

**UTILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
CITY HALL 8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33301
JANUARY 25, 2011 – 6:30 P.M.**

Cumulative
January 2011-
December 2011

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Bunney Brenneman, Chair	P	1	0
Robert Cole, Vice Chair	A	0	1
Maria Canady	P	1	2
L. Thomas Chancey	P	1	3
Don Larson	P	1	0
Ruchel Louis	A	0	1
Terri Murru	A	0	1
Frances Smoot	A	0	1
Clare Vickery	A	0	1
Jay Weiss	P	1	0

Staff

Hal Barnes, Engineering Design Manager
Robert Dunckel, Assistant City Attorney
Gene Dempsey, Urban Forester
Janet Townsend, Sustainability Coordinator, Parks and Recreation
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Guests

Emily Lagerquist, Executive Director, Kids' Ecology Corps

Communications to the City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order

Chair Brenneman called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was not present.

III. Self-Introductions

The Board members, Staff, and guests introduced themselves.

IV. No Meeting in October 2010 – No Minutes Minutes of November 23, 2010 Meeting

As a quorum was not present, minutes could not be approved.

V. Approval of Remote Attendance – Ruchel Louis

Attorney Dunckel noted that Ms. Louis was not physically present because of a prior engagement, and advised the Committee that remote attendance must be due to a medical issue. He said he did not believe the Committee had jurisdiction to consider allowing remote attendance in this case, as the Resolution states that the cause of absence must be “physical disability such as medical treatment or other similar extraordinary circumstance.”

He read an excerpt from the Attorney General opinion, which states that the office is reluctant to extend remote participation in public meetings by electronic means when the situation does not involve “a serious medical condition and the presence otherwise of a quorum.” However, he said he saw no prohibition of allowing Ms. Louis to listen to the meeting if she did not participate by speaking.

Chair Brenneman said Ms. Louis was calling to hear the presentation on the 2011 green event. Attorney Dunckel reiterated that Ms. Louis would be able to listen to the meeting but not to participate in it. He clarified that Staff had determined participation to include talking during the meeting.

Mr. Weiss asked if it would be possible to require all Committee members to respond to reminder emails and advise whether or not they could attend. Attorney Dunckel said this is possible, and the response is generally directed to the Staff Liaison’s office. Mr. Weiss suggested that this could be introduced as an agenda item at the next meeting. Chair Brenneman agreed with this.

Chair Brenneman advised Ms. Louis that she could listen to the meeting via telephone but would not be able to participate.

VI. New Business

- **Presentation on People + Planet Day**

Janet Townsend, Sustainability Coordinator for the City, said Fort Lauderdale will join with the Kids’ Ecology Corps to hold a green event, the People and Planet Day, in 2011. It will be held on Saturday, April 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on

the Esplanade area of the Riverwalk. The target audience this year will be families with children, and the event will feature several interactive games and activities with an ecological/environmental twist.

Partners for the event will include the Riverwalk Trust Urban Market, the Museum of Discovery and Science, the South Florida Water Management District, and the Audubon Society. Holding the event on the Riverwalk will also provide an opportunity to feature marine ecology, in addition to featuring green initiatives by some City Departments, nonprofit groups, and food vendors. Entertainment will include dance, chorus, and band performances by Walker Elementary School, which has a magnet program for the arts. The South Florida Wildlife Care Center will release a rehabilitated bird into the wild, and the Museum of Discovery and Science will present a "reptile encounter."

Ms. Townsend invited the UAC to participate in this year's event by manning the information booths. She asked that any members who know prospective sponsors reach out to them as well.

Mr. Weiss suggested that some local universities might be interested in sponsoring the event in order to showcase their marine biology programs to children in the area. Ms. Townsend said they have also reached out to South Plantation High School, which has a magnet program for environmental studies.

Mr. Chancey asked if sponsors will have booths at the event, or if they would become sponsors by supporting the event financially. Ms. Townsend said there are different levels of sponsorship, ranging from a \$250 small business sponsor to a \$5000 title sponsor.

Mr. Chancey said previous events in which the Committee has participated have featured booths sponsored by different companies. Ms. Townsend explained there will be a \$50 fee for vendors, who will be selling something at the event; exhibitors, such as nonprofit groups, will not be charged a fee.

Attorney Dunckel noted that a group called B Cycle is working to establish bicycle kiosks at several locations throughout the County. The program allows individuals to rent bicycles to get from one location to another. He advised he could put Ms. Townsend in contact with the program.

