



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

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

January-December

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Jason Crush, Chair	P	5	1
Cary Goldberg, Vice Chair (dep. 4:45)	P	4	2
Steven Buckingham	A	3	3
Keith Costello	P	3	3
Christopher “Kit” Denison	A	0	2
Mick Erlandson	A	5	1
PJ Espinal	A	2	4
Lonnie Maier	A	4	2
David Neal	P	3	3
Dustin Robinson	P	3	3
Jordan Yates	P	6	0

Staff

Michael Chen, City Liaison, Economic and Business Development Manager
Lutecia Florencio, Economic Development Program Aide
Suzy Joseph, Economic Development Program Aide
Karen Reese, Business Outreach / Foreign Trade Zone Administrator
Ben Sorensen, Vice Mayor of Fort Lauderdale
Jamie Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to the City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum

Chair Crush called the meeting to order at 3:48 p.m. It was noted a quorum was present.

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

III. Staff Updates

Mr. Chen reported that there was an increase in the number of businesses contacting Fort Lauderdale for various reasons, such as relocation or expansion, during the months of June and July 2018.

The City will attend the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) in Orlando, FL. The City will also attend the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) in New York in December.

An event on doing business with the City was being scheduled. Economic and Business Development Department Staff met with the City's Purchasing Department. It was determined that training their staff how to be more "user-friendly" to businesses and vendors would be more productive. This training will be extended to each City Department that also makes purchases that are below the thresholds at which policies apply and therefore are not subject to the formal bidding process.

The City has had continued interaction with international markets, including a meeting between the Counsel General of Turkey and Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL). A tour and leadership meeting will be rescheduled for the Director General of Taiwan at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (FXE), to be followed by a similar tour and meeting at Port Everglades. The Mayor is planning a trip to Taiwan in September 2018 with a small business delegation.

Mr. Chen advised that a trade mission to Israel is being planned by City Manager Lee Feldman. He has been tasked with scheduling meetings and identifying potential objectives for the City's delegation. One possibility is a sister port relationship between Port of Haifa and Port Everglades. Another option is an incubator joint venture between an Israeli University and the City.

Building Broward, a Broward/Palm Beach County Realtor's event, was hosted by ECI at the Tower Club. Over 180 realtors attended this event, which included a panel presentation by the Mayor, Ella Parker, John Travers, and Mike Chen to provide a "State of Fort Lauderdale" update. Feedback indicates this was a very successful event.

Staff has reached out to a Miami incubator, Venture Café, in order to encourage them to open a branch in Fort Lauderdale. This incubator is linked with a real estate investment entity, Cambridge Investments, which builds entrepreneurships through shared space in various cities. There are at least 12 of these incubators nationwide. It was noted that a similar program, Collective Ventures, currently exists in the City.

Mr. Chen stated that Staff continues to attend meetings with the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, among other entities, to demonstrate active support of partner agencies. The 2018 Business Engagement Assistance and Mentorship (BEAMs) program, where 78 companies were represented, was completed in June with 41 graduates. The BEAMs program has received a national award.

Mr. Neal asked if there has been any discussion of creating an incubator zone in Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Chen replied that he would like to see suggestions from Israel regarding a potential model and strategy for an effective program. He noted, however, that Israeli universities are known to partner only with Ivy League universities for this purpose.

Mr. Neal suggested the creation of a cluster zone with tax benefits in an area such as Cypress Creek Road, which would allow participation from universities. Mr. Chen reiterated that the City hopes to learn more from Israel's universities about a possible model for this type of operation. Ms. Reese recalled that several years ago, the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance produced a whitepaper on this possibility for the Cypress Creek area, which she recommended to the members for further reference. Chair Crush advised that a Land Use Plan Amendment would be necessary in this area in order to allow residential housing that would support creative centers such as an incubator.

Chair Crush requested an update on the implementation of new software by the City's Building Department. Mr. Chen replied that the Department of Sustainable Development has closed on the past three Friday afternoons to allow for training on this new software.

