

**APPROVED MINUTES  
 BEACH BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
 STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING  
 Thursday, April 14, 2022, 2:30 P.M.  
 CITY HALL, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room  
 100 North Andrews Avenue  
 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301**

| MEMBERS   | September 2021 – August 2022 |        |              |        |   |
|---|------------------------------|--------|--------------|--------|---|
|   | REGULAR MTGS                 |        | SPECIAL MTGS |        |   |
|   | Present                      | Absent | Present      | Absent |   |
| The “W” Hotel, Capri Hotel, LLC<br><u>Anna MacDiarmid</u><br>Brigitte Bienvenu, Alternate           | P                            | 8      | 0            | 0      | 0 |
| Marriott Courtyard, PHF Oceanfront<br><u>Michael Fleming</u><br>Steve Zunt, Alternate               | P                            | 8      | 0            | 0      | 0 |
| Ritz Carlton Hotel<br><u>Bosther Kusich</u>   | P                            | 8      | 4            | 0      | 0 |
| Greater FTL Chamber of Commerce<br><u>Stuart Levy</u>   | P                            | 7      | 1            | 0      | 0 |
| The Westin Ft Lauderdale Beach<br><u>Daniel Esteves</u><br>Laurie Johnson, Alternate (at 2:37 p.m.) | P                            | 7      | 1            | 0      | 0 |
| B Ocean Fort Lauderdale<br><u>Rizwan Ansari</u><br>Ken Elizondo, Alternate                          | P                            | 7      | 1            | 0      | 0 |
| Bahia Mar Doubletree<br><u>Lisa Namour</u><br>Michael Munroe, Alternate                             | P                            | 5      | 3            | 0      | 0 |
| Sonesta Hotel<br><u>Michael Medeiros</u><br>JP LeBlanc, Alternate                                   | P                            | 8      | 0            | 0      | 0 |

**Staff**

Tasha Cunningham, BID Manager  
 Sarah Spurlock, Nighttime Economy Manager and BBID Liaison

Ingrid Kindbom, Nighttime Economy and BBID Program Manager  
Carla Blair, Prototype, Inc.

**Guests**

Ina Lee

Ari Glassman, Website Manager

**I. Call to Order / Roll Call / Quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 2:31 p.m. by Chair MacDiarmid. It was noted that a quorum was present.

**II. Why Are We Here Today?**

Ingrid Kindbom, Program Manager, introduced the objectives for the meeting and reviewed the agenda briefly. She noted with the new staff there had been a number of questions regarding the goals and objectives of the Board and explained the discussion would provide space to think outside the box and become more proactive for the future.

Ms. Kindbom shared the purpose of the BBID and the goals and objectives for the Board, noting they were established in 2006:

**Purpose:**

Monitor the progress of the Beach Business Improvement District; make recommendations on services, enhancements and special programs and events.

**Goals and Objectives:**

Fort Lauderdale Beach is in the on-going process of transforming itself into a world-class beach resort area. The establishment of a Beach Improvement District along the beach would assist in:

- Establishing Fort Lauderdale Beach as a premiere resort destination
- Significantly increase tourism in the area.
- Expanding business revenue and increasing economic growth.
- Enhancing the physical appearance and increasing the attractiveness of the district.
- Developing pedestrian friendly sidewalks.
- Creating a unique sense of place for visitors to enjoy.
- Improving the overall image of the beach.

Ms. Kindbom stated the list was still good but needs to be tweaked to align with the current conditions as the beach area has evolved since 2006 when the goals were established.

### **III. Establish Baseline**

#### **• Review of Historical Activities, Funding, and Results**

Ms. Kindbom reviewed the state of the BBID briefly. She explained revenues had gone up based on property values and noted expenditures had gone up and down based on projects funded in various years. She reviewed the fund balance and expenditures briefly from Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) through Year-to-Date 2022. She noted in the FY22 budget, expenditures break down as follows: 75 percent to events, nine (9) percent to professional services, and 16 percent to administrative services. Discussion ensued briefly on what portion of the FY22 budget had come from the fund balance.

Ina Lee asserted that one of the things that had changed was that when the Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) sunsetted, the BBID took over a number of the costs they had previously covered. She stated for example, the BBID and CRA used to split costs like the snowman and holiday lights.

Ms. Kindbom shared a draft of a preliminary FY23 budget. She noted the Tortuga and Audacy music festivals were the only commitments with contracts in place for FY23 and pointed out the contracts are contingent on funding. She stated revenue for FY23 was not yet known.

Sarah Spurlock, BBID Liaison, explained revenue numbers would be better known in June when the property appraisals are completed. Discussion continued regarding estimated revenues.

