



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

APPROVED
MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2020 – 3:45 P.M.

January-December 2020

<u>Board Members</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Jordan Yates, Chair	P	1	0
Nicholas Kuchova, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Jay Adams	A	0	1
Michael Buonaiuto	P	1	0
Christopher “Kit” Denison (arr. 3:54)	P	1	0
Dudly Etienne-Harvard (3:50-4:37)	P	1	0
Bernice Lee	A	0	1
David Neal	P	1	0
Brett Rose	A	0	1
Michael Stara	P	1	0
John Vratsinas	P	1	0

Staff

Michael Chen, City Liaison, Economic and Business Development Manager
Suzy Joseph, Economic Development Program Analyst
Krystal Permanan, Economic Development Program Analyst

Communications to the City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum

Chair Yates called the meeting to order at 3:48 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. Approval of December 11, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Vice Chair Kuchova, seconded by Mr. Buonaiuto, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. Staff Updates – General Update (5 minutes)

- **2020 Meeting Conflicts – February 12th (Commission Meeting) and November 11th (Veterans Day)**

Ms. Permanan stated that Staff is looking into the availability of another meeting room with recording capabilities for the February 12, 2020 meeting. Ms. Joseph advised that it may be necessary to change the meeting date to another day, such as Thursday, February 13. Staff would also look into changing the November 11, 2020 meeting date.

Ms. Etienne-Harvard arrived at 3:50 p.m.

Mr. Denison arrived at 3:54 p.m.

IV. Old Business

Mr. Denison advised that he was concerned whether or not the Board is doing all it can to interact within the community. He recalled that this was Mr. Chen's primary responsibility, and the Board is charged with ensuring that this outreach is in line with what they, as business leaders, feel should be done.

Chair Yates observed that he had raised this issue with a member of the City Commission. He suggested reciprocity between the Board and the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance by providing a seat on the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) for one member of the Alliance and a seat for one member of the EDAB on the Alliance. This would, however, require an amendment to the Ordinance that governs the Board.

Another possibility could be for each of the two organizations to be granted a seat on the Board to which they can appoint a member. In this case, any reciprocal relationship would be left to their discretion. There are currently no empty seats on the EDAB, although its capacity could be expanded by amending the By-laws. There was also discussion of extending a member or members of these organizations a standing invitation to attend EDAB meetings without having a formal seat on the Board. It was suggested that representatives of the Alliance could be seated as members *ex officio*, which would allow them to formally attend in a non-voting capacity.

Mr. Buonaiuto noted that there are other local associations with a footprint in Fort Lauderdale that could be invited to attend Board meetings. The South Florida Technology Alliance, Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, and Marine Industries Association of South Florida (MIASF) were also discussed as entities that could be asked to attend Board meetings, as well as representatives of Port Everglades and the Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (FXE). Mr. Buonaiuto concluded that he would research these and other organizations further and send information to Mr. Chen's office for dissemination to the Board.

Mr. Stara cautioned that should Board membership expand greatly, it would be difficult to accomplish their goals. Mr. Chen advised that he would discuss the possibility of *ex officio* membership with the City Attorney's Office, although there is no such provision in the

Ordinance that created the Board. He reiterated that any member of the public may attend an EDAB meeting.

Mr. Chen continued that there is an outstanding request for representatives of the City's Department of Transportation and Mobility to make a presentation to the Board regarding the one-cent Broward County sales surtax. He also encouraged the Board members to reach out to their contacts and bring in a wider audience to hear presentations and discussions.

V. New Business

- **A discussion for charting our course on EDAB during 2020**

Chair Yates requested ideas from the members on what they would like to accomplish in 2020. Mr. Denison also felt they should expand their footprint within the community through working with the associations mentioned earlier, such as MIASF. He recommended broader communication in general to other boards with similar areas of focus.

Mr. Buonaiuto asked if the Board might request use of the City's Public Information Office (PIO) to send blast emails or other notifications. Mr. Chen replied that they may make this request for promotion of Board meetings to encourage more public attendance and participation. He noted that Economic and Business Development uses email to promote opportunities and resources that could benefit businesses. New businesses that take advantage of state incentives are often protected under the Secrecy Act, which allows at least one year's confidentiality, and are therefore not promoted.

Ms. Etienne-Harvard suggested that when speakers present to the Board, they might bring a contact person with them so interested parties would know whom to reach out to for further opportunities. Mr. Stara proposed that the members be accountable for specific responsibilities to the Board, such as keeping them apprised of the activities of major economic engines. Mr. Chen advised that the City seeks presentations from these entities, including the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, FXE, and specific organizations such as MIASF. The current trend is to hear presentations from major economic engines at least once per year so the Board remains informed on their activity within the community.

