

City of Fort Lauderdale



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 4, 2021

1:30 PM

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

Access Via:

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

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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

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 1:37 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mayor Trantalis explained details related to the virtual and in-person format of this meeting and how members of the public can participate.

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Commission Members Present: Vice Mayor Heather Moraitis, Commissioner Steven Glassman, 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 and City Auditor John Herbst

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COMMISSION

[21-0471](#)

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

SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD (SAB) February 22, 2021

Communication to the City Commission

The Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) provides the following Communication to the City Commission:

The Sustainability Advisory Board strongly recommends that the City adopt policies to reduce the City's carbon footprint consistent with achieving the goals and objectives of the Advance Fort Lauderdale Comprehensive Plan. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions both locally and as part of a global effort is essential to limiting sea level rise and other climate change impacts and to ensuring the best long-term future of Fort Lauderdale and South Florida. The policies were presented to the SAB by the Public Works Sustainability Division on January 25, 2021.

We believe these policies will help the City achieve meaningful

reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Advance Fort Lauderdale Comprehensive Plan	Proposed Policy for Commission Consideration
Reduce GHG emissions from City Operations by 80% by 2050 (EVALUATION MEASURE CC 1.1.1)	Achieve government operations net zero emissions by 2040 and community net zero emissions by 2050 (Ready for 100)
Source 20% of electricity from renewable energy by 2030. (EM CC 1.1.6:)	Require City Operations sourcing of 20% of electricity from renewable energy by 2030 through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of solar with all roof replacements on existing facilities; • Requiring at least a 20% renewable energy contribution on all new facilities; and • Purchases of renewable energy credits
Consider GHG emissions in decision making (Policy CC 1.1.2)	Realize 10% reduction in electricity usage in City Operations from 2020 to 2030 by investing in energy efficiency retrofits, energy management programs, and energy battery storage
Ensure multimodal options of transportation exist along key corridors (Policy CC 1.2.7)	Prioritize advocacy for and investment in multimodal transportation
Reduce City vehicle fossil fuel use by 20% below 2015 levels by 2025 (EM CC 1.2.5)	Replace 50% of the fleet with low emission, electric, and hybrid vehicles for all non-emergency vehicles with available alternative fuel models by 2030
Reduce community GHG emissions (not specified in the Comp Plan)	Adopting ordinances, policies and programs to reduce emissions in the community such as requirements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool roof and cool hardscapes; • Solar ready buildings and electric charger ready parking; • Green building certification and/or features; and • Energy disclosure and efficiency upgrades.

Education Advisory Board Meeting (EAB)

Virtual Meeting

Thursday, April 22, 2021

Communication to Commission:

The EAB asks the City Commission to request that the School Board of Broward County ensure Stranahan High School gets the actual cafeteria construction it needs for current and future projected capacity and have the promised bathroom upgrades from 2018.

Motion by Mr. Rory Sponsler, seconded by Vice Chair Amy Ellowitz, to approve the letter and send it to the Commission for review.

Zoie Saunders, Chief Education Officer, explained background details of the EAB communication regarding *Stranahan High School Cafeteria (Stranahan Cafeteria)* construction.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Janelle Ceden, *School Management & Record Tracking, Inc. (SMART Program)*, on behalf of the *Broward County School Board (BCSB)*. Ms. Ceden explained she would be sharing the *BCSB Compromise Plan* presentation addressing *Stranahan Cafeteria* needs.

Comment and discussion ensued on the procedural process associated with a stakeholder presentation.

Vice Mayor Moraitis clarified *BCSB* funds this project. She confirmed her support of the *EAB* communication recommendation.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his perspective. He remarked on meeting expectations envisioned by citizens who voted for the *BCSB Bond* to address *Stranahan Cafeteria* needs and he does not support the *BCSB Compromise Plan* for *Stranahan* due to reduced project scope and capacity.

Commissioner Glassman commented on the procedure and desire to hear input from individuals who had signed up to speak. Mayor Trantalis confirmed public comment would be heard.