Ms. Namour asked for clarification on the increase in administrative costs year-to-year. Ms. Kindbom explained that the preliminary FY23 budget is smaller, so while the cost had not changed since last year, it became a larger percentage of the total.

Mr. Fleming noted the impact on the budget an increase in commitment to promotion would have. Ms. Spurlock responded that was a decision the Board would have to make.

Mr. Ansari asked if there was a break down available of the other professional services line item within the budget.

Ms. Kindbom reviewed the numbers briefly as follows:

- BBID Manager - \$57,600
- Website Administration - \$50,000
- Holiday Lights - \$26,000
- Snowman - \$79,784
- Supplemental Cleaning Services - \$28,600

Ms. Kindbom pointed out the contracts were less, but these were the budgeted amounts. Discussion ensued regarding the cost of the snowman.

#### **IV. Looking Ahead – Plan for the Future**

Ms. Kindbom shared a sampling of BBID funded events from 2013-2022, including the amount contributed and the number of times funded.

Mr. Ansari asserted the cost of the snowman and holiday lights was a hard pill for him to swallow. He asked the last time other vendors had been contacted for a bid.

Ms. Kindbom explained the snowman had been funded for seven (7) years, and the current three (3) year contract expires October 2022.

Discussion ensued regarding the contract and the investment in the snowman and related storage. Ari Glassman, Website Manager, provided added detail on the history of the snowman décor.

Continuing, Ms. Kindbom provided examples of some of the improvements other Business Improvement Districts had been involved with.

Chair MacDiarmid stated she had also done a review of other districts, and found projects that included marketing, business development, capital improvement, community service, parks and public service, among others. She noted the BBID had been geared a lot toward funding of events, where others were not.

Ms. Lee asserted it would be useful to know what responsibility the City of Fort Lauderdale has for maintaining infrastructure on the beach, including the major public areas covered by Parks and Recreation. She stated it was not necessarily the BBID's job to support and fund capital improvements, and noted the beach was managed by the City as a park.

Ms. Spurlock clarified the BBID is part of the City. She explained the BBID fund is a different pot of money but is still City funds. She agreed the City manages the beach and has a budget they do what they are able to with, but when looking at who is responsible, it is the City. Ms. Spurlock stated the reason beach improvement districts are created is to do improvements on the beach. She noted this Board makes decisions to go above and beyond what the City is funding and prioritizing.

Chair MacDiarmid used the lifeguard stands as an example, pointing out the City had not prioritized it, but the Board thought it was important to make the improvement.

Ms. Kindbom stated in order to know what to do moving forward, it was important to understand who the BBID's audience was. She led an activity to brainstorm responses, and the Board discussed the results, including:

- Couples and families (moms, parents)
- Businesses on the beach (local businesses, business owners)
- Visitors to the beach (international visitors, tourists, Spring breakers, well-traveled guests from specific regions, cruisers)

- Business travelers (airline crews, business meetings)
- Snow birds
- Residents (locals, Florida residents)
- Dog lovers
- Fitness people (joggers, bike riders, swimmers, yoga, volleyball)

Ms. Kindbom asked the Board to repeat the activity, addressing what they thought the target audiences want. The Board discussed the results, including:

- Hotels
- Dining/Eating (beverages and food on the beach, great restaurants, cocktails)
- Activities (fun in the sun, water activities, swimming, biking, exercise, relaxation)
- Events
- Safe and clean beach
- Shopping (upscale shopping)
- More seats on the beach
- Quality time
- Green space
- Bike paths
- Easy transportation
- Family-oriented
- Clean restrooms
- Great service

Ms. Glassman discussed the audience research that had been done during the process of creating events and activities to activate the beach for Friday Night Soundwaves and LOOP activations. She noted the LGBTQ+ population and those with environmental interests are also audiences which were not included on the list previously brainstormed. She reviewed efforts to focus activities on specific audiences and create positive feelings based on experiences.

Ms. Kindbom noted Ms. Glassman brought up good points in that the feeling and experience after leaving Fort Lauderdale beach is important to make people want to return. She asked the Board whether they believe the beach is safe today.

Mr. Ansari shared that he had moved from Tampa to Fort Lauderdale and lived in the hotel for two (2) months. He discussed walking to A1A for food and stated he had a horrendous experience. He noted there was not a police presence, and it appeared to be the ghetto in the evening. Chair MacDiarmid agreed, stating she would not go alone in the evening.

Mr. Kusich stated for the past several weeks, he had hired police for his hotel for Thursday through Sunday each week. He stated the activities were increasing and there had been incidents with customers getting physical with employees. Discussion ensued regarding the homeless population and associated issues.

Mr. Fleming stated there were frequent issues on the patios and outside. He added that he had had people check out of the hotel because they did not feel safe.

