



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD HYBRID MEETING
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
OCTOBER 20, 2021 – 6:00 P.M.
8th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE, FORT LAUDERDALE,
FL 33301**

Board Member	Attendance	10/2021 through 9/2022 Cumulative Attendance	
		Present	Absent
Brian Donaldson, Chair	P	1	0
Jeff Lowe, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Ross Cammarata	P	1	0
Michael Marshall	P	1	0
Prabhuling Patel	A	0	1
Adam Sabin	A	0	1
Christopher Williams	P	1	0

Staff

Chris Lagerbloom, City Manager
Tarlesha W. Smith, Assistant City Manager/Director of Human Resources
Laura Reece, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Susan Grant, Finance Director
Rhoda Mae Kerr, Fire Chief
John Herbst, City Auditor
Charmaine Crawford, Budget Department and Board Liaison
Lisa Tayar, Prototype Inc. Recording Secretary

Communications to the City Commission

Motion made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Marshall that the BAB would like the following:

1. To have feedback from the Commission regarding the 2023 non-profit award process;
2. To refine the 2022 non-profit vetting process to narrow the criteria, to eliminate the number of applications;
3. To continue public vetting of the non-profits;
4. To have the Commission to identify organizations they feel do not need to be vetted or that they want to continue to award or give contracts to;
5. For the City to streamline the criteria, and
6. To have a discussion with the City Commission in November.

In a roll call vote, **motion** passed 5-0.



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In a roll call vote, **motion** passed 5-0.

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the Budget Advisory Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll was called, and it was determined a quorum was present.

III. Approval of Last Meeting Minutes – September 15, 2021

Motion made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Marshall, to approve the minutes of the Board's September 15, 2021 meeting. In a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

IV. Floor Open for Neighbor Input

None

V. Old Business

None

VI. New Business

A. Selection of Budget Advisory Board Chair and Vice Chair

Mr. Williams nominated Mr. Donaldson for Chair, seconded by Mr. Cammarata. In a roll call vote, motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Williams nominated Mr. Lowe for Vice Chair, seconded by Mr. Marshall. In a roll call vote, motion passed 5-0.

B. Selection of Revenue Estimating Conference Committee Member and Discussion

Postponed.

Ms. Reece agreed to draft a letter of acknowledgement to Catherine Graham, who had resigned from the BAB.

C. Selection of Infrastructure Taskforce Representative

Mr. Marshall wished to continue serving on the Infrastructure Taskforce.

Mr. Lowe nominated Mr. Marshall to continue serving on the Infrastructure Taskforce, seconded by Mr. Cammarata. In a roll call vote, motion passed 5-0.

D. Infrastructure Task Force Update

Mr. Marshall provided an update. He said there had been discussion regarding extending the Committee's term and discussing infrastructure that was not water/sewer related. They had also discussed a joint Commission meeting, and dedicating ad valorem revenue to infrastructure. Chair Donaldson had advised the City Commission that they should

consider dedicated funding for infrastructure/CIP programs, either by a dollar amount or a percentage of the General Fund.

Ms. Reece said the City usually put \$10-\$15 million in general capital for CIP, or approximately 2.5%.

Chair Donaldson felt this year would be more of a challenge than ever to balance the budget. Therefore, the BAB's task this year would be approving or not approving a flat ad valorem to the City Commission. He wanted their recommendation to be based on what they felt, without guessing what the City Commission would do. Mr. Lowe agreed.

Mr. Williams hoped they would not be distracted by the non-profit grant process next year and could devote their time to the rest of the budget. Mr. Marshall wanted to evaluate the budget based on scenarios of what they wanted to accomplish.

Chair Donaldson said he would be willing to tell the City Commission that they could not accomplish what they needed to with a flat ad valorem, if need be.

E. Update - International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Collective Bargaining Agreements

Ms. Smith provided the update. In five sessions, they had 50% of the contract agreed upon. They had provided the proposals to the IAFF group and were awaiting response. Chair Donaldson stated they did not know if the new contract would put them into arrears for 2022. Ms. Smith said the contract proposals were for three-year agreements.

Chair Donaldson asked Chief Kerr how the academy and new cadets were going. Chief Kerr invited Board members to the 24-person Cadet graduation at the Parker Playhouse the following day.

F. FY 2022 BAB Work Plan and Priorities Discussion

Chair Donaldson asked Mr. Lagerbloom for input on the Board's priorities for the coming year. Mr. Lagerbloom thought there would be competing interests for large amounts of money. He did not want to speculate yet regarding whether an ad valorem increase would be justified. He thought the Board should be comfortable advocating for the expenses proposed in the budget.

