



**City of Fort Lauderdale  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**  
January 12, 2022, 3:00 PM  
Meeting Minutes

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<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Michael Stara, Chair	P	1	0
Nicholas Kuchova, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Jay Adams	P	1	0
Dudly Etienne-Harvard	P	1	0
Michael Lorigas	P	1	0
Katherine Koenig	A	0	1
William Feinberg	P	1	0
Aaron Baron	P	1	0

**Staff**

Amber Cabrera, Senior Management Fellow

Suzy Joseph, Economic Development Representative (absent)

Daphnee Sainvil, Government Affairs & Economic Development Manager (absent)

**I. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum**

**Chair Stara** called the meeting to order at 3:07 PM. Roll was called, and it was noted that there was no quorum at the time. Therefore, minutes cannot be approved, nor official business be conducted.

**Chair Stara:** Proceeded with a reading of the mission/purpose of EDAB. Starting with this meeting and finishing with the next meeting, all were provided with the Ordinance and the mission statement to review and propose any changes at the February meeting. Any changes to the Ordinance must be sent to the Commission for approval. Ms. Sainvil will be present at the Feb meeting to make sure there are no issues, from a legal standpoint, with any proposed changes, prior to submission to the Commission.

*Action Item: Please communicate to members, that if they are not able to attend to please advise in advance and that we need a full active board.*

>>> Jay Adams joined the meeting; one more member needed to satisfy quorum<<<

**Chair Stara** provided a recap to Member Adams regarding review of Ordinance for February meeting.

**Amber Cabrera:** advised the Chair that an email was received from Member Koenig that she was unable to attend.

**Chair Stara:** addressed that all members present at today's meeting have provided their area of interest/concentration. Advised that staff would like a member of EDAB to assist with web content.



**City of Fort Lauderdale  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

January 12, 2022, 3:00 PM  
Meeting Minutes

---

**Amber Cabrera:** Clarified that Strategic Communication's department will be assisting in the revamp of the department website. However, staff welcomes and would appreciate input from EDAB as to what content the board would like to see on the website.

**Action Item:** Ms. Cabrera to send the link of the current website for members to review and provide feedback

**Chair Stara:** clarified that we are not asking members to do the website, but to advise on behalf of the board. Members may provide feedback directly to staff, however, EDAB liaison for this purpose will be more hands-on with staff.

**Amber Cabrera:** Read the email from Member Koenig advising her interest in engaging with startups and tech hubs as her area of concentration.

**Chair Stara:** requested clarification from staff regarding where it was the Sunshine Law that prohibited Ms. Sainvil from attending the EDAB meetings virtually

**Amber Cabrera:** Clarified that virtual attendance is no longer permitted for Board/Committee Members and the general public, therefore staff may not appear virtually.

>>> Dudley Etienne-Harvard joined the meeting; quorum is now satisfied <<<

**II. Approval of the December 8, 2021, Meeting Minutes**

**Motion** to approve the December 8, 2021, minutes was made by Member Baron. The motion was seconded by Member Kuchova. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. Old Business**

None

**IV. New Business**

**Chair Stara:** Informed Member Etienne-Harvard of the initiative regarding areas of concentration.

**Area of Concentration Updates**

**Chair Stara:** Solutions to the permitting process for new and current businesses.

**Report:** Due to the holidays, was unable to schedule a meeting with permitting. But plans to have a report at the next meeting. Goal is to provide a document/road map regarding permitting. Once complete, will move on to a new area of concentration.

**Vice Chair: Connections with Embassy International**

**Report:** Nothing new to report at this time. We need to make sure that we have someone from the Commission level ready to speak with them. While he has close ties with various international liaisons, he needs to know what the commission/city would like to establish in partnership with them before trying to set up a meeting.



**DRAFT**

**City of Fort Lauderdale  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**  
January 12, 2022, 3:00 PM  
Meeting Minutes

---

Vice Chair Kuchova would like to see a relationship with Israel and their startup initiatives within the United States and possibly bring more of that type of business to Fort Lauderdale

Chair Stara advised Vice Chair that Ms. Sainvil is very committed in getting connected to the right international liaisons.

Member Lorigas: ED Liaison

Report: Not present

Member Baron: Galleria Mall Project and Franchise Group

Report Item 1: Galleria Mall meeting with stakeholders

Received results from association member. They will cutaway the mall from Capitol Grill east towards the beach and take open space to make an outdoor venue with a housing complex similar to what Plantation did with the Fashion Mall. They are looking towards upscale shops as they want to maintain the relationship with Macy's and Dillard's.

**Member Etienne-Harvard:** Is the city funding this in any type of way?

**Member Baron:** Private funding currently.

**Member Etienne-Harvard:** do we know if they plan on using local small business?

**Member Baron:** It is still in the planning stages and needs approval from the various interest groups/committees. Traffic and other issues are still being worked out.

**Member Etienne-Harvard:** Would it be appropriate for us to suggest to them to include options for local small business in their scope as far as constructions or retail shops, considering they may seek funding form grants and the city in the future?

**Member Baron:** I don't think that would be appropriate as I would not want it to come across as bias.

**Chair Stara:** If local companies did want to participate in the bidding process or if members of EDAB would like more information in that regard, who should they contact?

**Member Baron:** I would suggest they contact the office of the Galleria Mall or the attorney, Stephanie Toothaker.

Report Item 2: Franchise Expo South 2022 – Fri Sept 9 – Sat, Sep 10 Fort Lauderdale Convention Center

Contacted the United Franchise Group, they are not sure if they are going to be in the expo. In his search for information that we can provide at the expo, he came across a booklet developed by DSD: Business Assistant Guide. Advised, that we should have a City booth at all of these



**City of Fort Lauderdale  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

January 12, 2022, 3:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

---

shows, i.e. yacht, business expo etc. or at least a guide on how to do business with the City and various opportunities.

