DRAFT

City of Fort Lauderdale
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
October 13, 2021, 3:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Board Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Michael Buonaiuto, Chair	P	8	2
Nicholas Kuchova, Vice Chair	P	8	2
Jay Adams	P	7	3
Michael Stara	P	9	1
Dudly Etienne-Harvard	P	7	3
Michael Lorigas	A	4	2
Katherine Koenig	P	5	1
Willian Feinberg	A	7	1
Aaron Baron	P	2	0

Staff

- Daphnee Sainvil, Government & Economic Development Manager - Liaison (absent due to city travel)
- Suzy Joseph, Economic Development Representative
- Amber Cabrera, Senior Management Fellow

Communications to the City Commission

No communications to the Commission.

I. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum

Ms. Joseph called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM. Roll was called, and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. Approval of the September 8, 2021, Meeting Minutes: Chair Michael Buonaiuto

Motion to approve the Sept. 8, 2021 minutes was made by Member Stara. The motion was seconded by Member Baron. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Old Business

Member Baron: Last meeting I offered to volunteer research regarding Lockhart being a part of Economic Development. However not sure if that is being reviewed by Ms. Sainvil.

Chair Buonaiuto ("Chair") asked if Ms. Sainvil disseminated the information. Mr. Baron responded in the negative. Both deferred to Ms. Sainvil's decision not to disseminate.

IV. New Business

October Ethics Training by the City Clerk – October 14, 2021, at 6:00 PM.

Chair: Reminded everyone of ethics training for new board members. IT would resend login

information. It was confirmed, that if you had attended in the past, previous board members, you are not required to attend but are welcome to do so.

Transportation Surtax Funding

Chair: Who brought this into new business? Is this an item Ms. Sainvil wanted on the agenda? I don't have any foundation or credibility to discuss this.

Member Adams: We really need to talk about it because it's billions of dollars

Chair: Let's have Ms. Sainvil bring someone to the board with the knowledge to discuss it.

Member Stara: It was previously discussed in a prior meeting, and Ms. Sainvil advised that there is one woman in the county who is the expert, but she is never available. This was the month we were supposed to have a speaker about this, but I guess that did not happen.

Member Adams: I've got someone who would be able to do that. He's NPO. I will email Ms. Sainvil with his information.

Chair: Yes, please send to Ms. Sainvil to follow up on this to get someone to discuss this with us.

Member Stara: Ms. Sainvil did send out the data on the Surtax. Did everyone see that? Probably the best thing is to remind Ms. Sainvil and table this until we have more information.

Chair: Yes, let's encourage Ms. Sainvil to follow up on this to get someone to discuss this with us at the Nov 10th Meeting.

Communications to the Commission (staff liaison driven)
Table to November per Ms. Sainvil.

The **Chair** expressed uncertainty about the item. He asked about the drivers of the proposed discussion. Further asked the following questions: Do we feel like they are not listening to us? Do we feel like it's difficult to communicate with the Commission? Do we feel that they are not taking our advice? Because that's sort of the feel, to my recollection.

Member Baron: (directed to Chair) are you the liaison between the commission

Chair: No that is Ms. Sainvil.

Member Stara: I believe it is a little bit of all those things you mention, as long as I have been on the board.

Chair: So, I had this thought the other day, where would the Commissioners be without us? How could they run the economic end of this city without the EDAB and the value that each of our board members brings to the city. How can we get the commission to take our motions more seriously, to do Nighttime Economy evaluations, take EDAB more seriously and be present to share our two cents? Because it does not seem like there has been any traction since the last two meetings.

Member Stara: Three or four months ago we were all united in having a meeting with

commissioners and coming up with some clear objectives from them. This has died, but I don't understand why. I don't see how we can say the commission is not listening to us when we have not sent them a single communication nor have we met with them. I still think meeting with them is a good idea and that we should push for it.

Member Baron: I meet with my commissioner once a month.

Chair: As you should. You should have a good relationship with your commissioner. But what we are talking about is when the Board has made motions in the past in performing an economic SWOT Analysis or making recommendations of performing some sort of audit and when the board has requested this from a particular person, it has sort of fallen on deaf ears or it has been rejected. So that is where the board is coming from. Not in whole, but in part with communication from the commissioners.

Chair: A comment, Jay Adams mentioned that we could be losing out on opportunities, like billions of dollars in a certain area. Jay, is there a motion you would like to bring up for the next meeting?

Member Adams: The issue is, we don't have a department that can produce plans or bids. What we need to do is recommend to the city to outsource those plans and bids. Because internally the City isn't doing any good. If we hire an outside group, I'm sure there are people who do this, and pay them for it. We got to get on the commissions' list.

Chair: Jay, can I encourage you to make a motion in your own words, so we can get that in front of the commission?

Member Adams: I make a motion to Ms. Sainvil that TAM outsources their plans and bidding process to a third party.

Ms. Joseph: Not sure if that is within our realm. If we are going to do that, we should speak to the TAM board.

There was then a conversation on whether there is a board within the city that addresses Mr. Adam's issue.

