

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2006 at 4:00 P.M.
City of Fort Lauderdale
100 North Andrews Avenue
8th Floor Conference Room

	<u>Current Meeting</u>	<u>2006 Cumulative Attendance</u>	
		<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Board Members</u>			
Robert Boyd	A	1	1
Mark Budwig, Vice Chair	P	2	0
Will Burrington, Chair	P	2	0
Pat DuMont	A	1	1
Kristina Hebert	P	2	0
Cort Neimark	P	2	0
Adam Sanders	P	2	0
Tim Schiavone	A	0	2
Gerri Washington	P	2	0
Gwen Watson	P	2	0
Lisa Zelch	A	0	2

Staff

Ron Hicks, Director of Economic Development
Patricia Smith, Secretary III
Jamie Opperlee, Recording Secretary

Guests

Bob Swindell, The Broward Alliance
Elizabeth Wentworth, The Broward Alliance
Frank Herhold, Marine Industries Association of South Florida

I. Call to Order

Chair Burrington called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Board members, City staff and guests introduced themselves in turn.

II. Approval of January 2006 Minutes

[This item was taken out of order due to lack of a quorum]

Motion made by Ms. Watson and seconded by Mr. Budwig to approve the January 2006 minutes. Board unanimously approved.

III. Director's Update

Ronald Hicks, Director, Economic Development

Mr. Hicks announced that Deborah Wilkinson, Broward County Development Manager, would attend their next meeting.

Mr. Hicks distributed a rendering of proposed streetscaping plans for Las Olas just west of A1A that would be completed in 2007; streetscaping the Las Olas/beach intersection would be the next phase. He informed the Board that Earl Prizlee would attend their next meeting to discuss the streetscape. Chair Burrington asked Mr. Hicks to provide the Board with information on the downtown and Sistrunk corridor streetscape projects at a future meeting as well.

Mr. Hicks informed the Board that a consultant was preparing a feasibility study for the Aquatic Center, in which the City wanted to incorporate retail and mixed use space. They hoped to make the complex self-sustaining and more attractive to the industry.

Mr. Hicks stated that Blackstone had taken over the lease on the Bahia Mar property and had plans to redevelop.

Ms. Hebert distributed an information sheet with statistics regarding the Marine industry's economic impact on Broward County for 2005.

IV. Broward Alliance Presentation

Broward Alliance Representatives

Ms. Elizabeth Wentworth, The Broward Alliance, noted that Fort Lauderdale was now a local contact Film Commission and the permitting process was now much swifter and more organized.

Ms. Wentworth explained that creative industries development had been added to her responsibilities after the Vision Broward Study had revealed that creative industries development was an important endeavor, along with workforce development, education, transportation, housing and redevelopment. She noted that, "economically successful and vibrant communities of the future are the ones that embrace creativity and innovative leadership." Ms. Wentworth felt that Fort Lauderdale had become a "world class city" because many of the strategies of the creative industries movement had been put in place in Fort Lauderdale. She cited the investment in artist living/work space, involvement of artists and creative thinkers in civic decision-making by placing them on boards and commissions, and creating a sense of place as examples of the strategies the City had already undertaken.

Mr. Swindell, The Broward Alliance, explained that they must concentrate on developing jobs to keep people in South Florida; the state was currently an exporter of college graduates.

Mr. Swindell explained that the Broward Alliance was a public/private partnership and the official economic development organization for Broward County. \$1.2 million of their funding was derived from occupational license fees; the other half came from the private sector. They worked to develop incentives to get companies to relocate to or remain in Broward County.

Mr. Swindell informed the Board that their methods for expanding the County's tax base included encouraging capital expenditure and expanding the workforce. They often visited businesses to help them address their barriers to growth.

Mr. Swindell distributed copies of the Broward Alliance's Annual Report from 2004 – 2005 and described the expansion/relocation projects on which they had worked and their other activities during last year. Mr. Swindell noted that Marie industries, film and television, publishing, high tech, bioscience and aerospace were some of their top target businesses because these were

high skill, high wage jobs. Mr. Swindell described their targets for the next year: undertake 14 projects; add 1,500 and retain 500 jobs; bring in \$77 million in new capital investment.

Mr. Hicks described how the Alliance had acted to coordinate retention and expansion efforts for businesses in the City and noted their encouragement of the film industry. Ms. Wentworth announced that the film "Hoot" had "spent \$10 million" in South Florida. She promised to report back to the Board on the specific vendors in Fort Lauderdale that had benefited.

Ms. Wentworth announced that an upcoming "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" would soon be filmed in Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Hicks explained the selection process and Ms. Wentworth noted that this was a win-win situation because, "the City of Fort Lauderdale will be promoted on air, and that's a good thing."

Ms. Watson asked Mr. Swindell and Ms. Wentworth how the EDAB could help the Broward Alliance. Mr. Swindell said when the Alliance was working on a project, he thought the City Commission would like to know that the EDAB had voted and endorsed it. Mr. Swindell explained that in Florida, incentives were performance-based. He described the incentive structure and noted that the State required local investment in order to contribute.

Chair Burrington asked what the biggest objections were when a company was considering Broward County or Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Swindell stated that the major concerns were workforce, schools and housing. Chair Burrington said he assumed the alliance had some "very strong responses" to these concerns, and asked how they addressed them. Mr. Swindell said businesses were very happy with their workforce and schools responses, but housing was "a huge piece of the puzzle that I don't have the answers for."

Ms. Wentworth asked if there would be an opportunity for the Economic Development staff and/or Board members to travel with the Alliance on their "missions" Mr. Swindell agreed that they could and explained that they traveled both nationally and internationally each year.

Chair Burrington said he had read in the South Florida Business Journal that South Florida was ranked number one in the country for small business; He felt that many creative industry-type companies were these small businesses. Ms. Wentworth explained that these creative industries included banking, education, advertising, sciences and medical. Chair Burrington noted the potential for these creative industries in South Florida and said he hoped this was something they could "build upon over time." Ms. Wentworth stressed the importance of the marine industry as well.

Mr. Frank Herhold, Marine Industries Association of Florida, remarked that of their 800 members, 75% were small businesses. He noted that boat registrations had been flat over the last 10-12 years, while the population in the state had increased 18% and boat registrations in other areas had increased. He attributed this decline to the reduced availability of dockage. He felt the Alliance must concentrate on retention of this industry. Ms. Hebert agreed and said they must be prepared to pay people to be able to afford housing and remain here.

Mr. Watson asked Mr. Swindell what his answer was to the affordable housing question. Mr. Hicks informed her that the City had completed an affordable housing study for the Commission to review; he hoped there would "be some answers there." He noted the number of organizations who had undertaken studies of this issue. Mr. Swindell stated that the Broward

Housing Partnership had been created by combining the expertise of many organizations and had commissioned a study by FIU. The results of the study would be available on the organization's website and Mr. Swindell invited the Board to download the study themselves. The website address is www.BrowardHousingPartnership.org.

V. 2005 EDAB Retreat: Review Summary & Establish 2006 EDAB Objectives

EDAB Members

Chair Burrington referred to the outline from the EDAB's October workshop and said he wanted the Board to discuss this at their next meeting and determine what points they could set for 2006 priorities. Ms. Watson felt that some adjustments would need to be made in light of their experiences after hurricane Wilma, specifically the addition of business recovery.

VI. Other Business

EDAB Members

The next meeting of the EDAB is scheduled for March 8 at 4:00 p.m.

Thereupon the meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.