Chair MacDiarmid stated that police response takes 45 minutes and shared an experience where she and her staff had to call for police assistance four (4) times to handle an unruly person.

Discussion on safety continued. Ms. Kindbom noted it was clear a lot of work needed to be done in this area.

Chair MacDiarmid stated this was important work for the Board, more important than providing dollars to events that would continue without the BBID funding.

Ms. Kindbom asked the Board if they are happy with how clean the beach is.

Mr. Fleming asserted the beach is clean, but the sidewalks and parks are an issue. Chair MacDiarmid added that the bus shelters are not clean at any time of day. Discussion continued regarding cleanliness on the beach.

Ms. Glassman stated there had been in-depth conversations with the new Police Chief prior to their taking over the position regarding the huge problem of safety, cleanliness, and homelessness on the beach. She noted they had been able to stifle the problem while the beach was being activated. She added that they had hired members of the homeless population for events and discussed an ambassador program in the works.

Chair MacDiarmid asserted cleanliness and safety are what bring people back. Discussion continued regarding safety and cleanliness in the area.

Ms. Kindbom noted only one (1) Board member had included easy transportation in their list. She asked about public transportation options on the beach.

Ms. Namour stated difficulty getting down A1A is among the biggest complaints her staff receives. Discussion ensued regarding traffic issues, policing of weekend cruisers and motorcycles, Uber, Freebee, and public transportation options.

Ms. Kindbom pointed to a summary of what is allowable for the BBID to fund. She noted as long as it was within the physical boundaries, many things were allowable, and invited discussion regarding the specifics of what the BBID should be doing next.

Ms. Namour stated she liked Ms. Glassman's idea of selecting three (3) areas to be the focus of the plan and then creating action steps for each. Discussion ensued regarding creation of a marketing plan once the Board knew what they wanted to promote.

Chair MacDiarmid suggested the three (3) main topics for a plan could be a clean, safe beach with things to do. Discussion continued on promotion of actions being taken to improve safety on the beach.

Ms. Lee stated a focus on bringing business to the district should be added to the discussion. She noted funded events and activities should be in the shoulder and summer seasons to bring people to the hotels. Continuing, Ms. Lee asserted safety and cleanliness would take coordination with the Police Department and Parks and Recreation, because that is a part of what they do and what they are responsible for. She asserted the Visitors Bureau is already marketing the area, so the BBID does not necessarily need to duplicate their efforts. She discussed past priorities of the Board.

Chair MacDiarmid pointed out the Board members also do their own marketing for their own hotels. She noted that in addressing safety, there may be more of a need to advocate for the district's needs, rather than trying to address it themselves.

Ms. Spurlock asserted it was a misconception that safety is all about police. She stated it is organic, and activation is a cornerstone of safety, with more people on the beach resulting in less criminal activity. She pointed out a beach covered by a large presence of police officers is not a place people want to go and noted there are ways that the BBID can contribute to the effort of making the area cleaner and safer, creating a fun beach that people want to return to.

Ms. Glassman stated it was about intrinsic qualities, providing people with an experience that contributes to a positive memory of a place where they felt safe, welcomed, and comfortable. She noted for example that a tram that takes people from the garage to the beach was a safety thing.

Chair MacDiarmid asked whether they could hire someone to be responsible for monitoring the beaches.

Ms. Spurlock discussed how Amsterdam's hiring of red shirts to encourage people to keep things clean and behave.

Ms. Namour asserted the Amsterdam model may have worked a few years ago, but everything had changed. She noted four (4) years ago these were not the same issues being dealt with today. Discussion continued regarding the difference between issues in Fort Lauderdale and other locations.

Ms. Lee asked the status of the police substation that had been planned for Las Olas Park. She noted CRA funds put into developing the park were supposed to contribute to the police presence at the beach. Ms. Glassman explained the substation was unlikely to be happening any time soon.

Ms. Lee asked the process for increasing the amount contributed to the BBID's revenues. Ms. Spurlock explained it was a part of the budget process with hearings held in September and the budget approved by the Commission.

Ms. Lee inquired as to the current millage rate. Ms. Kindbom responded that it was currently 85 cents per \$1,000 in taxable value.

Ms. Lee suggested an increase and stated if the Board is thinking outside the box, perhaps they should be looking at not being limited to that same number. She stated the fund could be increased with a specific intent, especially in light of the impact on the budget of the CRA sunseting.

Ms. Spurlock noted the City's millage rate had not been changed in years, and the Commissioners are also voting on the BBID rate.

