

**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD  
Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport  
Red Tails Conference Room  
6000 NW 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309  
May 22, 2023 – 6:00 PM**

<b>Cumulative Attendance</b>					
<b>1/2023 through 12/2023</b>					
	<b>Members</b>	<b>Appt by</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>1</b>	Sofia Thordin, Vice Chair	M	P	4	0
<b>2</b>	Vacant	I	-	-	-
<b>3</b>	Robert Daoust (at 6:19 p.m.)	II	P	4	0
<b>4</b>	Kelly Charles	IV	P	4	0
<b>5</b>	David Blattner, Chair	I	P	4	0
<b>6</b>	Suzee Bailey	C	P	1	0
<b>7</b>	Whitney Dutton	IV	A	3	1
<b>8</b>	Cameron Steagall	III	P	1	0
<b>9</b>	Jason Kirchhoff	II	P	4	0
<b>10</b>	Vacant	III	-	-	-
<b>11</b>	Jason Hignite	M	A	3	1

**Staff Present**

Public Works Department

Glen Hadwen, Sustainability Manager  
Stefan Perritano, Sustainability Coordinator, Staff Liaison  
Luz Ramirez, Sustainability Analyst  
Dr. Nancy Gassman, Assistant Public Works Director  
Todd Hiteshow, Environmental Compliance Manager

**Guests**

Nicole Barnett

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m. The roll was called, and it was determined a quorum was present.

Newly appointed Board member Cameron Steagall introduced himself. He stated he is a Sustainability Consultant for an international nonprofit consulting firm, and the work of the Board seems to fit well within his specialties, so he is excited to serve. Mr. Steagall was appointed by Vice Mayor Beasley-Pittman. However, because he was appointed shortly before this Board meeting, he was not able to complete his Oath of Office and, therefore, he did participate in any of the Board votes.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A **motion** to approve the April 24, 2023, minutes as amended was made by Ms. Charles and seconded by Ms. Thordin. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

### **Staff Liaison Report**

#### **April 2023 Flooding Update**

Dr. Nancy Gassman, Assistant Public Works Director, provided a brief update on flooding following a significant rainfall event on April 12 and 13. She stated many neighborhoods were impacted, primarily Melrose Park, Melrose Manors, River Oaks, and Edgewood. She discussed the recovery efforts and provided highlights briefly. She stated City Hall also suffered significant damage, which included damaging the electrical and mechanical systems for the entire building. She explained the City was now working on lessons learned, preparation for the next event, and getting back to as normal a state as possible.

Mr. Hadwen noted the SAB meeting locations had also been displaced, and stated the June 26 meeting would be held at Fire Station 2 located at 528 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Fort Lauderdale.

#### **Vulnerability Assessment**

Mr. Perritano explained staff had reviewed the bids received in response to a Requests for Proposal (RFP) for a vulnerability assessment, and a contractor had been selected. He stated next step is approval of the contractor by the Commission.

Mr. Hadwen stated completion was estimated for March 2024.

Mr. Perritano outlined the process briefly and stated data from the April flooding event would be considered in the assessment.

#### **Tree Preservation Ordinance**

Mr. Hadwen stated the ordinance continues to move slowly forward. He noted staff would be working to put the item before the Planning and Zoning Board in June, which would put it before the City Commission in August and September.

#### **LEED for Cities Recognition**

Mr. Perritano stated an April public event to announce the City's LEED for Cities certification was canceled due to the flooding. He explained representatives of Bank of America and the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) would now recognize the City at the June 20 Commission meeting.

Ms. Thordin asked about the connection to Bank of America. Mr. Perritano explained Bank of America had sponsored the 2022 LEED for Cities Local Government Leadership Program, a cohort of 15 cities across the US working on LEED for Cities which included Fort Lauderdale.

#### **South Florida Climate Action Pledge**

Mr. Perritano shared that a resolution in support of the South Florida Climate Action Pledge would be presented to the Commission at its June 6 meeting. The resolution affirms the City of Fort Lauderdale's Commitment to jointly advancing strategic climate adaptation and mitigation efforts and implementation of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (the Compact) Regional Climate Action Plan 3.0.

Ms. Bailey asked for additional information on the pledge. Mr. Perritano stated he would email the Board the language of the plan.

