

**Approved**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD (EDAB)**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE**  
**8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2009 – 3:00-5:00 P.M.**

**1/09 – 12/09**

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Ralph Riehl, Chair	P	4	0
Dev Motwani, Vice Chair (3:20)	P	3	1
Gwen Watson	A	3	1
Mark Budwig	P	3	1
Patricia DuMont	P	4	0
Kristina Hebert	A	1	3
Adam Sanders	A	2	2
Mark Krom	P	4	0
Roslind Osgood	A	2	2
Sean de Vosjoli	P	4	0
Susanne T. McCoy	P	3	0

As of this date, there were 11 appointed members to the Board, which means 6 would constitute a quorum.

**Staff**

Stephen Scott, Economic Development Director  
Karen Reese, Economic Development Representative  
Patricia Smith, Economic Development Secretary III  
Hilda Testa, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**I. Call to Order & Introductions**

Chair Riehl called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. and the Board members introduced themselves. Mr. Scott recognized guest speaker Mason Jackson, President and CEO of WorkForce One, and noted that other guests are expected as well.

He continued that Item IV, "Business Retention and Expansion," had been added to the Agenda, as this is relevant to the Board's mission. It will also be discussed with the City Commission at their next meeting.

**II. Approval of March 11, 2009 Minutes**

It was noted that on p.15, "State Representative" should be changed to "Congressman Ron Klein."

**Motion** made by Ms. DuMont, seconded by Mr. Budwig, to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2009 meeting as amended. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

### III. WorkForce One

Mr. Scott recognized Frank Herhold, Executive Director of the Marine Industries Association; Joan Goodrich, representing the Broward Alliance; and Dan Lindblade, President of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, also guests at today's meeting. He then introduced Mr. Jackson of WorkForce One, who gave a presentation to the Board.

Mr. Jackson advised that the City's unemployment rate, which is 8.3%, is less than the State and National unemployment rate; however, 18 months ago, it was 2.8%, which, he pointed out, is more than an entire point below full employment. While an unemployment rate as high as 8.3% has occurred in the City's past, it is remarkable due to how quickly it developed. There are over 82,000 unemployed residents in Broward County, and 35,000 jobs have been lost in the past year alone.

Nearly every industry except health care, private sector education, and government has been affected, with the greatest losses occurring in construction and its related fields, including transportation, financing, and manufacturing.

WorkForce One operates three reemployment centers in Broward County, Mr. Jackson stated, and they have seen a 77% increase in the number of people coming into these centers. He noted that over a year ago, WorkForce One recognized that a recession was imminent, and began a strategic plan in March 2008, after managers at the reemployment centers had identified an increase in traffic at these locations.

The strategic plan initially had 10 points, including hastening renovations at the centers, ensuring that equipment was in good repair, and printing out materials. This meant they were "as prepared as we could be" when the recession began. Mr. Jackson added that they also encouraged the State to put up the website "Employ Florida Marketplace," or [www.employflorida.com](http://www.employflorida.com), which is a free job-posting site that allows employers to post and individuals to search for jobs. This site scans all other existing job boards, and picks up every business that uses the internet to list a job opening. It also allows both businesses and job seekers to set up electronic alerts for when a resume or a job that fits their search criteria is available.

He added that Florida is superior to most states in terms of coordination and delivery of services, as well as allowing individuals to sign up for unemployment compensation online or via phone or fax.

In February 2009 the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA), known as the "stimulus bill," took effect, which will put significant funding behind infrastructure improvements, unemployment compensation, training, and immediate relief such as

food stamps or welfare benefits. Mr. Jackson stated that WorkForce One will receive roughly \$11 million in stimulus funds toward training, as opposed to approximately \$5 million over the past year. \$2.4 million is set aside for a federally supported summer youth program, which has not existed for over a decade; the summer program that has existed in Broward County has been funded by the Children's Services Council and the City of Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Jackson advised that City Manager George Gretsas had approached WorkForce One with this idea, which creates job opportunities.

