



**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY, AUGUST 2, 2021 – 2:00 P.M. TO 5:00 P.M.**

CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

February 2021-January 2022

Attendance

Marilyn Mammano, Chair	P	6	0
Gerald Angeli	P	6	0
Shane Grabski	P	6	0
Charlie Ladd (arr. 2:07)	P	4	2
Michael Marshall	P	5	1
Peter Partington	P	6	0
Jacquelyn Scott	A	5	1
Roosevelt Walters	A	5	1
Ralph Zeltman	P	6	0

As of this date, there are 9 appointed members to the Committee, which means 5 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

- Patricia Jolly, Sr. Administrative Assistant and Board Liaison
- Talal Abi-Karam, Interim Director of Public Works
- Garry Brandy, Distribution and Collection Supervisor
- Victor Carosi, Assistant Director of Public Works – Engineering
- Omar Castellon, Chief Engineer
- Kymberly Holcombe, Business Operations Manager
- Krishan Kandial, Project Manager II
- Brandy Leighton, Senior Project Manager
- Vincent Morello, Assistant Director of Public Works – Engineering
- Igor Vassiliev, Project Manager II

I. Call to Order

i. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. and roll was called.

ii. Approval of Agenda

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

iii. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes June 7, 2021

Mr. Zeltman noted the following correction:

- P. 9, paragraph 5: insert "...dynamic fire flow testing, particularly at suspicious areas to ensure that fire hydrants can deliver the required fire flows, maintaining a minimum residual pressure of 20 psi"

Mr. Marshall noted the following correction:

- P. 6, paragraph 4: change "would" (first sentence) and "should" (second sentence) to "could"

Motion made by Mr. Partington, seconded by Mr. Zeltman, to accept the minutes as corrected. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. Ladd joined the meeting at 2:07 p.m.

II. General Discussion and Comments by Committee Members

i. Introduction of Interim Public Works Director Talal Abi-Karam

Interim Director of Public Works Talal Abi-Karam introduced himself at this time. He advised that he did not have information on the timeline or procedure for hiring a new Director of Public Works. He will appoint Chief Engineer Omar Castellon as his designee to the Committee. He also introduced Assistant Director of Public Works (Engineering) Vincent Morello.

Chair Mammano stated that she and City Manager Chris Lagerbloom have discussed the Committee's request for a workshop meeting with the City Commission in September 2021. Mr. Lagerbloom is considering Thursday, September 9, 2021, as a possible date for this workshop. Chair Mammano advised that in the absence of Emergency Orders from the Governor, all official meetings must be held in person.

Chair Mammano continued that as there are only seven prospective meetings left in the Committee's mandate, they should communicate the following to the City Commission during the workshop:

- Explain to the Commission how they arrived at their decision regarding a moratorium, including the importance of capacity in addition to condition
- Determine the actions the Commission would like them to undertake in the remaining seven months
- Determine whether or not the Committee's life will be extended beyond February 2022

Chair Mammano recalled that with the exception of reaching a decision on the proposed moratorium, they have not addressed issues that needed to be solved but are more accurately monitoring the City's process toward solving problems, such as sewer and/or water line breaks and progress on the City's Consent Orders. She suggested that the members consider the value the Committee may be able to provide, as well as their recommendations on the focus of the Committee moving forward.

The members discussed their views on how to proceed, with Mr. Zeltman recalling that when the Committee was formed in 2017, they operated under a mission statement that referred to various categories of infrastructure. He proposed reviewing this statement to determine how closely the Committee has met its charge, as well as what remains outstanding. He noted that they have not discussed bridges thus far.

Mr. Zeltman continued that there may be differences in what the previous and current City Commissions would like the Committee to focus on. Chair Mammano agreed that the Committee has not exhaustively discussed bridges and noted that the City has a separate Bridge Master Plan which is currently being implemented in phases. The Committee has previously asked what would become of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funds previously allocated to bridges if the City instead uses Broward County transportation surtax funding for bridge-related projects.

Mr. Zeltman advised that Resolution 72-46, which lists the purpose and duties of the Committee, tasks them with reviewing existing City infrastructure including roads, sidewalks, airports, seawalls, water and wastewater distribution, collection systems, treatment plants, wellfields, parks, and “all City facilities and structures” to examine their current condition.

