



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

APPROVED  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD (EDAB)  
MEETING MINUTES  
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2018 – 3:45 P.M.

**January-December 2018**

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Jason Crush, Chair	P	6	2
Jordan Yates, Vice Chair	P	7	1
Steve Buckingham	P	5	3
Keith Costello	A	3	5
Christopher "Kit" Denison	P	2	2
Mick Erlandson	A	6	2
Nicholas Kuchova	P	1	0
Bernice Lee	A	0	3
Lonnie Maier	A	4	4
David Neal	P	5	3
Dustin Robinson	A	4	4

**Staff**

Michael Chen, City Liaison, Economic and Business Development Manager  
Lutecia Florencio, Economic Development Program Aide  
Al Battle, Deputy Director, Department of Sustainable Development  
Jamie Opperlee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to the City Commission**

None.

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

Mr. Chen called the meeting to order at 3:49 p.m. It was noted a quorum was present.

**II. Approval of September 12, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

**Motion** made by Mr. Buckingham, seconded by Mr. Yates, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**III. Staff Updates**

Mr. Chen reported that he recently attended a trip to Taiwan with Mayor Dean Trantalis and other representatives of Fort Lauderdale. They executed the renewal of a Sister Cities agreement with Kaohsiung, Taiwan, and entered into a cooperative agreement with that city to mutually support the marine industry. The City also co-sponsored an event with the Council of Israel entitled "Doing Business with Israel." Roughly 50 individuals were in attendance. Both events were very successful.

Mr. Chen continued that fiscal year (FY) 2017-18 closed as a record year with \$1.3 billion in building permits. Over 26,800 building permits were issued during the year. These values do not cover all the permits issued, which means a more accurate figure may be \$1.5 billion. Other fees, such as capital expansion, transportation, concurrency, school, or park impact fees, are not reflected in this estimate. It was suggested that these figures could be presented and discussed at a future meeting.

**IV. Election of Vice Chair: Refer to attached excerpts from the Guide for Members of Boards and Committees**

**Motion** made by Mr. Denison, seconded by Mr. Buckingham, to nominate Mr. Yates as Vice Chair. In a voice vote, Mr. Yates was unanimously elected.

**V. Discussion – to establish priorities for ECI, mutually agreed at the EDAB / City Commission Joint Meeting. Refer to document attached.**

Mr. Chen referred the Board members to notes from the recent EDAB/City Commission Joint Meeting, which included specific discussion points outlining actions the Commission would like the Board to take. He recalled that the City Commission expressed an interest in creating subcommittees to address various issues such as Sister Cities, incubators, the arts, Community Reinvestment Agencies (CRAs), and others.

Subcommittee meetings must be formally noticed and provide notes or minutes. Mr. Chen noted that the Board may not be able to form more than one to two subcommittees due to current staffing levels. Chair Crush cautioned that under Florida's Sunshine Law, Board members may not discuss Board or subcommittee business outside official meetings that are open to the public. The City Commission would need to create any specific subcommittees.

Mr. Buckingham suggested that the work of a given subcommittee could be accomplished under the auspices of the Board during regular meetings, setting aside a certain amount of time during each meeting for discussion of topics.

Mr. Kuchova suggested that for some potential subcommittees, such as Sister Cities, the Board could recommend possible locations to the Sister Cities organization based on cities with which Fort Lauderdale could encourage international business

relationships in key industries. The Sister Cities organization would also be able to inform the Board members why some of these relationships might not pan out.

Mr. Chen noted that the City's relationship with the Sister Cities organization is not entirely clear: while Fort Lauderdale funds the organization with approximately \$19,000 per year, Sister Cities makes its own appointments independently of the City. Mr. Denison also noted that the organization may be more closely focused on tourism rather than business. Mr. Chen added that while a subcommittee would need to be chaired by a member of the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB), its full membership may include non-Board members.

Chair Crush proposed that a representative of Sister Cities be invited to provide the Board with a brief update each month as a regular Agenda Item. He pointed out that in the past, the organization has provided updates to the Board on an annual basis. Subcommittee members could also keep in regular contact with Sister Cities and email information to Mr. Chen for dissemination among Board members, or may provide updates at regular Board meetings. The intent is to develop strategies to enhance the City's economic development by better leveraging the Sister Cities concept.

Chair Crush continued that there may be other key items the Board can prioritize and receive updates on at each meeting. Mr. Chen recalled that the City Commission mentioned the update and adoption of the Economic Development Plan, which would bring the previous Plan up to date with a more international scope and a focus similar to that of the new Commission. Chair Crush requested that the previous Economic Development Plan be sent to the members in advance of the next Board meeting so it can be fully discussed.

**Motion** made by Mr. Kuchova, seconded by Mr. Neal, to add [Sister Cities and the Economic Development Plan] to their items. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. Chen continued that the City Commission was also interested in developing a "How to Start a Business in Fort Lauderdale" publication. While he is asked about this topic with some frequency, there are few written materials available other than contact numbers and brief steps. He suggested that this may be a priority after an updated Economic Development Plan has been adopted.

Mr. Kuchova requested an update on the City's concierge service for investors and business owner. It was noted that the City is considering adding a second person to this service. Chair Crush proposed creating a pamphlet or page on the City's website that would help investors move through the City's processes.

Mr. Chen advised that what may be needed is a resource guide for investors and owners interested in starting a business. Mr. Buckingham pointed out that the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance offers an information packet on starting or expanding

businesses in the City, to which information on key contact departments and individuals could be added. It was decided that this item would be prioritized behind other areas of focus at this time.

Vice Chair Yates recalled that he had proposed concierge service for the economic development pipeline initiative several months ago, with the intent of creating an infrastructure for businesses in which the City serves as a central hub. He emphasized the importance of branding the City as a point of contact for companies and executives who may be interested in relocating to Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Chen pointed out that all employees in the Economic Development office act as advocates for businesses and seek to answer questions in a positive manner.

Mr. Kuchova recommended organizing the materials available to investors and businesses, suggesting that they be made available on the City's website. Mr. Chen noted that the Economic Development Department's web page is being upgraded by a local designer to add various tools, including demographic information, industry clusters, and other information such as the names of law firms and accountants within the City.

Mr. Neal stated that once the website has been updated, it will need to be marketed. Chair Crush recommended that this be the third item on which the Board receives monthly updates.

The Board members moved on to branding, which was also a point of discussion during the joint meeting with the City Commission. Mr. Chen recalled that the Mayor had stated he would like to see more professional presentations as part of an overall branding strategy. Mr. Denison pointed out, however, that branding is a specialized field, and the Board was not likely to be able to contribute to this effort other than surveying the branding of other municipalities. It was determined that the Board's recommendation would be for the City to hire professionals for branding purposes.

Mr. Buckingham advised that he had brought together information on branding efforts at previous meetings, and offered to provide these materials to Mr. Chen for distribution to the other Board members. Mr. Chen recommended that "business identity" would be a more accurate term than "branding" when used to describe a business platform.

Chair Crush concluded that it was clear the City Commission is pleased with the work Mr. Chen has done with economic and community investment (ECI) in Fort Lauderdale over the past three years. He felt the City Commission would be receptive to continued increases in funding for Economic Development.

The Board determined that they would focus on the following priorities on future Agendas:

- Have a representative of Sister Cities provide a monthly update
- Update and adopt the Economic Development Plan

- Receive monthly update on the progress of the City's economic development website
- Work toward a precise business identity for Fort Lauderdale
- Continue the growth and maintenance of the Business Engagement Assistance and Mentorship (BEAMs) program

## **VI. Old Business**

None.

## **VII. New Business**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:57 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.]