Chair: So, Jay is stating that we can be missing out on an economic opportunity because what we have in-house is unable to keep up. And by putting forward this motion we can see the effectiveness of how the commission will respond to our motions.

Member Baron: I have been doing research on the NLC and Inter City Capitol Connections. We have so many areas that are under sourced.

Chair: We are extremely focused on that. My focus on getting Jay to do a motion is to see if it comes back alive or dead and kind of monitor it. Because we haven't sent any communication to the commission in some months now. And if there is something that could have the potential of an economic impact of billions of dollars, I would like to either understand it, educate Mr. Adams where he may be innocently ignorant of a certain area of city business, or potentially uncover something that the city has not looked at and/or not up to snuff on. But I do completely agree that we are focused on the attraction and retention of business to this area, and in no way does that impact our ability to pass this motion, because theoretically we can pass many, many, motions, and I would encourage you to do that so that we can be a more active board in the eyes of the

city commissioner, which could eventually help our communication with them.

Member Adams: We don't even offer economic incentives. We can talk about that, but it's not that important when we don't have the structure to support them.

Member Stara: Isn't our mission about getting jobs and real business to Fort Lauderdale? I mean we can talk about a lot of different things, but isn't that our front business?

Member Adams: we can do that if we have educated employees, in engineering, workforces, and lifestyle to support that.

Member Stara: we still talk about finding venture capitalists, educating small businesses, using SCORE, having small businesses that are prepared to go the next level. Those kinds of things are more our core.

Member Adams: I've heard very few jobs that were created by that, I don't see them really bringing anything. I think that one guy did, and it was like 10 jobs in the last year and a half? The incubators are a great idea, but don't really think they work.

Member Koenig: It's my first year too. And I'm frustrated because it looks like we don't offer much. The only things we are able to discuss with the commission is basically glorified social media starters. What's the point of driving people here if we don't have anything here that is going to help them? It's kind of like a bait and switch, when we don't have the educated workforce to meet their needs. Where's the infrastructure, where's the bidding system, the stuff you really need to build a business. Unless we are able to really pitch these ideas to other boards or departments and discuss the underlying issues of what makes a business profitable, then what's the point? We keep getting shut down and told that's not our area and that's not what we're supposed to do. So how do we talk to that someone else so that they can present it to the commission? We're just spinning our wheels. It doesn't seem like we're talking to the right people or getting anything done.

Chair: you're right. It seems that whenever we finish up a meeting, were reminded that it doesn't carry any clout.

Member Adams: I agree with you. We're not getting to the heart of the matter. We are not getting anything done

Member Koenig: Have we done anything that has made a difference over the years? I would like to look at some of the projects that have been successful and see how we made those work and maybe apply some of those tactics.

Chair: When we have asked point-blank what EDAB has done, its tied to what the Economic Development department has done, not what EDAB has done. It is difficult to put a magnifying glass to the success that this board has had. That is why I would love to get some motions from this board to the TAM board or the director of TAM and have those discussions even if it's incorrect. Let us fail and fail fast to convey that we are trying to get communication going.

Member Baron: Can we recommend something regarding the approval of a tunnel under Las Olas. Should we move it to another area, like the 17th street causeway near the convention center? Can we make a motion asking how that decision was made, and can we read that?

Discussion of the need for the location of the tunnel to be else were

Chair: I made a request for public information, and it has been veiled. Can I make a motion to release the boring tunnel proposal? The motion was seconded by **Member Baron**.

Member Kuchova: (to the chair) not sure you can make the motion as the chair.

Member Baron: I make a motion that the city and commission release to us the information that they used, to develop the decision to produce the tunnel, which they call the Las Olas loop, I believe, and that they share that information publicly or at least with us.

Member Kuchova: Second. All those in favor: approved by voice unanimously

Chair: Before I take a step back and get Jay on the hook for his motion, I do find it curious, three meetings ago, Ms. Sainvil told Bill she would aid him in finding workers for his business. Has that been a part of any previous meetings that I have not been a part of or missed? I'd love to find out, that would be really cool to know if the resources that Ms. Sainvil has at her disposal came to fruition. Let's go ahead and finish the last bullet point and then I'll jump back to Jay.

Review enabling Ordinance – any recommendations from members (staff liaison driven)

Mrs. Cabrera: Since Ms. Sainvil is not present, table the recommendation for the Nov meeting.

Chair: Ok to table to November

Mrs. Cabrera: Also, we did not approve the minutes. We jumped right into Old Business

Chair: Did everyone have a chance to review the minutes that were supplied? Were there any corrections that had to be made?

Member Stara: I move that we approve the minutes, second by **Member Kuchova** and approved unanimously.

Chair: Now Jay, I only do this because you bring a lot of interesting points to the table and on the surface, it seems like a potential opportunity for economic growth. So can I encourage you to make a motion.