Ms. Ceden shared the *SMART Program - BCSB Compromise Plan* presentation.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Kathleen Langan, *SMART Program* on behalf of *BCSB*. Ms. Langan introduced Matthew Hunt, *BCSB SMART Program Construction Manager - BCSB Compromise Plan*.

Mr. Hunt narrated the presentation and provided a brief history of the project. The *BCSB Compromise Plan* increases *Stranahan Cafeteria* size providing an interior seating capacity of 790.

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

In response to Mayor Trantalis' questions, Mr. Hunt explained the current *Stranahan High School* population is approximately 1,500 students, necessitating two (2) lunch sessions. The second or third quarter of 2022 is the anticipated construction start date for the *BCSB Compromise Plan*.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Nathalie Lynch Walsh, Chair of the *Stranahan High School Facilities Task Force (Task Force)*. Ms. Walsh discussed her perspective in opposition to the *BCSB Compromise Plan* renovation and support of *Stranahan Cafeteria* replacement. She referenced the *2005 Castaldi Report* evaluation of schools with critical needs and reviewed historical funding details.

Commissioner Sorensen confirmed his support and resident support for *Stranahan Cafeteria* replacement rather than renovation. Further comment and discussion ensued on replacement costs, estimated at approximately \$20,000,000 - \$21,200,000.

Ms. Walsh said the *Task Force* has requested BCSB Staff to evaluate existing utilities and determine the best location for replacing *Stranahan Cafeteria*. Ms. Walsh explained BCSB directives hindering contractual obligations of AECOM to present the best options. She requested Commission support advocating for *Stranahan Cafeteria* replacement.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Esthel Brennan, President - *Riverside Park Residents Association*. Ms. Brennan acknowledged Ms. Walsh's comments. Ms. Brennan discussed how project information was presented to stakeholders and noted their surprise when informed about reductions to plans for *Stranahan Cafeteria*.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Mary Fertig, 511 Poinciana Drive. Ms. Fertig reviewed historical aspects of this topic. She expounded on her perspective in support of *Stranahan Cafeteria* replacement.

Commissioner Sorensen expounded on his perspective regarding previous project managers. He explained the 2,300 student capacity of *Stranahan High School* and the need to plan for the future.

Commissioner Sorensen recommended a written communication from the City to the *BCSB* in support of *Stranahan Cafeteria* replacement. Further comment and discussion ensued on this recommendation and the *May 18, 2021 BCSB Meeting* on this topic. There was agreement for a *Walk-On Resolution* at tonight's *Commission Regular Meeting*.

Commissioner McKinzie recommended Commissioner Sorensen attend the *May 18, 2021 BCSB Meeting* and communicate the Commission Resolution and position on this topic. Mayor Trantalis concurred. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner McKinzie commented on the need to request BCSB input regarding *BCSB Bond* funding earmarked for all City schools. Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on addressing *Northeast High School* needs.

Mayor Trantalis suggested a focus on *Stranahan High School*, the topic currently at issue. He confirmed the need for additional Commission attention on *BCSB Bond* funding for all school facility needs within the City.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on communications with Sarah Leonardi, District 3 Broward County School Board Member, and her efforts on this topic.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

BUS-1 [21-0212](#)

Parental Leave Discussion

Tarlesha Smith, Assistant City Manager - Human Resources Director, said Commission discussion of this topic was requested by Commissioner Glassman. Ms. Smith provided a brief overview of this Agenda item.

Janeen Richard, Human Resources Department Employee Relations Manager, presented a synopsis of how other South Florida counties and municipalities, including the City of Gainesville, address parental leave policy.

Mayor Trantalis noted Broward County provides six (6) weeks of paid parental leave for a newborn, foster or adopted child. Ms. Richard confirmed. Current City guidelines follow *Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)* policy and allows twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave.

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' question, Ms. Richard explained that *Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs)* allow certain employees to donate unused sick time if criteria are met.

Commissioner Sorensen spoke in support of providing paid parental leave.