The federally funded summer program will differ from the City/CSC-funded program, which has focused on 16- to 18-year-old youth. The new program allows young people from the ages of 19-24 to participate, which means the projects will be slightly different. In addition, WorkForce One will be able to place job seekers in the private sector for the first time. While the young people placed by the program will not replace laid-off workers, it allows private businesses the opportunity to offer internships and introduce young people to their industries. WorkForce One covers the cost of these wages, as well as the cost of any workers' compensation.

He added that program applications are available on WorkForce One's website, [www.wf1broward.com](http://www.wf1broward.com), along with information on training grants. They are also funding employed-worker training with 50% matching funds. A summary page of the ARRA's workforce development provisions is available on the website, with a link to [www.recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov) and [www.flarecovery.com](http://www.flarecovery.com), the Federal and State recovery program sites.

The website also includes tabs for municipalities, job seekers, employers, training providers, and nonprofit or non-governmental organizations, with advice on how each of these may take advantage of the stimulus bill.

Mr. Krom asked how many local jobs might be created as a result of the ARRA stimulus package. Mr. Jackson replied that this could mean 4 million jobs over the next three to four years, according to a report entitled "Jobs Impact of the Stimulus Bill" by the Vice President's chief economist. The states have attempted to break these down into state-level numbers, and Florida's estimate is 206,000 jobs statewide. For Broward County, which contains roughly 9.3% of the State's population, this is estimated at 18,000-20,000 jobs.

Mr. Jackson pointed out that the stimulus package is hoped to "kick-start" the economy sufficiently to create even more jobs than these.

Vice Chair Motwani asked if local projects figured into these estimates, noting that if there were no ARRA projects located in Broward County, the number of jobs created would be significantly affected. Mr. Jackson agreed, pointing out that the original report includes several caveats regarding the speed of action by state legislatures, the rate at which projects may come through various Congressional departments, the effect of human behavior, and other assumptions. All these make it difficult to accurately break

down the report to a State or County level. He cautioned that it would not be wise to place a great deal of confidence in these numbers.

Ms. McCoy asked what the Board could do to assist WorkForce One. Mr. Jackson responded that anything that might “jump-start” economic development in the City, such as speeding up the permitting process, could help entrepreneurs, as well as contractors bidding on infrastructure jobs. Individual Board members were also encouraged to list their jobs at Employ Florida Marketplace.

In addition, he noted that cities could list their jobs at this site as well when contractors have successfully negotiated the bidding process. He suggested that this could even be a requirement of the contract, particularly as it is a free site. The County has already gone “one step further” by seeking first-source hiring agreements, which mean the contractors must show they have checked the site to learn if an unemployed person might meet their hiring criteria before they may hire.

He continued that Board members could also look into the summer youth program for their businesses, pointing out that over 1000-1500 job sites will be needed to appropriately match young people to summer employment.

Mr. Herhold commented that the Marine Industries Association has had a “long and productive” relationship with WorkForce One, and has benefited from at least two grants gained through this association. He felt the organization deserved more community recognition.

Ms. DuMont asked if Mr. Jackson could speak to the impact of the recession on the defense industry, and the light manufacturing industry in particular. Mr. Jackson responded that he had not studied the effect on the defense industry, which is based primarily in Central Florida; however, he had looked into the possibility of creating “green-collar jobs” in the renewable energy industry. \$50 billion is available in the stimulus bill for energy initiatives, and \$500 million is available for training in green-collar jobs. These involve not only alternative energy, but resource management.

He noted that Broward College has recently created an Institute of Renewable Resources, and has held two training programs thus far. WorkForce One is also in discussions with Bradford Marine about how they might be able to take advantage of some federal funds in this industry. Mr. Jackson summed up that this part of the stimulus bill provides “real opportunities” for growth, and provides a great deal of room for entrepreneurship.

