



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**CITIZENS COMMITTEE OF RECOGNITION
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, December 17, 2018 | 2 p.m.
Fort Lauderdale City Hall, 100 N. Andrews Avenue
City Commission Conference Room**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Former Mayors:

Mayor James Naugle

Former Commissioner:

Commissioner John Rodstrom

Former Award Winners:

Courtney Crush

Mary Fertig

Fort Lauderdale Council of Civic Associations Representative:

Michael Albetta

STAFF

D'Wayne Spence, Assistant City Attorney

Chaz Adams, Strategic Communications Manager

Monique J. Damiano, Senior Strategic Communications Specialist/Staff Liaison

Safeea Ali, Administrative Assistant II

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

Ms. Fertig recalled that there had been discussion by the City Commission regarding the 2019 Chairmanship of the Committee. Assistant City Attorney D'Wayne Spence recalled that at the November 29, 2018 meeting, the Committee had approved minutes from their October 9, 2018 meeting, which stated that former Mayor Jack Seiler was the Chair. He recommended that the Committee vote to appoint an acting Chair for today's meeting.

Motion made, and duly seconded, to nominate Courtney Crush as acting Chair (A/Chair). [The **motion** was not voted upon.]

Ms. Damiano explained that at the October 9, 2018 meeting, a motion was made to elect former Mayor Seiler as Chair. The draft minutes of that meeting referred to the date of his chairmanship as 2019; however, they should have listed Mr. Seiler's term as 2018-2019. At the November 29, 2018 meeting, the minutes were approved with this correction.

Ms. Damiano stated that according to the October 9, 2018 minutes, Mr. Seiler was elected as the 2018-2019 Chair of the Citizens Committee of Recognition in a unanimous voice vote. Ms. Crush pointed out, however, that her term of service on the Committee ends with today's meeting.

Motion made, and duly seconded, to nominate Mayor Naugle as Chair.

Attorney Spence cautioned that electing a Chair for a full term rather than an acting Chair for today's meeting could establish an unwanted precedent.

Ms. Fertig proposed that an acting Chair be selected for the purposes of chairing today's meeting, as first discussed, and that the next scheduled meeting include further discussion of the issue of Chair.

The **motion** and **second** to nominate Mr. Naugle as Chair was withdrawn.

Motion made by Mr. Naugle, seconded by Ms. Crush, to nominate [Ms. Fertig] to be acting Chair (A/Chair) during this meeting. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. Distinguished Citizen Nominees

Ms. Damiano explained that the City places an annual call for nominations, which lasts at least one month. In 2018, the call for nominations began in July, with the intent that nominations would go before the City Commission in September and winners would be recognized at an event in October. The event was postponed and has yet to be rescheduled to a set date.

Ms. Damiano continued that outreach for the call for nominations includes social media, blast emails, web posting, utility bill messaging, fliers, digital signage, an internal newsletter, and contact with local organizations that help to share the message. A press release is sent to local media. An online nomination process was created in 2017 which sends submissions directly to Committee members for review.

Once nominations have closed, Staff compiles an information packet that is sent to the Committee members. Members are also allowed to make nominations from the table during Committee meetings after the call for nominations has closed.

Ms. Crush requested additional information on what was presented to the City Commission at their December 4, 2018 meeting, as well as direction to the Committee from the Commission. It was clarified that the City Commission wished the Committee to have further discussion of the Distinguished Citizen nominees, as the Commissioners had not been able to reach consensus on this category. A/Chair Fertig added that her understanding was the City Commission was seeking a single nomination for the Distinguished Citizen award.

An additional nominee for the Distinguished Citizen award was presented to the Committee at this time. The nominee, Roosevelt Walters, has been a civil rights and community leader in Fort Lauderdale for more than 30 years.

Another nominee, Michael Jackson, was also named at this time. Mr. Jackson is the CEO of AutoNation, Inc., and has been instrumental in overseeing the company's role in philanthropy, particularly with regard to the homeless community.

Motion made, and duly seconded, to nominate Michael Jackson as Distinguished Citizen.