Member Adams: Let me give you an example, the city has been talking about LauderTrail for five years. They finally outsourced Path to do it and they came up with a plan quickly. I would love a study, from a private company, on autonomous cars. Let's have that on 17th street, downtown or Flagler Village. That's also an economic driver. If we have an efficient way of transportation that is safe, we ought to look into that. And if you all agree, we should make a motion on that. That would be great.

Chair: I would like to encourage you to make that motion.

Member Adams: I make a motion that the city and TAM utilize third parties for their planning and bidding for the Broward County surtax program and a study for an autonomous program for downtown and the beach.

The **Chair** seconded the motion. **Member Kuchova**: As Chair, you should not second. I will second the motion.

Member Baron: Before we vote, I would like to change the language to vendors and consultants instead of third parties, because then it would be a bid process.

Member Kuchova: Before we take a vote should we find out what process they are doing now? Does anyone know? I would hate for there to be a motion from EDAB and then they come back and say, thanks guys, we are doing that. It kind of makes us look silly.

Member Adams: I can give you some history on that. They had a team of planners but let them go when the surtax came in. PATH is a perfect example.

The motion passed 4 to 2. Dissenting members - **Member Kuchova** – Before we send a motion, we should be 100% sure of what they are doing. I think we should hear it from that department; **Member Stara** – I'm very concerned with us sending out not fully thought-out motions to the city council. I don't think that's a good strategy at all.

Member Etienne-Harvard: Amendment to the Motion: if you have a system to which addresses the issue, EDAB request a conversation with that party to further discuss the process in place.

Member Etienne-Harvard made a motion to amend the previous motion, seconded by **Mr. Baron**. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair: Excellent. And if we do not get it before the Commission, we can have a conversation with the person who oversees that.

V. Next Meeting: November 10, 2021 @ 3:00 PM; City Hall, 8th Floor Conference Rm.

EDAB Fiscal Year 2020 Goals:

- Expand Community Footprint via increased engagement and participation from citizen/residents, associations, other city boards.
- Outreach via City social media Economic Engine Focused Presentations.
- Speakers Presentation Format Board Engagement & Accountability (TBD).

Chair: We should be reviewing the benchmarks that we set. Was that set by the City?

Member Kuchova: Part of it, we are not really involved. We didn't. No, we didn't have any benchmarks. If these meetings were not recorded there would be no movement. I really do think we should have a sit-down with the commission. In a formal meeting addressing what they are looking for EDAB to deliver. I don't think we have any guidance.

Chair: As well as an inquiry as to what has EDAB provided you in the short-term past that you can look back on, that EDAB guided the discussion of a decision. I am very curious. I will make a meeting with Vice Mayor Moraitis to talk about that.

Member Stara: How many commissions would have been around to know what was done by EDAB. I think we have an opportunity to get their sign off on what we want to do, but we need to be clear on what that is.

Chair: I believe that Ms. Sainvil formally proposed with Sarah Spurlock in a PowerPoint as a SWOT analysis. What came of it, I did not know.

Member Adams: It's not their job to tell us, but us to tell them.

Member Baron: I'm looking forward to that meeting. But I'd like to mention that there is a small business certification program with Trust Bank, that maybe they can offer it through the city or that we can promote it through EDAB. We can't just depend on big business. I'll be doing that in the coming weeks.

Member Stara: I'm all in with you. If you'd like help with that and partner with other banks, I would like to help.

Chair: Something I saw in the news is LauderGo is a new shuttle. Has anyone heard of this in the commission meetings? There is a service called Circuit transportation that does pickups on golf carts.

Member Adams: Sounds like a great idea. Maybe turn it into an autonomous option.

Chair: Is there any new business that the board would like to bring up at this time? to discuss?

Member Adams: I think we should get someone from the building department that would help small businesses.

Mrs. Cabrera: I think we discussed that at the last meeting. It was decided that we would try to have Andre come to the November meeting because there were a number of members who were not going to be present at this meeting.

Member Adams: I would also like Anthony, the director, to be in attendance at that meeting. There are just certain procedures that kill small businesses because of the cost of completing those steps. They just nickel and dime you to death.

Mrs. Cabrera: Is the conversation we are trying to have in regards to updating their systems to be more current?

Member Stara: What I remember from the last meeting is that when they hooked him up with Andre his problems went away. But Andre cannot work with every small business, and we need to set something up to make that resource available.

Mrs. Cabrera: Correct. Having a dedicated staff or a blueprint, or fact sheet, indicating these are pitfalls you can avoid. Maybe we can come up with something like that from EDAB, to show this is something substantive that we put together to help connect new business owners with the City of Fort Lauderdale.

Member Stara: That's what I like. This is something we can accomplish, I like that. Great.

Mrs. Cabrera: Again, our goal would be to have the representatives from the building department here at the Nov 10th Meeting. And everyone will bring clear questions or email them in advance so that they are prepared to answer our questions.

Member Baron: Like a staff liaison who would take care of things in the back end, a liaison with the city and the business owener. There is a way to smooth it out.

VI. Adjournment

Chair: There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:59 PM.

Member Baron: Motion to adjourn

Member Kuchova: Second. Vote to adjourn, the motion passed unanimously.

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