

Approved
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD (EDAB)
MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2009 – 3:45-5:15 P.M.

1/09 – 12/09

Board Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Ralph Riehl, Chair	P	9	0
Mark Krom, Vice Chair	P	8	1
Mark Budwig	A	7	3
Patricia DuMont	P	8	2
Sean de Vosjoli (arr. 3:51)	P	7	2
Christopher Denison	P	4	1
Miya Burt-Stewart (arr. 3:53)	P	5	0
Sheryl Dickey	A	3	2
Dev Motwani	A	3	1
Christopher Pollock	A	1	1
Adam Sanders	A	1	1

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
Diana Alarcon, Director, Parking and Fleet Services
Earl Prizlee, Engineering Design Manager
Karen Reese, Economic Development Representative
Patricia L. Smith, Secretary III

Communications to the City Commission

None at this time.

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Chair Riehl called the meeting to order at 3:48 p.m. Roll was called and it was determined a quorum was not yet present.

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

III. Greater Fort Lauderdale Sister Cities & Economic Development

Marianne Winfield, President of Greater Fort Lauderdale Sister Cities International, stated that Fort Lauderdale has 17 sister city relationships worldwide, including Venice; Gold Coast, Australia; Vacation, Haiti; and cities in Guatemala, Venezuela, and many others. Each sister city has a Chair and Co-Chair, who aid participation in cultural, humanitarian, environmental, medical, and economic opportunities. In 2011, Fort Lauderdale will celebrate its 50th anniversary with its first sister city, Medellin, Colombia.

Ms. Winfield introduced fellow board members Danny Warren, the organization's Environmental Chair; Libby Reed, Co-Chair of the Australian Committee, representing the cultural exchange program; and Marcus Koch, Economic Development Chair.

Mr. Warren stated that in the last five years, the Sister Cities program has planted over 1 million trees in Haiti and 2 million in Ghana in the name of Fort Lauderdale. He has recently worked with former President Bill Clinton, the U.N. Special Envoy for Haiti, and the Soros Group, which is offering \$32 million to businesses that invest in Haiti. Mr. Warren reported that the business environment in that country has "never been better," and felt the timing is right for Fort Lauderdale businesses to expand into Haiti.

He continued that retail, production, trade, and other businesses with a solid plan and history would qualify; "start-up" businesses would not meet these criteria.

Ms. Reed stated she was asking the Board to help her "define Fort Lauderdale" and provided the members with information on the program's cultural exchange website. The site offers opportunities to share ideas about the city's cultural identity, including its visual arts, music, literature, film, and performing arts. She felt the site will be of particular interest to prospective tourists, as many sister cities are also beach communities.

Ms. DuMont recommended that Ms. Reed contact the African-American Research Center, pointing out that they do a great deal of cultural programming in the City.

Ms. Reed noted that there are also arts programs for local teenagers featured on the site. She felt it provides an illustration of what life in the City is like.

Ms. Winfield added there is a Youth Exchange Program, which recently allowed local children to spend time in Italy and Taiwan, and a Principal Exchange Program, which selects a school principal from Broward County to represent the area in Gold Coast, Australia. A principal from Australia will come to the Fort

Lauderdale area to visit schools that specialize in math, science, technology, and the environment.

She explained that the program gathers information about the economies of its sister cities, such as how their business environment is evolving and what they are teaching their children.

Mr. Koch advised that he has worked with the U.S. Department of Commerce, as well as other different governments, on economic development in Africa, Asia, and Europe. He sees a great deal of opportunity for development in Fort Lauderdale due to the “knowledge transfer” between cities, as involvement in these locations allows the City to learn their sister cities’ needs.

The Economic Development Committee of the Sister Cities program is evolving as a conduit through which to educate the local community on how to do business with other nations overseas. They are implementing a program called International Business Briefing, which works with the consulates from the sister cities’ respective countries and teaches local businesspeople how to use the consulates, as well as the means of procurement for overseas economies. The program helps establish a conduit for Fort Lauderdale businesses to meet these international communities’ needs. It is hoped the program will be operational by next year.

Mr. Warren stated that the student exchange program was recently implemented in Taiwan; this nation is “a very active partner” and hopes to do more business with the City. King of Fans, a business based in Taiwan, has over 6000 employees worldwide and currently operates in Fort Lauderdale; its owner is the Sister Cities Chair for Taiwan.

He continued that when a city is matched with Fort Lauderdale as a Sister City, several aspects are taken into account, from economic development to education and culture.

Ms. Winfield distributed program information to the Board, explaining that individual memberships are \$50 annually. The organization is seeking greater community involvement.

Ms. DuMont asked which of the 17 sister cities Fort Lauderdale had “real relationships” with, such as ongoing communications. She also asked what kind of financial and in-kind support is received from these participating cities.