Mr. Lagerbloom appreciated the Board's work on the non-profit funding this year. Chair Donaldson stated the Board had discussed the non-profit vetting at the last meeting. He said they had put in a lot of time and effort and were disappointed about actions the City Commission had taken regarding the non-profits. Chair Donaldson did not want the BAB to devote the time and energy they had last year on that project, but he did want the applications evaluated for the City Commission. He wished Mr. Lagerbloom to provide a list of those who had received awards this year to the City Commission and ask which did not require vetting. They should also create finer criteria for the applications:

organizations must have matching funding; there should be a cap on the amount requested [he suggested \$70,000]; the program should be for the betterment of the City as a whole.

Mr. Cammarata thought the Board should help oversee how the non-profit funds were spent. From an optics perspective, he felt the way it had been done in the past did not make sense. Mr. Williams suggested a separate board perform this review. Mr. Lagerbloom said the Community Services Board had been mentioned for the review process.

Mr. Lagerbloom advised the Board to send a Communication to the City Commission with their recommendations regarding the non-profit funding.

Chair Donaldson asked Mr. Lagerbloom if the BAB should weigh in regarding the water plant proposals and whether it should be funded by the City or a private entity. Mr. Lagerbloom stated Ernst & Young would compare the four financial reviews the City would use to rank the proposals. He said this would not be a privatization of the City's water utility; the City would own it but it would be built and operated for a time by someone else. If the Commission moved forward on ranking the proposals, then the BAB could be involved in the process. Mr. Lagerbloom agreed to provide an overview of why the City would consider a public/private partnership for the water treatment plant.

VII. Communications to/from the City Commission

Motion made by Mr. Lowe, seconded by Mr. Marshall that the BAB would like the following:

- 1) To have feedback from the Commission regarding the 2023 non-profit award process;
- 2) To refine the 2022 non-profit vetting process to narrow the criteria, to eliminate the number of applications;
- 3) To continue public vetting of the non-profits;
- 4) To have the Commission to identify organizations they feel do not need to be vetted or that they want to continue to award or give contracts to;
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In a roll call vote, **motion** passed 5-0.

VIII. Board Member Comments

Mr. Lowe found the vacancy reports very interesting. He asked the City's policy for how long a position would remain vacant before it was removed. Ms. Reece explained that sometimes they used the savings from a position to fund contract labor.

Mr. Williams discussed neighborhood CIPs, whereby the City provided neighborhoods with matching dollars for projects such as identifying signage. He said the program had not happened for the past few years, but his neighborhood had kept collecting funds

anticipating matching funds from the City. Ms. Reece recalled the City used to have engineering staff to support those projects but now those services were billed per hour.

Mr. Marshall wished to discuss remediating bridges and seawalls. He wanted to consider ways to optimize revenue. Chair Donaldson wanted to focus on items that would go into the General Fund because this affected ad valorem rates.

Mr. Cammarata was happy Fire Rescue would soon be fully staffed. He thought a significant number of Police Officers were considering retirement and wanted to attract seasoned talent to the City. He also wanted to concentrate on Code Enforcement, property values and vacation rentals.

Chair Donaldson said when they considered adding staff, they needed to consider where they could cut to fund those new positions.

Mr. Williams wanted to go through scenarios with Stantec. Ms. Reece said Stantec would provide an update on the General Fund model in November. Chair Donaldson said when the new contracts were ratified, the new information should be provided to Stantec so they could give the Board an update on the General Fund. He suggested some departments provide updates prior to May.

Chair Donaldson reported the new Police Chief Larry Scirotto was looking at all positions and ratios and Chair Donaldson would like the Board to hear from him with a status update in January or February. He wanted to know if Chief Scirotto felt the amount of money they had spent on technology was worth it.

Chair Donaldson wanted to take a close look at General Fund items: specifically staffing and the CIPs.

Ms. Reece said the problem with constantly updating models was that it repeated the budget process. The City wanted to keep their current strategy in place instead of keeping a running list. Chair Donaldson wanted to keep track of costs and how much they would need to increase the ad valorem to maintain the status quo. Ms. Reece said they could have Stantec update the model with ongoing projected processes so they would know what the deficit would be. They could also move up the departmental meetings to March when they shared their business plans [prior to the BAB meeting with the City Commission]. Chair Donaldson wanted to have a preliminary conversation with the City Commission. Mr. Lowe thought they could get a budget versus actual report in April. Chair Donaldson suggested meeting with the City Commission after the BAB's April meeting.

IX. Adjourn

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Minutes prepared by J. Opperee ProtoType Inc.