Mr. Partington asserted that the Committee’s charge includes monitoring condition and expenditures related to infrastructure. He added that ongoing issues with water infrastructure have resulted in the addition of another Consent Order, which is on today’s Agenda for discussion. He felt this merited a continuing role for the Committee over the next few months.

Mr. Angeli added that the Committee also wishes to learn more about some of the topics that have been discussed or touched on at previous meetings. He cited the recent condominium tragedy in Surfside, Florida as an example, which may have wide-ranging consequences for other structures across the state of Florida. Another concern is the proposed river crossing for passenger rail service. He concluded that there is an ongoing need for the Committee’s input.

Mr. Ladd advised that significant work remains on the City’s infrastructure. He noted that the Commission may wish to hear input from advisory entities on other projects, such as one-way pairings, the potential “tunnel to the beach,” and other initiatives. The Committee may be able to provide input on these items as well. Chair Mammano concluded that the Committee has examined various City systems and may not be needed for any future action other than monitoring.

Mr. Partington commented that the Committee had identified six stormwater projects that were fully designed but not yet funded and had pushed for these projects to be funded and implemented. He felt this type of pressure on City officials had been beneficial.

Mr. Zeltman added that he had learned the City's storm drain systems in the Imperial Point community were not exfiltration systems that allowed water to percolate into the ground but were instead "basically a holding tank" for stormwater, which can allow water to stagnate and may contribute to the breeding of mosquitoes. He was concerned that the City's standard design uses this type of system.

It was noted that a number of older stormwater drain systems remain throughout the City. The Stormwater Master Plan, designed by consultant Hazen and Sawyer, examines all the tools available to provide the best solutions, including drainage wells and other features. Some areas of the City currently use the older system to which Mr. Zeltman had referred. The Stormwater Master Plan allows for analysis of the City's drainage infrastructure to identify where older systems are still in use. These aging facilities will be addressed through a multiphasic program on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis.

It was further clarified that stormwater fees have recently been updated to generate more revenue to address for this infrastructure. This can be used to supplement bond or other funds used toward drainage improvements.

Mr. Ladd asked if Staff can estimate a timeline on which existing outfall systems might be converted to retention and injection wells. It was clarified that Staff is looking ahead past the first seven neighborhoods to the next group of neighborhoods that will be added to the priority list. The addition of these areas will be subject to the availability of financing and funding. Drainage wells may not be the best systems to implement depending upon the location of the neighborhood and proximity to the water. Prevention of water intrusion can be very difficult in light of rising sea levels.

Chair Mammano suggested that the Committee offer to review larger issues, including sustainability and emerging methodologies, as part of its ongoing charge. Mr. Ladd also noted that it is a valid concern to ask why construction in low-lying areas continues in an age of sea level rise, and to suggest that coastal developers be asked to contribute to greater drainage capacity for their projects. He concluded that there may be creative options to address the need for drainage more aggressively.

It was further clarified that the City's streets are so low that it is difficult for gravity injection wells to work. These wells must be 2 ft. above the water table in order to work properly. Even while some building sites have been raised due to changing Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements, the streets remain low. The Committee discussed how this could be addressed, including use of pumps to remove water from the roadways on an emergency basis.

It was noted that the City also has a Sustainability Advisory Board. Chair Mammano pointed out, however, that this board's scope is less technical than that of the Committee and focuses more closely on green initiatives.

Mr. Partington asserted that despite his time on the Committee, he still did not have a clear understanding of the responsibilities of various personnel within Public Works. Chair Mammano recalled that the Committee was previously shown a diagram with this information and requested that it be provided at the next meeting for review.

Mr. Partington raised the issue of the recent resignation of former Public Works Director Raj Verma and his letter of resignation. There was consensus that the Committee did not wish to become involved in the subject.

Mr. Abi-Karam advised that Public Works Staff is undergoing internal discussions on assignments and stabilization of the Department. He estimated that Staff will have a better grasp of this information and an official organizational chart in the future, at which time it could be presented to the Committee.