Ms. Winfield replied that the City communicates regularly with Medellin, Colombia; Venice, Italy; Haifa, Israel; and cities in Costa Rica, Argentina, Ghana, Panama, Turkey, and England. Residents of these cities have visited and are visiting Fort Lauderdale as well.

Mr. Koch added that the sister cities themselves often lack a similar structure to Fort Lauderdale's – for example, the city of Haifa did not raise funds for their student exchange, so they did not participate in the program this year. Ms. Winfield agreed, noting that the program "is a fundraising organization," and in some countries, as well as many U.S. cities, a city staff worker is assigned to the program. In Fort Lauderdale, the organization has a specific Chair for each participating country.

Mr. Koch noted that the Sister Cities program had recently facilitated the purchase of marine engines. Chair Riehl advised that representatives of 75 countries will be attending the upcoming Boat Show, and Mr. Scott is assisting the Public Information Department in preparing several "economic packages" so these delegates will have a clear idea of the economic opportunities available in Fort Lauderdale. Ms. Winfield added that one caveat to this effort is a requirement that interested parties must be interested in purchasing recreational equipment from Florida.

Chair Riehl thanked the representatives for their presentation.

II. Approval of September 9, 2009 Minutes

Motion made by Ms. DuMont, seconded by Mr. de Vosjoli, to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2009 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Chair Riehl noted that Board member Sheryl Dickey is one of the developers of the Commerce Center, for which ground was recently broken. He recognized her for her role in the economic development of that area of the City.

IV. Sign System

Diana Alarcon, Director of Parking and Fleet Services, stated she and Mr. Prizlee, along with Ella Parker of the Planning and Zoning Department, have assisted in developing a sign system program geared toward the beach area, which can eventually move into the Downtown area and other parts of the City for a more uniform look.

The conceptual design focuses on identifying vehicular and pedestrian gateways; vehicular, parking, and pedestrian directional signage, and beach regulatory signage. Ms. Alarcon showed the Board a slide presentation to share some of the concepts they have come up with so far.

She showed slides of vehicular and beach wayfinding signs, pointing out that the project is using international icons, as the City has visitors from several different countries. Along with transit signage is an informational addition that provides

bus stops, routes, and times. The City is considering alternative means of power, perhaps solar, to keep these lit at night.

Water taxi information is included throughout the City, she noted, and pedestrian information is situated at eye level. Beach regulatory signage will be a back-to-back display, which identifies regulations and identifies the safety flags used on the beach. Amenities are included as well.

Ms. Alarcon continued that some gateways have signage appropriate for photo opportunities, and showed slides of this signage, adding that the Department is still in the process of determining exactly where it will be placed. Gateway signage, she clarified, should signify "you have arrived."

She added that the Department has met with the City Commission, and is now meeting with stakeholders in the community to gather input. They will then arrive at a "final concept" and make a second presentation to the City Commission, at which time they will also present a funding plan. Until input is complete, she explained, it is difficult to arrive at an estimated cost, final placement of signs, or determine the materials recommended for use.

The rollout is broken down into three phases:

- Identify beach areas and parking for visitors (complete by Super Bowl);
- Identify rights-of-way;
- Identify pedestrian gateways.

Ms. Alarcon stated when all input is gathered, it will be brought back to the Department's consultant, and should come before the City Commission in November with preliminary estimates for the cost of each phase. This should provide sufficient time to put signage into place by the Super Bowl.

Chair Riehl commended Ms. Alarcon for the work done by Parking and Fleet Services. Mr. Scott added that this Department is responsible for the more than 1500 vehicles in the City's fleet, and informed the Board that the Department is ranked #3 in the nation among government fleets.

Motion made by Ms. DuMont, seconded by Mr. Krom, to approve and recommend the information presented on behalf of Parking and Fleet Services regarding the signage system. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

Chair Riehl thanked Ms. Alarcon for her presentation.

Regarding the Super Bowl, Mr. Scott advised that the Westin Hotel will serve as the NFL Headquarters during the Super Bowl; the Convention Center will be the media headquarters. One team will be housed at the Marriott Harbor Beach Hotel.

There will be a large event on the beach the night before the Super Bowl, featuring a concert by a “national act,” and two major events will be held at the Convention Center. Mr. Scott pointed out that several events are being held in the City near the time of the Super Bowl, which has not been the case in the past.

He added that there will be additional events in the City related to the Super Bowl, not all of which have been publicized yet.

The Pro Bowl, which has taken place in Hawaii for the past 30 years, will be in Florida for the first time, at Land Shark Stadium. Due to the proximity of the Pro Bowl and Super Bowl, Mr. Scott noted, it is hoped that the economic impact will last longer than the expected three to four days.