Ms. Kindbom asserted it would be helpful to look at broad ideas, including the creative and unusual, identifying what is working well, what is just ideas, and what is doable. She asked Board members to list things the BBID could do or provide. The Board discussed the results, including:

- Bikes for public use
- Events (Friday Night Soundwaves, Fur the Love, summer events)
- Water ferry
- Entertainment
- Information on what is going on (communication)
- Supplement safety and cleanliness (hire a Safety Ambassador)
- Hire a team to walk the beach during busy season
- Review funding for events carefully (less funding of events)
- Easy parking
- Unique experience
- Walkable, easy to get around
- Traffic
- Jogging track
- Sense of pride in community
- Address homeless situation

Ms. Johnson discussed the feeling of pride in community she has experienced before even leaving the airport in other communities.

Ms. Kindbom encouraged Board members to consider the topics of what the BBID can do for discussion at the May meeting.

Chair MacDiarmid reiterated that there are not enough chairs on the beach, noting by 10 a.m. on Saturday they are occupied. Discussion ensued regarding the chairs on the beach, locking up chairs early in the evening, and other issues surrounding the contract with Boucher Brothers.

Chair MacDiarmid stated they had all been saying these things about and to Boucher Brothers for years and it had not changed.

Ms. Spurlock noted the Boucher Brothers were following the contract that had been given them. She stated the City is looking at giving hotels the ability to do their own concessions

on the beach, including chairs, food, and beverages. Discussion continued regarding the beach vendor contract and its negotiation.

Ms. Lee asserted that the Board could put together a list of what they need for their guests and provide it to the City for use in negotiating the contract with Boucher Brothers. Ms. Spurlock stated the topic could be discussed more as it is developed more.

## **V. How Do We Measure Success?**

Ms. Kindbom shared examples from other cities with Business Improvement Districts and what they use in measuring success and defining outcomes.

Ms. Spurlock stated one way to measure success is to do a fiscal impact study of the beach area. She noted this would give the audience and stakeholders an idea of the revenue, jobs, and taxes produced by the beach, and could be updated periodically to measure improvement in the beach's financial value to the City. She asked the Board to consider commissioning a study.

*Item VI was addressed following item VII.*

## **VI. Event Funding – Revision of Process?**

Ms. Spurlock pointed out two (2) events take up the bulk of the expected funding for FY23 and suggested a discussion on revision of the process for funding future events.

Chair MacDiarmid asked whether the Board would review event presentations if there were not uncommitted funds available.

Ms. Spurlock explained there would probably be a small amount of fund balance, but not a lot, and the Board had committed to funding Tortuga and Audacy for two (2) years. She stated staff wanted to make it easier for the Board to have those difficult conversations by developing a policy on what they would fund.

Mr. Levy noted when the Board reviewed the Tortuga and Audacy applications, it was easier to commit because they had the money. Discussion ensued on funding of events.

Ms. Namour stated she understood exceptions had been made due to COVID-19, but she thought the arrangement was that the most an event would be funded was for three (3) years. Ms. Spurlock noted the BBID had been funding the Air Show for nine (9) years.

Chair MacDiarmid stated when she joined the BBID, she thought funding events was what the BBID did, and noted it was good that they were reviewing that now.

Ms. Spurlock pointed out there was work to be done, but staff envisioned having a policy outlining event funding guidelines in place for the FY24 budget, to make the criteria and application process clear.

Ms. Lee reiterated the suggestion to review increasing the millage rate. She asked that staff run the numbers regarding what impact that would have.

Ms. Kindbom asked if there was any regular communication going out to the other members of the BBID.

Ms. Glassman stated she emails once a month, but the communication addresses activities and does not go into depth regarding actions of the Board. She noted the last stakeholder meeting had been five (5) or six (6) years ago.

Ms. Spurlock stated she liked the idea of a town hall meeting with the opportunity to survey the contributing members on their thoughts and provide more awareness about the things their money is used for.

## **VII. Review and Assess Need for Revision of Existing Codes**

Ms. Spurlock stated there were a few Legislative changes staff had wanted to discuss. She noted the proposed revision of the Purpose, Goals, and Objectives shared at the beginning of the meeting and pointed out the Ordinance which governs the BBID is not Codified in the City's Code of Ordinances. Ms. Spurlock suggested the Board discuss a potential vote at a future meeting to recommend the Commission Codify the Ordinance.

Ms. Lee asked if they could also review the boundaries of the BBID. Ms. Spurlock stated that was something the Board could consider, but it was a bigger conversation that would take more time.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

Chair MacDiarmid thanked Ms. Spurlock and Ms. Kindbom for taking the efforts to improve the BBID to heart.

Mr. Fleming asked about planning meetings for Spring Break which were held in previous years. Ms. Spurlock noted it had become more routine, but there were still meetings.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. The next Regular Meeting of the BID is scheduled for May 9, 2022, at 3:30 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by C. Parkinson, Prototype, Inc.]

### Attachments:

Strategic Planning Presentation