III. Public Comments (at Each Item)

Public comments were heard as each Item was discussed.

IV. Old Business

i. Report on the Tunnel Project

Chair Mammano clarified that the “tunnel project” refers to a proposed tunnel “from Downtown to the beach.” The Committee’s backup materials indicated there is no update on this item, as it was an unsolicited proposal. They also included a Resolution to the City Commission demonstrating that the unsolicited proposal meets all necessary statutory requirements.

The proposal itself is not a comprehensive document and refers to a public facility or structure to be used by the public at large or in support of an accepted public purpose. As an unsolicited proposal, it is exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act.

It was further clarified that once an unsolicited proposal has been made, the City Commission votes upon whether or not to pursue it. If they wish to pursue it, there is a window in which other proposals may be made regarding the same general item. The Commission is currently vetting the proposal and will make a determination on its pursuit. Alternatively, they may vote not to address the proposal further.

Chair Mammano commented that she has been unable to find any materials regarding the tunnel proposal. It was reiterated that this is because an unsolicited proposal is exempt from public disclosure regulations, although the Committee may discuss the Resolution.

Mr. Zeltman expressed concern with the changing scope of the proposed project, which included references to autonomous vehicles. This would not serve to reduce east-west traffic in the subject area and could result in greater congestion of A1A than already exists.

Chair Mammano pointed out that there is no clear description of the proposal, including the additional infrastructure that would be required for the implementation of a tunnel. She also questioned the population that would be served by a tunnel from the Downtown area to the beach. It was noted that the western suburbs of Fort Lauderdale might constitute part of the population served by a tunnel.

Mr. Ladd noted that the proposal also suggests the project would ensure more equitable development and access to multimodal mobility, which are needed by the City. He advised, however, that there is no description of how the project would contribute to greater equity.

Mr. Partington stated that he did not take issue with addressing the proposal once it has been more thoroughly fleshed out. Mr. Zeltman added that it was challenging to imagine how the proposal would meet some of its stated objectives. Mr. Ladd asserted that he had hoped Staff could explain some of the findings included in the Resolution, as they address important objectives. Chair Mammano added that there was no such update at this time because Staff is also not clear on what is included in the proposal. It was confirmed that Staff had no additional information beyond the Resolution.

ii. Update on the Water Consent Order

Chair Mammano noted that the Committee members were provided with copies of the Water Consent Order and requested background information on the document. Mr. Abi-Karam explained that this Consent Order was issued following incidents in 2019.

During early 2020, the negotiated Consent Order was issued with two charges, one of which is related to the mapping of all water lines in a specific area as well as exercising of valves. The larger effort required is to map the City's entire water distribution system. This must be accomplished over a five-year period, which is the industry standard for maintenance of water distribution systems.

Chair Mammano requested an update on the status of the Consent Order's requirements. Senior Project Manager Brandy Leighton, who oversees the Consent Order, reported that all valves have been located and exercised. The next step is provision of City-wide maps for Fort Lauderdale's water distribution system, which is currently being procured. The City will issue a solicitation for a consultant who will undertake this step. Some of this mapping has already been completed.

Chair Mammano noted that another consultant, Hazen and Sawyer, had previously provided some mapping, and there are also maps of breakages provided to the Committee for review each month. It was clarified that while documents showing the water

distribution system exist, these may not be 100% correct, as they may not reflect all updates and improvements to this system. The objective of the Water Consent Order is the same as the Sewer Consent Order: the City must hire a consultant to map the entire water distribution and enter it into a geographic information system (GIS) database that matches the City's newly implemented asset management program.

Mr. Abi-Karam added that some mapping of the City's stormwater system has already been completed and entered into GIS. All of these efforts remain in progress. The City has base atlases of its stormwater system, but their level of accuracy is also not at 100%.

Mr. Partington commented that he was under the impression that water main mapping was already underway. Mr. Abi-Karam replied that Staff had conducted some of this mapping internally by updating its atlases when as-built reports were submitted. Under the Consent Order, the City has until May 24, 2023, to complete this mapping.