Mr. Herhold stated that Mayor Seiler spoke recently about his support of renewable energy, and there is currently an offshore project that uses the Gulfstream to power water turbines to generate electricity in a similar manner to wind turbines. Mr. Jackson added that this is expected to create 3000-4000 jobs, as the turbines will hopefully be produced, maintained, and repaired locally.

Chair Riehl thanked Mr. Jackson for his presentation.

#### **IV. Business Retention and Expansion**

Mr. Scott introduced guest speakers Dan Lindblade and Joan Goodrich once again, and noted that they had originally brought this initiative to his attention. He felt this was the perfect time for such a project, as there is a new City Commission and new Mayor, all of whom are willing to embrace new ideas.

He described this as a “manageable” project that plans to reach out to local businesses and find out how the City is doing economically, and possibly create a program of site visits to the City’s larger employers. The City of Fort Lauderdale, Broward Alliance, and Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce would work in conjunction with one another to speak to the business community. He felt a great deal could be accomplished simply by asking how local businesses were performing and what these three entities might do to make things better for them.

The program plans to bring together a group of individuals to make site visits to the City’s top 50 employers and arrive at a survey that will generate information that is “useful and statistically relevant.” Mr. Scott allowed that due to the current state of the economy, there will be some negative responses, and the survey should be designed in a way that will identify how the three participating organizations can better serve the business community.

He advised the Board that this project has not yet come before the City Commission, although it has been mentioned to individual City Commission members. He anticipates “strong support” for the project. It will appear on the Conference Agenda at the April 21, 2009 daytime meeting, and invited any interested Board members to attend.

He turned the floor over to Mr. Lindblade and Ms. Goodrich at this time.

Mr. Lindblade agreed with Mr. Scott that this is a good time to launch a project of this nature. He pointed out that Fort Lauderdale has a reputation for being less “business-friendly” than it could be, and this, among other goals, will hopefully be addressed through the partnership.

Along with its components regarding business permitting, sign permitting, and retention/expansion, the project hopes to address business recruitment as well, with particular attention to headquarters recruitment.

Mr. Lindblade advised that he has spoken only to Mr. Scott and Mayor Seiler at this point, as he does not like to “go around” Staff or individual committees. He is a believer in consensus management at the committee level, which is one reason he felt it was important to address the Board about this project before proceeding further: for

example, if the Board saw no value in the endeavor, he felt they should know right away and make any appropriate changes.

Ms. Goodrich described the project from a Broward Alliance perspective, stating that they hope to bring years of experience in putting together both surveys and corporate visitation programs, some of which have received national recognition. She felt the Chamber of Commerce is a "perfect partner," as they provide excellent volunteer business leadership, and can provide connections with the top 50 employers.

She continued that this is consistent with other Alliance endeavors, such as "Accelerate Broward," which was presented at the March 2009 Board meeting. They are ready to offer whatever support they can in this new initiative.

Mr. Lindblade identified Ms. Goodrich as the Chamber's volunteer in economic development, and oversees a cluster group that relates to small business, education, minority business development, and workforce development. This is part of the Chamber's new Economic Development Division.

Ms. DuMont informed the Board that in his 18 months as President, Mr. Lindblade has brought a "new vision" of how the Chamber fits into the community, and is attempting to move it into a larger role within the business community. She recalled that at the previous month's meeting, there had been discussion of an RFP for Planning and Zoning "best practices." Ms. DuMont felt that before an RFP goes out, the City should consider what the Alliance and the Chamber can do to improve these processes in the community.

Mr. Scott clarified that since the previous month's mention of the RFP, based on the City's current financial circumstances and the likelihood of reduced revenue this year, a new standard is being applied to expenses, which considers their relative overall importance as well as the consequences of what could occur if these investments are not made. With this in mind, the RFP is no longer planned. However, Mr. Scott explained that he has met with the Planning and Zoning Department, and Mr. Lindblade has met with stakeholders in the planning and zoning process, and some "simple changes" to the process have been identified.