Ms. Smith confirmed policy adherence to federal law without regard to gender. She discussed the fiscal impact of paid parental leave in Fiscal Year 2020, explaining cost details listed in the corresponding *Commission Agenda Memo (CAM)*.

Commissioner Glassman concurred with Commissioner Sorensen and supports paid parental leave. He commented on this type of policy moving towards employee paid leave for caretaking of a seriously ill family member.

Further comment and discussion ensued.

Ms. Smith suggested Staff explore all aspects of this topic and the impact on stakeholders. Staff would return to the Commission and City Manager Lagerbloom with information regarding the fiscal impact from a global perspective, including the impact on operations when combining paid and unpaid leave.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, Ms. Richard explained the cost to the City of Gainesville for full paid parental leave was approximately \$700,000 over the past two (2) years. She explained details of the sliding scale utilized by Miami-Dade County for paid parental leave.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Ms. Richard said paying a six (6) week portion of the current FMLA twelve (12) week unpaid leave would not compromise *CBAs*.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, Ms. Richard confirmed the revised *FMLA* policy for certain Federal Government Workers allows for twelve (12) weeks of paid *FMLA* leave. She explained that parental leave would be covered in a phased approach

under President Biden's proposed *American Families Plan*, expounding on details.

Commissioner Sorensen recommended beginning with six (6) weeks of paid parental leave, based upon Staff research and input. City Manager Lagerbloom commented on the budgetary impact on Fiscal Year 2022. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Commissioner McKinzie confirmed his support of six (6) weeks of paid parental leave and openness to twelve (12) weeks of paid parental leave.

There was a consensus to move forward six (6) weeks of paid parental leave. Commissioner Glassman reiterated his earlier comments and the need for further information.

Ms. Smith confirmed Staff would provide a presentation illustrating the cost-benefit analysis and a phased approach. Mayor Trantalis recommended incorporating paid parental leave into the FY 2022 Budget.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen, Ms. Smith explained proposed paid parental leave would run consecutively or concurrently with *FMLA* leave based on Commission direction. She clarified information in the *CAM* is based upon 59 employees. Staff will provide additional information broader in scope.

Commissioner Glassman commented on information from the *National Partnership for Women and Families* regarding benefits to private businesses offering paid leave. Commissioner Sorensen concurred.

BUS-2 [21-0250](#)

Neighbor Volunteer Office Program Update 2021 - (Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Jorg Hruschka, Chief Service Officer, narrated the *Neighbor Volunteer Office Program (Program) Update 2021* presentation. Mr. Hruschka reviewed and expounded on the impact of *Program* community service opportunities towards building goodwill and enhancing the quality of life in the City. The *Program* inspires and successfully engages civic associations and volunteers to create and manage quality service projects.

A copy is part of the backup to this Agenda item.

Mark Miller, President - *Action for Literacy*, commented on the remarkable results of children learning through *Program* reading efforts.

The *Program* has resulted in 125 *Little Libraries* throughout the City. He thanked the Commission for taking the time to hear this presentation.

Barry Levy, President - *Fort Lauderdale Beach Sweep*, expounded on beach clean-up efforts by residents and community organizations every second and fourth Saturday of the month. He thanked the City for its support.

Mayor Trantalis discussed the value of Mr. Hruschka and *Program* volunteer members towards enhancing the community and representing the best of the City.

Mayor Trantalis and each Commission Member acknowledged the importance of *Program* efforts and thanked Mr. Hruschka and *Program* volunteers for their effort.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question, Mr. Hruschka commented on the importance of Commission support of volunteerism and the opportunity Commission Meetings provide to promote and inform the community about *Program* initiatives. Mr. Hruschka said he would keep Commission Members apprised of *Program* events and activities.

Mayor Trantalis recognized Leann Barber, 500 NE 1st Avenue. Ms. Barber concurred with earlier comments regarding the important work of *Program* volunteers and Mr. Hruschka. To make youth excited about reading, Ms. Barber suggested fundraising efforts to purchase books interesting to young readers, particularly African-American and Hispanic, for placement in neighborhood *Little Libraries*.