Mr. Chancey also offered to reach out to some of the different groups who have participated in local green events in recent years. He explained that greater Fort Lauderdale has over 3000 backyard habitats, which is the largest number of habitats of any city nationwide, and encouraged Ms. Townsend to help the City extend word of the event to residents outside Fort Lauderdale as well as within the City.

Ms. Townsend pointed out that the weekend before the People and Planet Day event will be the City's Centennial Celebration. She said the green event will be publicized at the Centennial event.

Chair Brenneman recalled that the Kids' Ecology Corps had planted trees in 2010, and requested more information on tree planting in 2011. Ms. Townsend said the tree planting event will be held on April 17; it will be promoted at the People and Planet Day. She said she would reach out to Mr. Chancey about the event as well.

He recalled that a site used as a dump the previous year had ultimately become a valuable resource, yielding wildflowers that were later planted on Broward Boulevard as well as cuttings and opportunities for composting for the City. This had allowed the site formerly used as a dump to become something positive.

Ms. Townsend concluded that the City would love to have the Committee's participation in and support for the event. She said she would keep Chair Brenneman updated about the event.

Ms. Louis left the meeting at this time.

Chair Brenneman advised the members that no one involved with the Committee had heard about the People and Planet Day until the Kids' Ecology Corps filed for the appropriate permit with the City. Mr. Chancey emphasized the need for better communication with the City.

Chair Brenneman continued that the Centennial Celebration Committee will continue throughout 2011, with major events scheduled for March. Ms. Townsend has requested that the People and Planet Day be recognized as an official Centennial event. If successful, the event will be part of the promotions held during the March Centennial events. This would bring a great deal of attention to the People and Planet Day event. The creators of the event have also requested a proclamation from the City Commission to officially recognize April 2, 2011 as People and Planet Day.

Attorney Dunckel suggested that in 2012, the Committee could apprise the Parks and Recreation Department in advance of any event in which they might want to be involved. He proposed that Chair Brenneman could send a memo to the Director of Parks and Recreation, as well as the individual in charge of outdoor events, to prevent any miscommunication from occurring in the future.

Mr. Barnes advised that there was no budget for a green event in 2011, and recommended that the Committee submit a request that an event be included in the City's 2012 budget.

Chair Brenneman felt the members would be able to man multiple information booths along the Riverwalk, and advised that participants are asked to bring their own tables and chairs to the booths. Attendees will be given a map and a guide to the event.

- **Update on Remote Attendance Resolution**

Chair Brenneman noted that this Item had been on the Agenda before Ms. Louis' scheduling conflict occurred.

Mr. Barnes said there have been no changes in the Resolution since it was last reported upon. He reminded the members that the reason for remote attendance must be a physical disability, and at least seven days' notice is necessary, as the request must be processed through the City Clerk's Office.

Mr. Chancey asked if other advisory bodies have used remote attendance. Mr. Barnes said the City Clerk's Office informed him that it has been used by several other boards and committees, but he was not aware of the frequency of its use. Attorney Dunckel advised that other boards may have used remote attendance in the absence of a physical disability, such as when a member is simply out of town. He said he planned to meet with the City Clerk for further discussions on the subject.

He added that a number of Attorney General opinions have been written on the subject, and a compilation of these opinions was included in the handout he had distributed. He explained that the topic is covered under the Sunshine Law, and pointed out that quasi-judicial proceedings are not allowed to avail themselves of remote attendance.

He added that a member who is not allowed to participate telephonically is not allowed to speak at all, as speech is considered participation. While he had argued in favor of greater flexibility in cases of "other similar extraordinary circumstance," the key term had been "similar," which meant the absence must be founded on a medical disability.

- **Other New Business**

Chair Brenneman thanked Mr. Chancey for providing Ms. Townsend with information regarding the upcoming People and Planet Day.

VII. Continuing Business

None.

VIII. Good of the Committee

None.

IX. Announcements

- **Tuesday, February 22, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.: Next Regular UAC Meeting**
- **Tuesday, March 22, 2011: UAC Regular Meeting**
- **Saturday, April 2, 2011: People and Planet Day, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. on Riverwalk**

Chair Brenneman said the Committee would discuss whether or not to require members to respond regarding their attendance at the next scheduled meeting.

She added that she and Ms. Louis would strongly suggest that the Committee's participation be recognized in the official title of the event.

Mr. Barnes informed the Committee that official Staff Liaison Peter Partington will rejoin the Committee. The Committee asked that their best wishes be conveyed.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

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