For example, changes in use can be made that can bypass or expedite the DRC process in some cases. Mr. Scott continued that a meeting of the Department and the stakeholders has already taken place, and both parties arrived at a creative and relatively uncomplicated solution to expedite some processes. He noted that City Staff will take a "critical look" at similar processes, and by partnering with the Chamber and the Alliance, who are more familiar with the business community's needs and concerns, they may arrive at a positive result.

Mr. Herhold asked how Mr. Scott felt the proposed project will fare when it comes before the City Commission, as it is not without cost. Mr. Scott replied that he sensed

some support from both the Mayor and the City Commission. While all details have not been ironed out, the financial responsibilities for the project will be shared, as the three participants are “partners in every respect.” Mr. Scott added that he did not feel the project would be supported if the City had to shoulder the entire financial burden; however, the Office of Economic Development can contribute some funds, partly because the previously mentioned RFP, among others, is not being pursued.

Vice Chair Motwani asked for clarification of the project’s goal, which he understood to be data collection regarding the present status of the business community. Mr. Lindblade confirmed this as one component of the project, along with the outreach to the City’s top 50 employers. He continued that once this information is obtained, it is channeled to specific interested parties or stakeholders, such as the university system, WorkForce One, Planning and Zoning, and others, so modifications can be made to “elevate the overview” of the City.

Chair Riehl added that the outreach to the top 50 employers will be done with the intention of making them continue to feel welcome and to expand if possible. He noted that the involvement of Planning and Zoning, as well as Building and other related Departments, is intended to make the City a friendlier environment in which to do and expand business. He felt that the partnership of the three participating entities is a “great program,” and suggested that recruitment could be an important component as well.

Ms. Goodrich explained that the collection of data is important, as it allows the City to “benchmark” some of the perceptions and feelings among the business community; in addition, however, the project also anticipates that businesses will ask for assistance and share their long-term strategies for growth and expansion. It is hoped that this will actually generate new projects for the City to work on, and to address, proactively, any businesses that intend to leave the City.

Mr. de Vosjoli asked how the budget breaks down, such as the amount of funds that go toward visits or data collection. Mr. Lindblade responded that some of the expenses go toward staffing, some toward instrument design and implementation, and some toward training, in addition to the site visits. Ms. Goodrich agreed, describing the funds as “all-encompassing.”

Mr. de Vosjoli asked if strictly creating jobs is intended, or if “recycling” jobs will be done as well. Mr. Lindblade replied that, as the Chamber will manage the project if it is approved, he does not have sufficient staff to accomplish this, and will need to hire at least a part-time employee to help “deliver” the program.

Mr. Scott allowed that not all details have been worked out yet, and while the partners have discussed and recognized that outside help may be necessary, they have not yet identified how much every aspect of the program will cost.

Mr. Krom pointed out that in the collection of data, some difficult questions would need to be asked, such as cash flow and risks experienced by the companies.

Chair Riehl re-emphasized that some funds should be set aside for the recruitment aspect of the project. While it is important to visit the companies and communicate concern, he felt the project should also follow up with the recruitment aspect, such as pointing out prospective facilities or finding out how widely the company split its work force across the region or the nation.

Ms. Goodrich affirmed that this will be part of all the conversations discussing a company's future.

Chair Riehl continued, noting that the City Commission has stated particular attention will be paid to the City's economic development, and funds for this purpose will not be significantly cut. He felt a greater amount of the project's funds might be diverted to this purpose.

Ms. Goodrich pointed out that this refers to Phase II of the program. Chair Riehl suggested that these considerations be made part of Phase I instead.

Mr. Lindblade asserted that this is one reason the project is before the Board, as they specifically advise the City Commission on these aspects and the three involved entities felt their advice was valuable.

Ms. DuMont noted that the simplest and most economical approach to a project is often its initial phase; she asked if a motion of support by the Board should include specific verbiage regarding the addition of a recruitment aspect to Phase I, or if Ms. Goodrich felt the motion should simply encourage that the next steps be taken "as expeditiously as possible" once Phase I is completed.