BUS-3 [21-0370](#)

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

Raj Verma, Public Works Department Director, provided a brief introduction to this Agenda presentation entitled *City's Carbon Footprint Recommendations (Recommendations)*. Mr. Verma said these *Recommendations* would require Commission commitment and noted budgetary impact with competing priorities and his past experience.

Glen Hadwen, Public Works Department Sustainability Manager, narrated a presentation entitled *City's Carbon Footprint Recommendations*.

A copy is part of the backup to this Agenda item.

Mr. Hadwen explained Staff efforts to date addressing the November 2020 Commission request for a progress update and policy recommendations for reducing the *City's Carbon Footprint*. The *February 22, 2021 Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) Communication to the Commission* aligns with and supports these *Recommendations*.

Mr. Hadwen commented on the importance of local, national and global alignment towards reducing impacts of *Climate Change*. The *Recommendations* are in alignment with *Federal Climate Change Goals*.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions regarding costs, Mr. Hadwen referred to information in the backup to this item, citing the renewable energy example. Comment and discussion ensued on incremental costs towards investing in electric and hybrid fleet vehicles and future lower costs.

Commissioner Glassman commented on phasing in the *Recommendations*. City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the need to determine and develop an implementation strategy.

Mayor Trantalis noted opportunities to be more energy-efficient and reduce the Carbon Footprint in the future through the use of new technology for *Community Investment Projects (CIPs)*, i.e., *Fiveash Water Plant*.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding efforts of surrounding municipalities and counties to promote green development, Mr. Hadwen explained the requirement of *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Certification (LEED Certification)*. Miami-Dade County requires *LEED Certification* for new development above 7,000 square feet. The City of Miami requires *LEED Certification* for new development above 50,000 square feet.

Commissioner Sorensen confirmed his support of *LEED Certification*. Mr. Verma noted the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) requires new development include many *LEED Certification* features. New construction standards developed by Dr. Nancy Gassman, Assistant Public Works - Sustainability Director, are expected to be adopted by the Commission and incorporated into the Building Code. He confirmed the need for an implementation strategy to meet energy efficiency and reduce the City's *Carbon Footprint* based on budget

funding.

City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed Staff would return to the Commission with phased recommendations.

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on the importance of moving towards multi-modal transportation opportunities in conjunction with *LauderTrail* efforts. She commented on numerous energy efficiency projects in Salt Lake City, Utah, and inquired about beginning similar efforts. Mr. Hadwen explained actions vary and are based on State and Federal program incentives and utility partnerships, citing examples and the need for prioritization. He expounded on details regarding costs from a life-cycle cost perspective and payback received from energy efficiency. Further comment and discussion ensued.

CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

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

In response to Vice Mayor Moraitis' questions, City Attorney Alain Boileau explained details of Governor DeSantis' *Executive Orders*. City Attorney Boileau expounded on information related to revisiting a Board and Commission Member physical presence quorum.

Mayor Trantalis and Vice Mayor Moraitis discussed opportunities available to Commission Members attending *The Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce Washington Summit October 18 - 21, 2021*. Discussion ensued on adjusting October 2021 Commission Meeting dates to allow Commission Member attendance.

The Commission discussed upcoming Memorial Day events, including *Memorial Day* ceremonies at *Lauderdale Memorial Park Cemetery* and at the Lt. Alexander Ramsay "Sandy" Nininger Statue on Riverwalk, and the *Great American Beach Party*.

Vice Mayor Moraitis confirmed the dedication of a bench in honor of Pio Ieraci, longtime president of the *Galt Mile Community Association*, on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 and invited all Commission Members. A more significant event dedicating a park to Mr. Ieraci will occur in the Fall.