V. Chair Report

Chair Riehl informed the Board that four businesses are now participating in the sidewalk café expansion on the beach, which he and Mr. Scott have been supporting. They are now finishing an administrative review with the Planning and Zoning Department. He noted that there are some items included in the building Code that, if amended, could facilitate faster economic growth; for example, placing three tables in front of a restaurant requires a Level 4 review, which is the same process required for construction of a hotel. When the café expansion is complete, Chair Riehl concluded, it will create 25 new jobs.

He continued that he had assisted a company in obtaining permission to bring a wave runner tour business to the City. This business was approved by the Marine Advisory Board and subsequently by the City Commission; this approval resulted in the creation of 10 new jobs.

He concluded that Police Chief Frank Adderley had provided him with a Police Department update. There are 510 funded positions for officers, 12 of which are funded through the Justice Department; currently there are 495 sworn officers in the City. The goal is to have 512 officers.

Mr. de Vosjoli added that there is a greater police presence along the Riverwalk and the seawall, where it has been needed.

VI. Director’s Report

Mr. Scott reported that Business First held a training session for its 20 members, including Board representative Dev Motwani. He described the session as “very productive,” and noted that the actual survey is complete; site visits have not yet been scheduled, but are expected to begin within “a matter of weeks.” Representatives from the City, the Chamber of Commerce, and Business First

will attend each visit. The surveys will be conducted by telephone and will gather information regarding how economic development can be improved and the current state of business in the City.

Ms. DuMont noted that this is a short timeline, as information is expected to be complete and recorded by March 2010. Mr. Scott agreed that this is a labor-intensive project on a "condensed" schedule.

He continued that he had contributed an Agenda Item to the most recent City Commission conference meeting regarding the Super Bowl and Pro Bowl. The Super Bowl's promoters have suggested that a "paint the town" effort be made for the City, including building wraps and signs on bridges; however, according to signage Code, this is considered "offsite advertising" and is illegal. In order to avoid this designation, the month of January and the first several days of February have been declared a special event, "Super Bowl 2010," by Ordinance. This allows the City to exempt the Super Bowl from its sign Code. Mr. Scott felt it would promote excitement in the City to have decorations of this kind.

Part of the Ordinance will also affect the open container rule. From the Friday before the Pro Bowl to the Monday following the Super Bowl, individuals will be able to carry alcohol in plastic cups between Sunrise Boulevard and Holiday Drive on both sides of the street.

Mr. Scott explained that the purpose of this Ordinance is to make the City as friendly as possible to the Super Bowl, as the event contributes millions of dollars to the City's economy and it is hoped the event will return to Fort Lauderdale in the future. He added that the new City Commissioners are "very supportive" of these efforts, and the Mayor sits on the Super Bowl Host Committee.

He concluded that the first reading of the special event Ordinance will be on Tuesday, October 20, 2009. It appears to have "very strong support."

Mr. Krom asked how far in advance the NFL selects Super Bowl sites. Mr. Scott noted that the 2013 location has been chosen thus far. He pointed out that the NFL representative at a recent meeting indicated that the region is "starting to fall behind" with respect to its infrastructure, although the beach remains an attraction.

Mr. Scott stated that he will advise the Board of which buildings will be wrapped at the next meeting.

He moved on to discuss the stimulus funding, noting that while it has not been tied directly to economic development, there is a \$20 million allocation for programs called "Economic Development Revenue Bonds" and "Facilities Bonds" in Fort Lauderdale. A certain amount of these must go toward public works and

infrastructure projects; however, some of these funds can be used to “incentivize businesses.” He noted he would make this an Agenda Item for discussion at the November meeting.

Mr. Scott concluded that there will be an unveiling event for the first banner for the 50th Anniversary of the Boat Show on Friday, October 16, 2009. He encouraged the Board members to attend if possible. The banner will be unveiled across from the Museum of Discovery and Science.

Ms. Reese added that while September was “very slow” for film permitting, there will be a documentary on Virgin Air that will be filmed partially in Fort Lauderdale in October.

Mr. Denison stated that the recent Monaco Boat Show was reported to be “the strongest in 10 years,” which is considered to be a good sign for the City’s upcoming Boat Show. Chair Riehl observed that hotel rates are up for the Boat Show as well.

VII. Old / New Business

- **Community Services Board – International Swimming Hall of Fame / Aquatic Center Tour**

Ms. DuMont requested confirmation of the date for this joint tour. It was confirmed this would be Tuesday, November 10.

As the Board will not be able to meet on November 11, Veteran’s Day, it was determined that Mr. Scott would check on the availability of a room following the tour on November 10, and would advise the Board accordingly.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

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