Mr. Lindblade felt when the presentation is made before the City Commission, they should be made aware that it is only the first part of the program, and the partners will appear before them again prior to the next phase, which will include the recruitment portion of the plan.

**Motion** made by Ms. DuMont, seconded by Ms. McCoy, for a Resolution in support of the City of Fort Lauderdale/Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce project, including the following three points:

1. The Board supports the business retention/expansion project brought before them, and urge that it be implemented as quickly as possible;
2. The Board recognizes that this is a beginning step, and additional phases will be necessary to accomplish the retention, expansion, and recruitment goals in the community;
3. The Board applauds the public/private partnership with local business organizations, which is key to accomplishing the project's goals.



Mr. Scott advised that he plans to speak for the project before the City Commission, and will make it clear that the program will be before that body again with additional initiatives. He assured the Board that recruitment will figure prominently as a future aspect of the plan as well.

In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Mr. de Vosjoli asked if the Department of Economic Development, as well as the Alliance and the Chamber, would mention the Board as having endorsed the program in the future. Ms. Goodrich agreed with this idea.

Ms. McCoy offered to participate in the program as a volunteer.

Ms. DuMont asked if Mr. Scott would make the City Commission aware that the Board had voted in support of the project. Mr. Scott stated that he would include their endorsement in the agenda item itself.

Mr. de Vosjoli asked if a successful partnership on this venture could lead to an expansion of the Economic Development Department. Mr. Scott felt while this would be an excellent outcome, he did not believe current economic conditions were conducive to the expansion of any City Department in the near future.

Mr. Scott thanked Ms. Goodrich and Mr. Lindblade for their attendance and presentation.

## **V. Chair Report**

Chair Riehl thanked Mr. Scott for working with him and with other Board members, and for bringing the business retention and expansion program to his attention.

Mr. Scott informed the Board, at Chair Riehl's request, that the Riverwalk Public Realm Plan had been approved by the City Commission. Chair Riehl added that he would send an email expressing the Board's appreciation to the City Commission for passing the plan.

## **VI. Director's Report**

Mr. Scott advised that a handout he had distributed to the Board was a copy of the Economic Incentive Ordinance. He noted that this ordinance would appear on the Board's next Agenda for discussion, in conjunction with a discussion of a proposed revision to the ordinance, which would reduce the minimum job creation numbers. The advance copy, which is the most current version of the ordinance, would provide the Board with background information on this issue prior to next month's meeting.

Mr. Scott moved on to a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the Economic Development Department.

The Economic Development team consists of Mr. Scott, Ms. Reese, and Ms. Smith, he stated, all of whom were present at the meeting. The Real Estate Division is part of this team, and oversees the more than 800 parcels of land owned by the City. In addition to these parcels, the City also leases more than 100 properties to businesses. The Real Estate Division buys, sells, and leases City property, Mr. Scott explained.

Another department is Beach CRA, he continued, whose projects all relate in some way to economic development. They are currently working on improvements to the wall on the South Beach parking lot, new light fixtures on the beach, and other conditions that could be defined as "slumlike." Don Morris is the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Director, and his department works with bids as well as other responsibilities.

The CRA's mission is to implement the Beach Community Redevelopment Plan, and may only work with projects in compliance with this plan, which aims to eliminate "slum and blight" conditions and promote tourism. This includes the Central Beach Master Plan and the streetscape improvements that have taken place on Las Olas Boulevard.

The Beach Business Improvement District is an area that elected to tax themselves in order to improve services on the beach, which ensures that the beach area will be kept very clean. An outside contractor is responsible for this. The District is also planning "special events" for the beach. Their budget, including management assessment and a prospective contract for development of the special event, is currently in process.

Mr. Scott concluded that the Economic Development Department consists of roughly 10 to 12 individuals with a wide range of responsibilities. The most common issues that bring him before the City Commission are with regard to the City's leases, he pointed out.