Mayor Trantalis encouraged residents to get vaccinated and safely attend Commission Meetings.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's questions, Mr. Boileau clarified aspects and details of Governor DeSantis' *Executive Orders* regarding the ongoing *COVID State of Emergency*, citing examples. Comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question, City Manager Lagerbloom said he would provide an update on staffing the Police Substation at *Oceanside Park*.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding approved Community Redevelopment Agency Projects not moving forward, Clarence Woods, Area Manager Northwest Progresso Flagler Heights Community Redevelopment Agency (NWPFH CRA), explained aspects of the monthly status report on this topic. He would provide this report to the Commission. Staff is in contact with approved applicants and is monitoring approved projects that are not moving forward.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen and Mayor Trantalis' inquiry, City Manager Lagerbloom provided an update on COVID vaccination efforts. *Snyder Park* and *Lockhart Park* vaccination sites remain open. City Manager Lagerbloom expounded on discussions with private entities for pop-up vaccination sites and communicating vaccination opportunities. Further comment and discussion ensued on efforts to encourage vaccinations and possibly offering vaccine incentives.

In response to Commissioner McKinzie's question, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the ability to re-energize Fire-Rescue mobile vaccination efforts.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on local businesses possibly providing vaccine incentives.

Commissioner Sorensen commented on establishing a *Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline* as a transparency mechanism. City Auditor Herbst explained the history of previous Commission inquiry on this topic. Comment and discussion ensued. City Auditor Herbst explained the Inspector General has a broad investigation mandate to address these concerns. He expounded on details related to the City Auditor's Office receiving anonymous reports, its investigations and referral of matters as necessary. Further comment and discussion ensued.

City Auditor Herbst confirmed he would explore the establishment of a *Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline* and update the Commission.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's inquiry, City Manager Lagerbloom explained hiring a new Police Chief is on track. Tarlesha Smith, Assistant City Manager - Human Resources Director, provided a review of hiring efforts. Human Resources Staff will review and pare down candidates recently received from Gary Peterson, President/CEO of Public Sector Search & Consulting, Inc., for review by City Manager Lagerbloom. Ms. Smith explained efforts to involve community stakeholders in the selection process. Commissioner McKinzie commented on the need to include members of the public in the hiring process. Further comment and discussion on providing adequate community input. Ms. Smith confirmed the Commission would receive the list of community stakeholders given to Mr. Peterson. City Manager Lagerbloom said he anticipates between three (3) and five (5) candidates would engage in stakeholder forums. He expects a hiring announcement in late May or early June 2021.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' inquiry, City Manager Lagerbloom confirmed the ability to reinstate the *Dockless-Mobility (Scooter) Program* based on Commission direction, noting the need to repeat the procurement process. The ban of Scooters in specific areas would be maintained, i.e., the barrier island, Las Olas Boulevard and Riverwalk.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' inquiry regarding *Chick-fil-A* customers backing up traffic along Federal Highway/U.S. Route 1, City Manager Lagerbloom explained discussions with management at this *Chick-fil-A* location who indicated that removing COVID restrictions allows the reopening of its dining area and would alleviate this concern. Transportation and Mobility (TAM) Staff has been working to provide an additional curb cut. Staff will continue to monitor the situation. Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on other communication efforts and noted a NE 26th Street entrance.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' inquiry regarding the northern portion of the *Sewer Force Main Line Project (Project)*, Raj Verma, Public Works Department Director, provided a status update, expounding on details. The Project Manager indicates they are awaiting Murphy Pipeline to complete final connection work. The estimated completion date is mid-June 2021. Further comment and discussion ensued. Mayor Trantalis commented on the lengthy timeline for Project work at NE 15th Avenue and NE 18th Street.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding an update for the *Las Olas Isles Utility Undergrounding (Undergrounding Project)*, Raj Verma, Public Works Department Director, explained counsel for the

City and *Florida Power and Light* are meeting today to address aspects of the agreement. Staff anticipates the *Undergrounding Project* would be placed on a Commission Meeting Agenda in June 2021 for approval, followed by an early July 2021 start date.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 4:46 p.m.

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

[21-0490](#)

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

Christina McGuirk, et al. v. City of Fort Lauderdale
Case No.:CACE 20-007600 (12)