IV. Discussion – Board members will consider topics to be brought to the Joint Meeting with the City Commission on October 17, 2018. (EDAB members are requested to bring ideas to discuss)

Mr. Chen recalled that the previous joint meeting between the Board and the City Commission was held in October 2017. Since that time there has been significant turnover on both the Board and the Commission.

Chair Crush stated that one item he would like to discuss with the City Commission is the possibility of streamlining development and permitting approvals by the Department of Sustainable Development. He noted that the number of review meetings per month, as well as the typical number of items presented for Development Review Committee (DRC) approval, has been reduced, and asked if this would allow Staff additional time to review new applications or if more Staff will be hired to speed this process. Because Code provisions require the City to review applications within a specific time period, he expressed concern that the reduced number of meetings could affect this review.

Vice Chair Goldberg pointed out that the Building Department is working to address this process through its new software, while the DRC/Site Plan review process is separate from this. Chair Crush observed that it can be difficult to attract qualified Staff members who can address these needs. He pointed out that the time frame for engineering review is currently 30 to 60 days, although in previous years it was much shorter. He attributed this longer time frame in part to understaffing, and expressed concern for the effect of this delay on the City's economy.

Vice Chair Goldberg suggested that the members ask the City Commission to discuss the role they would like the Board to fulfill for them, or make suggestions themselves of what this role might be. This could include the types of economic development items they see on meeting Agendas, as well as how to make recommendations to the Commission regarding how the City should act on these items.

Mr. Chen advised that at the 2017 joint meeting, the discussion led to the development of five priorities, which were endorsed by the City Commission. All activity and budgeting that he has undertaken since can be linked back to these five priorities.

Mr. Neal emphasized the need for the Board to provide the City Commission with viable ideas and projects that will lead to actual economic development. Mr. Costello pointed out that the City Commission has an agenda and economic priorities, but the Board is not aware of these. Chair Crush suggested that after the joint meeting, the Board may wish to structure its Agendas differently in recognition of these priorities.

Mr. Neal again addressed the creation of an international hub. Mr. Chen noted that the City has a number of "spot operations," including incubators and accelerators; however, he was not aware of any plans for a zone or hub to concentrate these uses in a certain area. Ms. Reese reiterated that the Board members should reach out to the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance for this information, as they had prepared previous research on this topic.

Chair Crush characterized an Innovation Zone as similar to a Business Improvement District (BID), which allows for the diversion of tax dollars into a specific area with the agreement of that area's business owners.

Fort Lauderdale Vice Mayor Ben Sorensen briefly addressed the meeting.

Vice Chair Goldberg suggested that each member reach out to his/her appointing City Commissioner in advance of the joint meeting and ask what those individuals see as the role of the Board. This could be part of the discussion at the next meeting. Chair Crush requested that Mr. Neal look further into his idea for an international hub and prepare for additional discussion at the next meeting.

Vice Chair Goldberg left the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

Mr. Chen returned to the earlier discussion of development review, suggesting that the Board could benefit from a clearer understanding of the City Commission's vision for internal growth in the City. This could include a description of the term "smart growth," which was a priority cited by the Commissioners as candidates.

Chair Crush agreed that the Board needs to know the City Commission's current vision for economic growth. Mr. Yates added that another consideration could be the need for reciprocal accountability, through which the City Commission holds the Board

accountable for the responsibilities delegated to them as action items. The Commission would also be responsible for considering and possibly integrating the Board's feedback into its plans. He felt this accountability would make both entities more effective.

Mr. Chen characterized the role of the City Commission as the City's board of directors, while the City is actually managed by the City Manager. When the Board makes policy recommendations to the City Commission, the Commission then provides direction to the City Manager for their implementation. Chair Crush suggested that the Board also plan to meet with the City Manager in the future.

It was determined that Chair Crush and Mr. Chen would work together to prepare a list of potential topics for the joint meeting, which would be discussed further at the September Board meeting.

II. Approval of June 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes

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

V. Old Business

None.

VI. New Business

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 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.]