In addition to the EDAB, Mr. Scott also oversees the Beach Business Improvement District Advisory Committee (BID), the Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board (BRAB), and the Property and Right of Way Committee (PROW). In addition, the City Commission has recently tasked the Economic Development Department with the responsibility of supporting cultural arts and tourism in the City as part of the Community Services Board (CSB).

The Economic Incentive Ordinance provides a direct cash job creation incentive, as part of a State program. In order to qualify for City funds, the ordinance must create 100 paying jobs. It is being considered to require the creation of these 100 jobs, Mr. Scott advised, adding that the State requires the creation of 10 jobs.

At the time this ordinance was passed, the State paid for 80% of the program and the City and County divided the remaining 20% accordingly.

Some of the Economic Development Department's partnerships are with the Broward Alliance, Broward County Economic Development, the Riverwalk Trust, the Beach Council, Las Olas Merchants Association, Northwest CRA, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau, among others. Mr. Scott emphasized that Fort Lauderdale will host the Super Bowl, the Pro Bowl, and the Orange Bowl within a few weeks in 2010.

The Economic Development Director acts as a liaison to the business community and lets them know there is someone on City Staff to whom they may reach out if they have an issue. They are also working on a weekly basis with business owners in the Himmarshee district to determine if creation of a Business Improvement District would address some of their issues, such as cleanliness and enforcement issues.

He added that it is important to determine what the best businesses in the City are at any given time, and whether or not there is an overabundance of any particular business, or if the City should attempt to attract more of a specific type of business. This involves studying all areas of the City.

He continued that the Department's focus is on presenting a business-friendly environment, and using best practices to recruit and retain businesses in the City.

Ms. McCoy asked what is involved in the formation of a Business Improvement District (BID). Mr. Scott explained that all businesses in an area vote on the issue of taxing themselves, with an 85% approval necessary to pass. He described it as a "very complicated process," and pointed out that the difficulty in establishing a Himmarshee BID comes in setting up rules for enforcement, which is less of an issue for the Beach BID.

Vice Chair Motwani advised that he had met with NFL representatives regarding the 2010 Super Bowl, and thus far they are "extremely happy" with how their partnership with the City is developing. He felt this would lead to more requests for the City to host major events in the future. Mr. Scott pointed out that his Department is not involved in actual bids, such as for the 2013 Super Bowl; their charge is primarily to help the process of attracting further events.

Vice Chair Motwani continued that banners will soon be available to hang on the City's light posts, which has been a "gray area" in the past. He suggested that the Board try to ensure this effort proceeds smoothly.

Mr. Scott encouraged the Board members to apprise him of other City groups with which his office might become involved, such as the Broward Workshop, and to send him emails about projects that might be "useful" to the Board.

He added that although there are presently nationwide economic difficulties, this climate can make some parties "more receptive" to changes in an economic development program.

## **VII. Old / New Business**

Mr. de Vosjoli recalled that Mr. Jackson had mentioned “green-collar” jobs, and referred to a recent report on biofuel development. He felt these jobs and businesses would become more and more important, in the City area and nationwide, and the Board should make an effort to stay informed about these technologies and attempt to understand them.

Mr. Herhold advised that the Government Relations Committee has invited Congressman Ron Klein to meet with a selection of representative members on Friday, April 10, 2009. Cate McCaffrey, Director of Business Enterprises, will represent the City.

He continued that the Marine Industries Association partners with the United States Superyacht Association, which will meet Thursday, April 9, 2009, at Lauderdale Marine Center. Mayor Seiler will speak at this meeting on attraction and retention of, and growth in, the superyacht industry.

Mr. Budwig requested that a discussion of the length of Board meetings be added to the May 2009 Agenda.

Ms. DuMont reminded the Board that Congressman Ron Klein had created a Jobs Advisory Group, but she had been unable to learn who serves on the group, or any information regarding its charter or its expectations. Mr. Scott agreed that he would try to find out this information.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

### **Attachment: Presentation**

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]