Chair Mammano stated that she was concerned the Committee, in its remaining lifespan, would not be in a position to opine on the City's water system to the extent that they had provided input on the sewer system. She suggested that the Committee may wish to discuss this with the Commission at their upcoming joint meeting.

Mr. Abi-Karam advised that as a parallel effort to system mapping, Staff has engaged consultant Hazen and Sawyer to finalize a water computer model. This deliverable is expected in September 2021. Staff has also requested that this consultant provide a program that will allow development of a computerized model of the water system as well as procedures and instructions on how to maintain water at "dead ends." The City requested these deliverables as part of the procedure for the issuance of capacity letters for the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD).

Chair Mammano recalled that the Committee has seen a presentation showing how City fire hydrants were identified, mapped, and tested. Mr. Abi-Karam explained that this was a separate program that was initiated in 2016 for location and testing of hydrants.

Chair Mammano asked if the consultant responsible for mapping water infrastructure will also be responsible for examining its condition. Mr. Abi-Karam replied that this effort will only undertake mapping, although he expected that a similar analysis for condition may be required in the future.

iii. Update on Commission Communication Regarding the Moratorium from June 1, 2021 – Feedback from Public Works on how condition of infrastructure will be included in development reviews

Chair Mammano noted that the members received a memo from the City Manager addressing their recent communication to the City Commission. Following direction from the Commission, the City Manager consulted a number of local jurisdictions to determine if they incorporate condition of infrastructure in their consideration of projects. The

findings were that condition is reviewed administratively but is not codified as part of the process.

Chair Mammano recalled that an additional question raised by the Committee regarding how condition assessment of infrastructure can be incorporated into the development review process. She had reached out to Assistant City Attorney D'Wayne Spence for an opinion on a possible Ordinance to codify this inclusion, but he had indicated he was not yet prepared to opine on this issue. It is possible that an opinion may be provided in September.

Chair Mammano recalled that another option could be administrative review. The former Director of Public Works had suggested that he would offer some ideas on how this might be accomplished. Mr. Abi-Karam advised that he was not aware of any progress that had been made on this possibility and would reach out to Staff to determine whether there had been discussions of administrative review.

Mr. Partington added that with respect to the possibility of administrative review, he had not expected to see an Ordinance written that bases approval of a development on the condition of infrastructure; however, he felt it may be possible to add language to an existing Ordinance requiring that the condition of infrastructure that may be affected by nearby development will be reported during the development review process. He pointed out that if this review is written into an Ordinance, it cannot be overlooked.

It was confirmed that Staff already conducts this administrative review, and that the Committee's request was that this analysis be made public and included in the Development Review Committee's (DRC's) approval package. Chair Mammano recalled that a Committee member who also serves on the City's Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) regularly reviews the Staff Reports provided to this advisory body but did not recall seeing specific documentation regarding condition.

It was clarified that Staff may point out that a development may require repair or replacement of a piece of infrastructure, and the developer has the option of waiting for the City to make this repair or replacement or offering to do so himself as part of the approval process. Mr. Partington stated that he would also like to see the ongoing demands on the City's water treatment facility, including the result of new development. He recalled that the Committee had seen a spreadsheet estimating the demand on this infrastructure created by additional flow from new developments.

It was proposed that Staff could report to the City Commission on condition and capacity on a quarterly or annual basis to show where the City is with respect to these demands. Chair Mammano suggested that the Committee see a "snapshot" of development every six months to review changes in capacity as listed on the spreadsheet. She reiterated that while a moratorium on development was not deemed to be appropriate based upon capacity, there are real concerns that capacity and demand should be regularly reviewed.

She also noted that if this is already subject to Staff review, that information is not available to the public.

Chair Mammano concluded that this Item will be placed on the September 2021 Agenda for additional discussion and information.

iv. Additional detail regarding the unsolicited proposals for the water plant

Mr. Abi-Karam explained that there has been a second unsolicited proposal regarding the City's water treatment plant. This proposal is being reviewed by City Staff and will be presented to the Commission on September 27, 2021. This unsolicited proposal is also exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act and cannot be provided to the Committee at this time. Staff will assist the City Commission with recommendations.