### **Presentations**

#### **Living Seawalls**

Dr. Nancy Gassman, Assistant Public Works Director, made a presentation regarding living seawalls, one of many potential tools in the City's toolkit for working on resiliency. She discussed the benefits of natural shorelines, as well as techniques for habitat enhancement in coastal structures. She reviewed the continuum of green or softer techniques for shorelines to gray or harder techniques, including definitions and examples. Continuing, she discussed purposes of the seawalls and alternate solutions for habitat and waterway quality improvement. She shared municipal challenges with living seawalls, including products in development, costs, market readiness, and permitting.

*Robert Daoust joined the meeting at 6:19 p.m.*

A question-and-answer segment ensued.

***Presentation is attached.***

### **New Business**

Ms. Charles asked the history of the ordinance which states Fort Lauderdale residents cannot have chickens. She stated raising chickens could have a positive impact on greenhouse gasses resulting from food waste.

Dr. Gassman provided a brief background on the SAB and urban farming. She noted a previous Chair had gone to the Commission several times on the issue, and then Mayor Jack Seiler had been fundamentally opposed to creating an environment where Fort Lauderdale's image included roosters and chickens, and the other Commissioners agreed. She stated there may be an opportunity to bring the matter back before the current Commission.

Ms. Charles asked whether the Board was open to reopening the issue. Discussion ensued regarding the policy and bird policies in other communities.

Mr. Kirchoff asked whether the City participates in any of the multiple sustainability rating systems or scorekeeping systems. Mr. Hadwen stated in addition to LEED for Cities, the City has submitted to the Carbon Disclosure Project in the past without being scored, but will be submitting for scoring this year. Dr. Gassman noted the City also participates in the Florida Green Building Coalition.

Mr. Hadwen noted the greenhouse gas inventory is a portion of the CDP submission. He stated that in the next months, staff will be able to present the 2020 update of the greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory. He noted that due to COVID-19, GHG reductions exceeded the City's 2020 goals.

Mr. Perritano provided additional detail on the items included within the LEED for Cities program. He stated it gives a good picture of the City as a whole.

Ms. Thordin stated she would like to come up with more topics on the multimodal front but was having a difficult time narrowing it down to something actionable. She discussed the City's Vision Zero plan and

noted she had written her thesis on the program, but it appeared to have died down in the past five (5) years since it was adopted.

Mr. Hadwen agreed that Vision Zero was less of a priority now and noted a recent focus on Complete Streets. He stated staff could invite someone from the Transportation and Mobility Department to speak on the Complete Streets program. Dr. Gassman suggested Karen Warfel would be a good speaker and provided additional history on the City and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) efforts on transportation planning.

### **Old Business**

#### **Termite Impact on Urban Forest**

Mr. Hadwen stated Mr. Perritano had tried to reach Professor Thomas Chouvinc, University of Florida, who had presented to the Board in February 2022 regarding urban termites but had not been able to make the connection yet.

Chair Blattner stated he and Ms. Charles were the only members of the Board who had seen that original presentation. Ms. Charles noted Mr. Perritano had sent out the original presentation, and asked whether everyone had the chance to review it. She discussed the information provided briefly and explained the SAB had sent a communication to the Commission regarding education efforts to address termites, but it had not gotten far with the Commission. She suggested revisiting the communication to the new Commission.

Discussion ensued regarding the issue of urban termites, protection of the City's urban forest, and specific recommendations. Consensus was to have Ms. Charles work with Mr. Perritano to redraft the original communication for discussion at the June meeting, and to invite Professor Chouvinc back to speak.

### **Proposed Communication**

None.

### **Comments**

None.

### **Items for Next Meeting**

Mr. Hadwen noted the Board had discussed taking a summer holiday. Discussion ensued and consensus was to take cancel the Board's July meeting.

Mr. Perritano stated he would invite Karen Warfel and Professor Chouvinc to speak at the next meeting.

Ms. Bailey asked what the next steps would be in relation to the living seawall presentation. Dr. Gassman stated staff is working with its engineers to look at incorporating the concept into the future designs of City-owned seawalls. She noted if the SAB wanted to entertain mandating habitat enhancement into every seawall installed in the City, that would require contemplating a communication regarding policy recommendations. Discussion continued on the procedure for potential pilot projects.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting of the SAB will be held on June 26, 2023.