



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FORT LAUDERDALE EXECUTIVE AIRPORT
RED TAILS CONFERENCE ROOM
6000 NW 21 AVENUE, FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2023 – 2:00 P.M. TO 4:30 P.M.**

January-December 2023

Attendance

Marilyn Mammano, Chair	P	10	0
Peter Partington, Vice Chair	P	8	2
Gerald Angeli	A	7	3
Shane Grabski arr. 2:03)	P	9	1
James LaBrie	P	10	0
Michael Lambrechts	A	7	3
Michael Marshall	A	6	4
Marta Reczko	P	3	1
Fred Stresau	P	2	0
Roosevelt Walters	P	10	0
Ralph Zeltman	P	10	0

As of this date, there are 11 appointed members to the Committee, which means 6 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

Omar Castellon, Assistant Director of Public Works -- Engineering
Dr. Nancy Gassman, Assistant Director of Public Works – Sustainability
Vickie Beauvais, Senior Administrative Assistant
Semele Williams, Senior Administrative Assistant
Yvette Matthews, Assistant Director, Office of Management and Budget
Aricka Johnson, Office of Management and Budget
Jamie Opperlee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

None.

1. Call to Order

i. Roll Call

Chair Mammano called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

ii. Approval of Agenda

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

iii. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – November 6, 2023

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

Mr. Grabski arrived at 2:03 p.m.

2. Old Business

i. City Hall Replacement

Chair Mammano recalled that the first workshop to discuss City Hall replacement was held on Saturday, December 2, 2023. She estimated that roughly 35 members of the public were present, and requested feedback from the Committee members who had attended.

Mr. Walters stated that he had felt there was significant participation from the audience. He observed, however, that most of the individuals and businesses represented were from the same City Commission Districts, which meant outreach to the public must be improved in order to have participation from a cross-section of the entire City.

Ms. Reczko advised that Staff and the City's consultants were well-prepared for the workshop, and felt the survey will help generate more interest in the issue. She also believed all districts should be represented and involved in the process.

Mr. Stresau asked if there had been any information shared at the workshop which would be useful as part of any report the Committee might give to the City Commission. He did not believe there had been any such information, and did not feel the City Manager's comments had been helpful to the process, as they had seemed to discourage discussion from the public.

Mr. Stresau added that he felt members of the public should have been allowed to express their full range of concerns, although Staff had indicated that some of these concerns were not intended to be the subject of the workshop.

Mr. LaBrie felt the presentations at the meeting had been made at a high level, and the content had only scratched the surface of the issues related to a new City Hall. He recommended greater focus moving forward, as well as more defined goals of what each workshop is meant to accomplish. He recalled that while there had been some examples of guiding principles for a new City Hall, these had not been discussed in depth. He also noted that despite significant communication and outreach, there had

been approximately 15 members of the public present who did not represent City Staff, the Committee, or the consultants.

Mr. Zeltman stated that he felt the presentations were well done, and suggested that in the future, individuals who wished to speak at workshops could be invited to come to a microphone and speak so they could be more clearly understood. He asked if the public had provided sufficient feedback on what they wanted from a City Hall.

Sheryl Dickey, President of Dickey Consulting Services, advised that her consulting team had compiled an overview of the guiding principles they felt were important to the process. Mr. Zeltman observed that the City Commission, Mayor, and Staff should also provide input on what they want from a City Hall, including connectivity with other areas and departments. Ms. Dickey confirmed that some of these statements have been compiled as well and are included under the guiding principles.

Chair Mammano advised that she was disappointed in the public turnout for the workshop. She suggested that there may be outreach efforts the Committee has not yet considered, such as an editorial, coverage by the press, or more targeted efforts.

Chair Mammano continued that she had heard significant feedback regarding the visual examples of architecture, which had not been positive. She pointed out that all the examples provided appeared very similar, and shared Mr. Stresau's concern that the public had questions which went unanswered, including where the new facility would be located.

Mr. Walters commented that there had been conflicting direction, urging the public to address both general and specific concerns. He encouraged greater structure, pointing out that if everyone present can discuss whatever they want, the workshop would no longer be about City Hall. He also emphasized the importance of convincing the public to attend subsequent workshops and provide their input.

Chair Mammano observed that it may have been a strategic error to address what a new City Hall should look like before discussing what the public wants from a City Hall. She noted that the workshop had ended with many of the attendees "drifting away" rather than having a strong closing that reviewed what had been learned.