Vice Chair Kuchova: expressed that would be great if it was accessible on the web and if one of the commissioners did a short video directed at the business community that the City is open for business.

SBA, Enterprise Florida, and various entities offer opportunities to promote local business. We should have these associations be at these events to show how you can bring business to Fort Lauderdale.

Also reviewed top 20 nationwide franchise companies and noticed that many do not have locations here in Fort Lauderdale. There are affordable opportunities for franchising that can be explored. He is working on the language for a communication to the commission to suggest that we investigate these types of economic ventures and/or permission to send communications to them, providing them with information on how to open a location in the City of Fort Lauderdale. Or even to ask permission of the Commission to ask the organizers of the expo if we can have access to the list of attendees so that we may share information regarding doing business in the City of Fort Lauderdale.

**Vice Chair Kuchova:** Suggested the creation of an electronic welcome packet with video, Business Assistant Guide, etc. to be send when companies register for more information on our website.

**Amber Cabrera:** Requested clarification as to what Member Baron would be asking the companies permission for.

**Member Baron:** responded that in most situations, a welcome letter is provided in the materials handed out at the event. However, franchise expos are being done in various locations in the state, but there's no reason why Fort Lauderdale cannot attend or provide information about the City of Fort Lauderdale at the shows outside of our area.

**Vice Chair Kuchova:** Suggested a member of the Commission may also be interested in attending the event.

**Member Baron:** Advised that his goal with communicating with United Franchise Group was to advise that we want to partner with them in any ventures in the City regarding making licensing, permitting, real estate etc. easier for his assortments of businesses.

**Member Etienne-Harvard:** advised that these are the types of events and programs that should be advertised and marketed by Economic Development if they are being held in the City. She would like to be a part of assisting in that initiative of marketing the City of Fort Lauderdale and Economic Development since she has the experience of doing it within her district.



**City of Fort Lauderdale  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

January 12, 2022, 3:00 PM  
Meeting Minutes

---

**Member Baron:** The Sistrunk community is prime area for baking investments because the demographics.

**Member Adams:** expressed that CRA dollars from the banks are no longer as easily accessible as they use to be.

Discussion continued as to what Members of EDAB can do outside of the board. Clarification was made that members can represent themselves as individual citizens at events and the community and provide information regarding programs and funding opportunities. Furthermore, members can meet outside of board meetings regarding personal ventures and advice, as long as it does not relate to board initiatives and/or projects.

Additional discussion was had regarding the marketing of the City's Economic Development initiatives.

**Amber Cabrera:** Advised the board that the Commission Prioritization/Goal Setting Workshop will be January 27. At which time we anticipate receiving directives form the Commission regarding Economic Development.

**Vice Chair Kuchova:** asked status of BEAMs.

**Amber Cabrera:** Currently being reimaged.

**Vice Chair Kuchova:** suggested a workshop from the City, under the BEAMs platform, to prepare neighbors for the franchise expo.

**Chair Stara:** would you be willing to put that in the form of a communication to the commission?

**Vice Chair Kuchova:** would like that to be added to what Member Baron is working on.

*Action Item: Member Baron– would like more information on what the Office of Economic and Small Business Development does and how EDAB can interact with them.*

Member Adams: Small business and CRA

Report: Nothing new to report currently. Would like more information regarding the lending opportunities.

**Chair Stara:** are we allowed to have a meeting with CRA department?

**Amber Cabrera:** we are allowed to have a member of CRA come to our meeting, but not for members to have a meeting with them at their offices.



City of Fort Lauderdale  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD  
January 12, 2022, 3:00 PM  
Meeting Minutes

---

**Chair Stara:** please confirm if we can have one member, along with staff to have a meeting to ask questions about the CRA process. He has tried to have this set up for some time now.

Discussion continued regarding CRA and Small Business Banking activity within the City. Particularly in acquiring information from the various banks/lending options in the city and their requirements; setting up a questionnaire or fact sheet of some sort of their requirements to be then provided to the public.

**Action Item:** *invite CRA to the February or March Meeting*

**Chair Stara:** advised that he would investigate whether any changes have been made to the process with CRA and small business loans with some of his connections in banking.

Member Feinberg: Restaurant Industry and GFLCC Real Estate/Construction Council.  
Report: Not present

## V. Discussion and Final Remarks

Chair Stara provided a recap of duties/expectations of Web/Marketing Liaison to Member Etienne-Harvard.

Chair Stara advised members of EDAB videos. Informed board members that a memo from the Division will be sent with further details. Members should be prepared to either make their video on their own prior to the February meeting or staff will do the recording at the February meeting.

**Member Baron:** Will a release be provided?

**Amber Cabrera:** Yes.

**Chair Stara:** She liked mine, correct? I don't need to redo it.

**Amber Cabrera:** Correct.

**Chair Stara:** Staff is welcome to send out mine for reference.

**Action Item:** *Staff to share Chair Stara's video to other members for reference*

Chair Stara provided a recap to Member Etienne-Harvard regarding review of Ordinance for February meeting.

Parking Decals need to be reissued and distributed.

**Action Item:** *Staff to have updated parking decals for the February meeting*



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**City of Fort Lauderdale  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**  
January 12, 2022, 3:00 PM  
Meeting Minutes

---

**Chair Stara:** There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

**Vice Chair Kuchova:** Motion to adjourn.

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

**Adjournment** Meeting adjourned at 4:17 PM

**VI. Next Meeting: February 9, 2022 @ 3:00 PM; City Hall, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Rm.**

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

\*\*Attachment: Email from Member Koenig