Chair Mammano requested additional information on how this proposal might affect the City's contract for an owner's representative. Mr. Abi-Karam replied that the City will most likely engage this representative once they have completed review of all proposals.

Mr. Zeltman asked if a pilot study for the Prospect Wellfield to determine the best type of treatment has been finalized. Mr. Abi-Karam advised that this information will also be presented to the City Commission on September 27, along with financial analysis of proposals.

Mr. Zeltman observed that the Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (FXE) is planning to extend its westerly runway into the Prospect Wellfield. He expressed concern with the result this plan could have on existing wells, as well as the possibility of constructing a new water treatment plant on this site.

Mr. Ladd stated that the logic behind unsolicited proposals is to keep their information from becoming public, as competitors could take advantage of the proposal's specifications and underbid that proposal.

v. Update on proposed pilot study at Prospect Wellfield and Fiveash Treatment Plant

It was determined that this Item would be placed on the September 2021 Agenda for an update.

V. New Business

i. Planning for the workshop with the Commission in September 2021

Chair Mammano recommended that the Committee provide a comprehensive book of all the materials they have reviewed since August 2020. She noted that the members'

backup materials include a list of this documentation from all previous meetings. This will allow the City Commission to see what the Committee has been doing for the past few months.

Chair Mammano added that she would also provide the Commission with a one-page summary of what happened during the Committee's deliberations before they reached a decision on the moratorium. She has updated a previously existing document to reflect this summary, including background information on the previous Infrastructure Task Force.

The Committee will also ask the Commission for guidance on how to move forward with respect to monitoring, looking more closely at water and stormwater systems, and discussing new sustainability initiatives, among other possibilities. Chair Mammano requested that the members review the information she has provided and send any correspondence on this topic to the Liaison's Office.

VI. Public Works Update

i. Water & Sewer Breaks Report 2021 w/Mapping

Chair Mammano noted that this is an ongoing item presented for the Committee's monitoring.

ii. CIP Financial Report

Chair Mammano noted that this is also an ongoing monitoring item.

iii. Impact Fees – Usage

Chair Mammano recalled that at the June 2021 meeting, it was noted that some impact fees are used to pay interest on City bonds. The Committee had requested additional information on this, and received a copy of legislation stating that impact fees may not be used to pay off existing debt unless there is a reasonable connection to capacity issues, such as the impacts of new residential or non-residential construction. For this reason, using impact fees to pay down bonds are considered an appropriate use.

Mr. Partington asked if impact fees collected in regard to water must be used toward water-related projects, as well as similar requirements for stormwater, sewer, and other impacts. It was confirmed that this is the case. Prior to 2020, impact fees were not separated into different funds; at present, they are separated and used specifically for projects that increase capacity.

Chair Mammano requested that the Committee members review future meeting dates, pointing out that they may hold their regular meeting on September 13, which is after the joint Commission workshop, or August 30, which is before the workshop.

Motion made by Mr. Partington, seconded by Mr. Zeltman, to change the next meeting to Monday, August 30. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. Zeltman recalled that he had expressed concern a number of years ago regarding structural cracks he had observed in the concrete parking deck of a City garage. He had reported his concerns at the time. Following the condominium collapse in Surfside, he has reached out to the City Manager to reiterate these concerns and ensure that the City was aware of them.

Chair Mammano pointed out that one of the Committee's charges was to look at the condition of City-owned buildings. Information was provided to the members regarding six buildings that have undergone their 40-year inspections, including the Fort Lauderdale Police Station. They have not focused on the condition of buildings thus far. While there may not be sufficient time remaining for a comprehensive review of these structures, Chair Mammano recommended that this be addressed with the City Commission in case they wish to extend the life of the Committee.

Chair Mammano requested that the Committee's next Agenda include an item further exploring the condition of City-owned buildings. It was clarified that the garage to which Mr. Zeltman had referred falls under the auspices of the Department of Transportation and Mobility, whose Director would be invited to address the Committee.

Mr. Abi-Karam advised that this issue has been addressed by the City Commission, and building officials are involved in the review of City structures. Chair Mammano asked if an appropriate building official could also be invited to the next Committee meeting.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:27 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.]