Mr. Chen observed that in some cases, there may be opportunities for the Board to make follow-up recommendations to the City Commission regarding how the City might respond to activities or concerns. He noted, however, that the institutions are often seeking broader public awareness rather than City action, and the Board may be able to promote them through individual advocacy rather than to the Commission.

Vice Chair Kuchova suggested that the Board could be further enabled by scheduling another joint workshop with the City Commission to exchange ideas and priorities. This

could allow them to discuss the City's interests with different industry groups. Chair Yates pointed out that the Board members may do this by meeting individually with their appointing City Commissioners.

Mr. Chen explained that the Board has had two joint meetings with the Commission in the past two years, which is significantly more contact between the two groups than in previous years. Vice Chair Kuchova proposed a targeted approach that would invite a City Commissioner in whose district there is significant industrial activity to attend meetings and discuss those industries.

Mr. Chen commented that Broward County, and Fort Lauderdale in particular, has eight or nine existing industry clusters, including maritime, finance, tourism/hospitality, life sciences, and others.. He asked if the Board might wish to hear presentations from each of these concentrations rather than by individual businesses, pointing out that the strengths of these industries allows them to function as economic engines. There was general agreement with this proposal.

Mr. Chen continued that the presentations would depend upon the industry: for example, the marine industry has MIASF, which is an active and recognized trade association with strong representation. Other industries may not have established associations of this nature or less organized representation. Each industry's structure would determine the nature of the presentation. Each industry could be invited to share information on opportunities, challenges, and threats and how the City and County governments may react to these.

Ms. Etienne-Harvard left the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

Chair Yates recalled that in 2019, one goal was to work with other City advisory bodies to share information and learn about context of some economic development activities. It was suggested that this could be one way to draw other individuals or representatives of entities to EDAB meetings. Mr. Chen advised that one challenge could be assembling different boards on a common time and date at a common facility, among other challenges associated with public meetings. It was noted that one option could be asking an EDAB member to attend other advisory bodies' meetings and bring back information related to economic development and activity.

Mr. Chen requested that Ms. Joseph compile a list of all City advisory bodies' meeting dates and times so members could use this for future reference.

The Board discussed potential organizations that could be invited to present to them, noting that "big picture" entities may be able to present more ways to make a difference than smaller specialized groups. Chair Yates added that he agreed with Mr. Stara's proposal that each Board member assume responsibility for individual issues, such as attending other advisory body and economic development events and forums.

Mr. Chen advised that on July 21, 2020, at 1:30 p.m., the City Commission will hear an update on the City's Comprehensive Plan. He strongly recommended that residents and business owners in Fort Lauderdale attend this meeting, as it is the last presentation the Commission will hear before the Comprehensive Plan is submitted to Broward County for review. This will be the first Comprehensive Plan to include a section on Economic Development. Mr. Chen recalled that the Board heard a presentation on this topic in 2019. He concluded that he would provide the members with copies of the Plan if it is available in electronic format.

The Board revisited options for the February 2020 meeting, determining that the meeting would be rescheduled for Wednesday, February 19, 2020. The November 2020 meeting would be rescheduled for Wednesday, November 18. Both meetings will be held at 3:45 p.m. in the regular meeting room. The M2M Subcommittee will meet before these meetings at 2:30 p.m.

The 2020 EDAB goals were reviewed as follows:

- Expand the community footprint through citizen/resident participation at meetings
- Consider *ex officio* memberships for industry associations
- Use the City's social channels
- Hear presentations from economic engines in a structured format

Chair Yates also emphasized the importance of working on the M2M program. Mr. Stara added that the Board should also actively engage their City Commissioners, where appropriate, and continue to act in an advisory role.

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

- **Due to the recent software migration of Accela the December 2019 permit totals are unavailable for publication**

Mr. Chen stated that while data for building permits is still not available, the number of permits issued has decreased significantly because the Building Department has consolidated many of its permits. Where in the past few years, over 26,000 building permits have been issued each year, the City anticipates issuing roughly 20,000 permits in 2020 due to this consolidation.

Mr. Chen added that in the full first quarter of 2020, the value of building permits issued is expected to exceed \$1 billion. In recent years, the total for an entire year has been approximately \$1.4 to \$1.5 billion.

The next Economic Development Advisory Board meeting will be February 12, 2020.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

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