussions regarding the impact of a railway bridge or an underground railway tunnel on the *UDPA JGCC Project*.

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed ongoing work with Mr. Cohen for an amended *Interlocal Agreement (ILA)* to continue the *UDPA*. City Manager Lagerbloom noted the need for a Commission discussion regarding moving forward with *UDPA* discussions.

Vice Mayor Glassman commented on the earlier Commission discussion addressing the proposed railway bridge. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis commented on *County Commission* discussions for a possible future east/west rail service along *Broward Boulevard* and railway bridge integration with a Transportation Hub at this location. Mayor Trantalis expounded on his perspective regarding continuing *UDPA* discussions with the *County*.

Commissioner Moraitis reiterated her request for a proposed *FDOT* railway bridge presentation to make a determination regarding current plans at the proposed location or moving in another direction, i.e., a separate *City Hall* location. Further comment ensued.

City Manager Lagerbloom discussed an *FDOT Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study* for a *New River* crossing, expounding on details. He suggested Transportation and Mobility (TAM) Staff present this high-level finding to the Commission at the next Commission Conference Meeting. Mayor Trantalis expounded on his perspective, confirming this is the appropriate time to address concerns.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Mayor Trantalis said the *County Surtax*, *Brightline* and *FDOT* would fund the proposed railway bridge. Mayor Trantalis reiterated the possible opportunity for federal funding for an option other than a bridge. He commented on previous discussions at the federal level that confirmed the availability of federal funding for tunnel projects at that time. Commissioner Sorensen confirmed his position to pursue a tunnel option.

City Manager Lagerbloom said he would send a Commission Memo regarding the *PD&E Study* and discuss it with each Commission Member individually. A determination would be made regarding placing this item on an upcoming Commission Conference Agenda before the next *UDPA* Meeting.

In response to Commissioner McKinzie's question, City Manager Lagerbloom explained four (4) alternate cost estimates listed in the *PD&E Study*, including tunnel costs, which would be included in his

Commission Memorandum. Related costs range from \$144,000,000 to \$3,334,000,000.

## **CONFERENCE REPORTS**

**CF-1**    [20-0873](#)

Emergency Purchase for Repairs Associated with the Sewer Force Main Breaks in the Rio Vista Neighborhood at Ponce de Leon Drive, Virginia Young Park, and the Himmarshee Canal - (Commission District 4)

City Manager Lagerbloom explained this item reflects notice to the Commission for purchase of infrastructure equipment for the emergency situation in the Rio Vista neighborhood, the park and canal.

## **CITY MANAGER REPORTS**

City Manager Lagerbloom requested Commission input on 8th Floor Commission Office renovations to arrive at a consensus. He explained possible options. Plans previously discussed do not have budget funding. Comment ensued on this topic.

Mayor Trantalis noted discussions on this topic began pre-COVID, acknowledging circumstances had changed. Mayor Trantalis and Commissioner Moraitis commented that expending funds at this time for renovations was not prudent.

Commissioner Moraitis discussed the need to identify office space for each Commissioner and their respective Staff. Further comment and discussion ensued on this topic and included the 8th Floor Conference Room, soundproofing needs, the timeline and remote offices. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed Staff would address soundproofing needs.

City Manager Lagerbloom updated the Commission on his upcoming weekend schedule.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.