Mr. LaBrie also felt there should be review at the end of the workshop to ensure that the facilitators and the public have met their goals. He was not in favor of letting people talk at length about whatever issues came to mind if those issues did not address the workshop's goals.

Mr. Stresau advised that compiling the comments together was the consultant's responsibility, as was ensuring that discussion stayed on track. Ms. Dickey suggested that comment cards could be provided for the public if there were additional issues they wished to discuss that were not the specific topics of the workshops.

Vice Chair Partington observed that while he had not been able to attend the workshop, he had visited the City's website with the intent of taking the survey. When he did not find what he was looking for, he recalled that a survey had been sent to residents, including a QR code. Chair Mammano suggested that attendees at the workshop could have been asked how they were made aware of the survey.

At this time Chair Mammano opened public comment.

Norby Belz, member of the public, felt that a new City Hall should not recreate what has been done in the past, but should instead be a monument to what is possible for the rest of the country, particularly with regard to sustainability. He emphasized the importance of a net zero or net negative building. He felt there should have been more discussion of this from the beginning, as well as whether or not City Hall will serve a business function. He concluded that the function of City Hall should be the top priority, while its design should be a later concern.

Chair Mammano asked how Mr. Belz had been made aware of the meeting. He replied that he had heard of the workshop from a friend, but noted that there was also notice at the bottom of the City Commission newsletter.

Mr. Walters asked how Mr. Belz felt artificial intelligence (AI) should be integrated into a new City Hall. Mr. Belz advised that he did not know how this would fit into the City Hall space, but proposed that there could be further discussion of it as part of a new facility.

Mr. Belz continued that the workshop had focused primarily on how people use City Hall, and pointed out that simply going to City Hall may be a barrier for many residents, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stephen Schueler, member of the public, stated that function will follow purpose, which meant purpose should be the most important consideration. He continued that the new facility should be the result of the collective voice of the community, and suggested that the City consider how institutions are currently reexamining the purpose of libraries, creating a larger digital footprint than a physical one.

Mr. Schueler added that he is a resident of District 1, and was sent information about the workshop from one of the City's elected officials. Chair Mammano observed that the Committee members may wish to reach out to their elected officials to encourage them to disseminate information about the series of workshops.

With no other individuals wishing to speak at this time, Chair Mammano closed public comment.

Vice Chair Partington asked when the Committee should begin formulating general principles or levels of agreement. He felt there has already been agreement that a new

City Hall should be Downtown. Chair Mammano and other Committee members indicated this was not what they had heard thus far. Mr. LaBrie reiterated that this should be one of the earliest topics discussed during the workshops, and pointed out that the public should be made aware of any decisions already made by the City Commission.

Ms. Dickey stated that the Committee may wish to prepare a fact sheet for the public, which could be made available on the City's website as well as at subsequent workshops. She agreed with Mr. LaBrie that some of the questions the public is asking may have already been answered.

Dr. Nancy Gassman, Assistant Director of Public Works (Sustainability), advised that there have been numerous reports, as well as discussion during City Commission meetings, discussing the challenges the existing building would present, and the City Commission has already made the decision that that structure would be abandoned and demolished. It will not be occupied again.

Chair Mammano observed that this information should be made available on the City's website so there is no discussion of rehabilitating or retrofitting the existing building. She also agreed with Ms. Dickey's proposal of a fact sheet, which could be helpful in educating the public. She recommended that this fact sheet include the information that a previously submitted proposal for a public-private partnership (P3) for a new City Hall has been returned by the City Commission to the entity that submitted it, and all options for a new facility are on the table at present.

Ms. Dickey reviewed her notes from the workshop, which included questions asked by the public. She requested additional input from the Committee regarding other details they wished to see captured.

Mr. LaBrie asked if a decision on the new site of the new City Hall has been made thus far. Dr. Gassman replied that this has not been determined. Mr. LaBrie noted that there may be other City-owned properties outside the Downtown area where a new building could be constructed.

Vice Chair Partington asked if the City Commission will have the ultimate decision on the location of a new facility. Chair Mammano confirmed this, adding that based on the public responses at the introductory workshop, residents seem to be in favor of glass and/or transparent structures. She also noted that this was essentially the only option on display. Ms. Dickey advised that additional examples can be shown at subsequent meetings.

