

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2006 at 4:00 P.M.
City of Fort Lauderdale
100 North Andrews Avenue
8th Floor Conference Room

<u>Board Members</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	2006 Cumulative	
		<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>
Robert Boyd	P	4	2
Mark Budwig, Vice Chair	P	6	0
Will Burrington, Chair	P	4	2
Pat DuMont	P	3	3
Kristina Hebert	A	4	2
Cort Neimark	P	4	2
Adam Sanders	P	4	2
Tim Schiavone	P	4	2
Gerri Washington	P	4	2
Gwen Watson	P	6	0
Lisa Zelch	P	3	3

Staff

Ron Hicks, Director of Economic Development
Patricia Smith, Secretary III
Lavya Vassor, Recording Secretary

Guests

Michael Madfis, Architect
Frank Herhold, Marine Industries Association

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Burrington called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Board members, City staff and guests introduced themselves in turn.

II. Approval of May 2006 Minutes

Motion made by Ms. DuMont, seconded by Ms. Zelch, to approve the minutes of the May 2006 meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

III. Director's Report

Ron Hicks

Mr. Hicks reminded the Board of their discussion regarding the Rapid Response Team. Ms. Smith listed the Board members who had volunteered: Mr. Boyd; Mr. Schiavone; Chair Burrington; Mr. Budwig and Mr. Neimark; Ms. Washington stated she had volunteered as well. Mr. Hicks stated Rapid Response Team actions could include attending City Commission

meetings to support particular projects and staffing the Business Recovery Center during a hurricane.

Mr. Hicks reported that John Adams, the head of Enterprise Florida, would receive a VIP reception on June 29; Mr. Hicks was unsure of the location yet. Wayne Huizenga had agreed to allow them to use one of his helicopters to show Mr. Adams the City by air. After the helicopter tour, the Broward Alliance would host a luncheon reception for Mr. Adams at the Tower Club.

IV. EDAB Member Pre-Community Survey

EDAB Members

Mr. Budwig distributed copies of the survey Board members had completed concerning their reasons for living and/or working in Fort Lauderdale and what they felt the biggest problems were related to living and/or working in Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Budwig suggested they decide what the top two or three items were in each category and the Board could then decide if there were ways they could help promote the positive items and help address the problem items.

Chair Burrington asked Mr. Hicks for his input. Mr. Hicks said the City was addressing the permitting/development problem. They had instituted the Expedited Plan Review Program, whereby an additional fee was paid, and the initial plan review was guaranteed to be returned within 5 to 10 days. To address inspection delays, the City had contracted with two companies to provide an inspector who could be available the same day he or she was called. The City currently had an RFP out for General Plan Review. Mr. Hicks said the City was looking for a traffic engineer to help resolve their traffic issues.

Chair Burrington said he had heard questions from the community about why they should be paying more for services for which they were already paying [plan review]. Mr. Hicks said the price for the Expedited Plan Review was "very reasonable" and "incredibly affordable." The other two actions the City was taking were intended to address a longer-term solution to the problems.

The Board discussed the traffic light synchronization problem. Chair Burrington suggested they try to identify the person at the County who was responsible and invite him or her to attend their next meeting to educate them.

Mr. Boyd explained that Miami had a Neighborhood Enhancement Team [NET] Office in local communities to answer questions, issue permits and address specific community concerns.

Ms. DuMont remarked that the International Airport and Ports were another positive point about living and working in Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Budwig felt that the fact that the City was central to the rest of south Florida was a very important point, as was the opportunity for small business.

Chair Burrington felt that Fort Lauderdale offered a life/work balance. He felt the atmosphere was tolerant, progressive, and international. He felt that the cost of housing was the biggest negative. Mr. Hicks advised Board members to attend a City Commission meeting to voice their opinion, noting there was a difference of opinion on this issue. Ms. Watson asked what the difference was. Chair Burrington stated there were some who felt the market should dictate housing prices, and there were other schools of thought he felt were more informed, that were concerned with sustaining an economy in the City.

Mr. Boyd said hurricanes were a huge concern. Chair Burrington encouraged Board members to see the film, "An Inconvenient Truth" which specifically addressed the effects of global climate

change on south Florida. Mr. Boyd said he was out of power a total of two months last hurricane season and he felt that it was the recovery that everyone was fed up with. Mr. Budwig felt everyone was better prepared now. Chair Burrington felt the City was "as well equipped to respond as any City in the country because they had taken lessons from last year. Mr. Hicks said he hoped to set up a post-hurricane assessment program to report what businesses were open after a hurricane.

Ms. Dumont asked Mr. Hicks if he had been able to determine how many businesses had gone out of business after the hurricane last year; Mr. Hicks said he had not and there was no real way to calculate that. Many businesses failed many months after the hurricane.

Regarding beautification, Mr. Budwig felt the Board could do research on other cities, and put together ideas. Mr. Hicks stated that many people were waiting to see how the Beach Business Improvement worked.

Mr. Schiavone asked if consideration was being given to allowing buildings damaged by hurricanes to rebuild as they had been before the hurricane and not require them to rebuild to newer code standards. Mr. Hicks said the Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board had approved a resolution to pass this to the City Commission. They were also considering a Beach Master Plan.

Mr. Schiavone said he had worked for years to get a sidewalk in front of his business. He felt the Board could educate the "powers that be" on the importance of aesthetics, not just the importance of encouraging businesses to move here. Chair Burrington wondered if it would be appropriate to ask a Commissioner to attend a meeting; Ms. DuMont said that when they did the Strategic Planning Session, the Mayor had spent significant time with the Board. She felt it was appropriate to ask Commissioners to attend.

Mr. Hicks said even though the City had a \$25 million surplus, they had \$66 million in hurricane damage and there were personnel and other shortages in many departments. Chair Burrington suggested inviting one Commissioner per month to educate them about the business community's perceptions. Mr. Hicks suggested a "one-on-one" between Chair Burrington and individual commissioners to see if they had any objections to attending an EDAB meeting.

Chair Burrington felt the City could do a much better job to "package" Fort Lauderdale to prospective and current businesses and residents. Ms. DuMont felt they needed to know the commissioners' vision for the City before they invited commissioners to attend and they should begin with the Mayor and Vice Mayor.

V. Other Business

- **Women & Minority Owned Business Program**

Ms. Watson felt the definition of minority shifted between age, race, and sex, but it was more about economic minorities. She wondered where incentives were to retain those businesses already operating. Ms. Watson suggested Mr. Hicks give them information of New York's program that seemed to work there and Mr. Hicks agreed.

- **Monthly Calendar of Events**

Mr. Hicks asked if any Board members wished to represent the Economic Development Department at meetings they currently attended. He suggested individual Board members supply him with their meeting calendars.

- **Outreach Program to Small Business**

Mr. Hicks said he had been trying to get together with the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce to discuss an outreach program for smaller businesses. He asked if any EDAB members could help facilitate this meeting.

- **Other Business**

Chair Burrington announced that because he had missed two EDAB meetings, Mr. Hicks had alerted him regarding the Board attendance policy. Ms. Dumont had missed three consecutive meetings and the Board must move to reappoint her.

Motion made by Mr. Budwig, seconded by Ms. Watson, to reinstate Ms. DuMont to the Board. Board unanimously approved.

The Board's next scheduled meeting date: July 12, 2006 at 4:00 p.m.

Thereupon the meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Handouts:
Results of Board members' survey