The nominations of Mr. Walters and Mr. Jackson were added to the names of previous nominees including Barbara Magill, Beverly Morley, Jeffrey Reames, Hadny Fayyaz, Howard Fine, Ramola Motwani, Summer Weinstein, Tim Smith, Mickey Hinton, and Gale Butler. It was noted that the two names previously submitted as nominees for Distinguished Citizen, Ms. Butler and Mr. Smith, have already been discussed at length during previous meetings and would not be discussed further.

There being no further questions from the Committee at this time, A/Chair Fertig opened the public hearing.

Abby Loughlin, private citizen, pointed out that many of the nominations were made after the deadline for nomination submissions had occurred. Ms. Damiano explained that all names submitted through the call for nominations are included in the Committee members' backup materials, and it is up to the Committee to decide if additional names will be accepted for consideration.

Tim Schiavone, private citizen, stated that he was named Citizen of the Year in 2002. He asserted that it was inappropriate to proceed without discussing the two previous nominees. Attorney Spence advised that this is left to the Committee's discretion. Mr. Schiavone felt this could damage the integrity of the nomination process.

A/Chair Fertig explained that the City Commission sent this Item back to the Committee with the direction to name a single nominee. She added that there is already a **motion** on the floor for a potential nominee, which will be voted upon following public comment.

Charles King, private citizen, suggested that the Committee may not be discussing the names of some previous nominees because their nominations could be considered as divisive or inappropriate. He felt this may be the reason behind the City Commission's direction to revisit the nomination process for Distinguished Citizen.

Laura Croscenco, private citizen, stated she was in favor of the Committee's decision to consider additional nominees, as she had not felt the nomination of Mr. Smith was appropriate.

Mark Hartman, private citizen, felt the Committee should include Mr. Smith in its deliberations, as he had been the original nominee for Distinguished Citizen.

Paul Chettle, private citizen, recommended the consideration of Mr. Walters for Distinguished Citizen due to his background and qualifications. He pointed out that Mr. Walters has served an underrepresented community within the City for many years.

Art Seitz, private citizen, stated that he opposed the consideration of Mr. Smith for several reasons. He felt Mr. Walters or Mr. Jackson would be more appropriate nominees.

As there were no other individuals wishing to speak on this Item, A/Chair Fertig closed the public hearing and brought the discussion back to the Committee.

Mr. Rodstrom pointed out that the City Commission had had the prerogative of selecting one or both of the nominees submitted to them at their December 4, 2018 meeting; however, one nominee had withdrawn her name from consideration, and the Commission chose not to select the second nominee and sent the issue back to the Committee for further consideration. He felt this showed the nomination process has been followed properly.

Ms. Crush stated that the Committee has done its job at both the October 9 and November 29, 2018 meetings in recommending nominees to the City Commission, despite changes in its membership. Only two members who were present at the October 9 meeting are still Committee members at this time.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

It was noted that there may be a need for an additional category to nominate a former elected official, possibly with the caveat that the nominee(s) must not have run for public office in a certain number of years.

Motion made by Mr. Naugle, seconded by Ms. Crush, for consideration of a separate classification for elected officials, but with the provision that they be out of office and have not run for office in the past ten years.

Mr. Schiavone stated that this could result in the creation of a very complicated category, and suggested that the Committee research this possibility further before recommending the creation of a new award.

It was clarified that the **motion** referred to the creation of a category for the nomination of a former elected official who must have been out of office and may not have run for office within the past ten years.

Mr. Seitz recommended that background checks be required for nominees in this proposed category to confirm that they have served as elected officials in the past.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

A/Chair Fertig proposed posting the names of nominees so the public can recognize their contributions to the community. Ms. Damiano suggested that once all categories have been finalized by the City Commission, a link may be posted on the City's web page so the public can see a list of nominees.

Ms. Damiano continued that once the City Commission has approved all nominees, Staff will propose an event date to recognize the 2018 honorees.

IV. Communication to / from the City Commission

None.

V. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:07 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.]