Mr. Zeltman proposed that future surveys ask where the public feels a new City Hall should be located, keeping convenience and transportation in mind. While the Commission will have the final decision on location, they may take the public response into account.

Mr. LaBrie recalled that one intention of the survey's request for more specific demographic information was to determine why and how often residents use City Hall, which entities or departments they seek out when going there, and which City neighborhoods the residents are coming from. Access to City Hall may be simpler from one community to another.

Aricka Johnson, representing the Office of Management and Budget, advised that full survey results are not available at this time, as the current survey runs through December; however, as of this morning, there have been 49 responses. She suggested that once full data has been compiled, there will be some indication of where respondents are located and what kind of services they are seeking.

Ms. Johnson continued that there will be three to four additional surveys, which will dig deeper into questions about the purpose and use of City Hall. Other considerations will include the types of spaces residents want to see, such as neighborhood meeting spaces, as well as whether small District offices should be located throughout the City. If location is determined to be a priority, maps can be added and respondents can be asked to identify locations that would be convenient to them.

Mr. LaBrie observed that the idea of District offices may be worth additional consideration. Chair Mammano and Mr. Walters confirmed that they have heard discussion of this option as well.

Ms. Dickey provided a sheet to the members reflecting information captured at the workshop, noting categorized public comments on some guiding principles. These principles included efficiency, equity, flexible work spaces, integrated mobility, security, community collaboration space, a City-centric location, and hazardous waste drop-off.

Ms. Dickey further clarified that the consultant team was given the guiding principles from the Committee. Chair Mammano pointed out that the "Guiding Principles" were provided by the City Staff rather than the Committee. If the Committee wishes, these can be discussed further and added to at the next workshop.

Yvette Matthews, Assistant Director of the Office of Management and Budget, stated that the purpose of the workshops is to develop the guiding principles. The intent is to gather more feedback from the public to determine what the actual guiding principles for a new City Hall will be.

Chair Mammano suggested that instead of displaying guiding principles, the examples cited above could be re-characterized as "things to consider." Ms. Dickey added that the examples are more indicative of categories into which public comments were sorted rather than guiding principles. She concluded that these changes would be made.

Chair Mammano asked if the City's web page will include a list of the questions asked at the first workshop. Ms. Johnson replied that the web page will include the presentation

made from the introductory workshop, and can include some of the public feedback as well. The Committee agreed by consensus that the web page should include content from the public, including the public comments provided at today's meeting.

Ms. Johnson continued that the City is executing the 11-point strategic communications plan discussed at the November 2023 meeting, which will be modified with the Committee's feedback. There is an upcoming article in *Riverwalk* magazine regarding the workshops, and messaging will be included in residents' water bills.

Ms. Johnson added that some City Commissioners have identified a potential conflict with the planned March 16, 2024 workshop. She suggested that this be changed to an evening meeting during the week in order to avoid conflict with the St. Patrick's Day holiday. This workshop was planned within District 2. There was Committee consensus to move this meeting to a different date and time within the same Commission District.

Ms. Dickey also noted that the definition of the term "guiding principle" is an idea that influences a person very much when making a decision or considering a matter.

Ms. Johnson concluded that the draft survey questions and a facilitation plan will be brought to the next Infrastructure Task Force Advisory Committee meeting in advance of the January 13, 2024 workshop, which will be held at the YMCA.

Chair Mammano recommended that the City's public outreach include notice on NextDoor.

Mr. Walters asked if the Committee will continue to follow the same outline for subsequent workshops. He explained that as different members of the public attend these later workshops, they may want to focus on issues that are not the stated topic of those workshops, and asked how to encourage residents to receive information for later workshops. Ms. Dickey advised that there will be a wrap-up workshop that covers all the information provided. Committee members requested that a separate board capture public comment not related to the workshop subject matter.

Mr. Walters explained that he did not want members of the public to feel that all the information presented at the wrap-up workshop was not mentioned at the individual meeting or meetings they attended. Ms. Dickey replied that the public will be informed that the workshops were spread out in order to give people an opportunity to attend at different dates and times. She added that comment cards will be available at each workshop.

Mr. LaBrie pointed out that if not all Committee members are present at the workshop, the members who are there may not discuss Committee business among themselves due to the Sunshine Law. Chair Mammano explained that the workshops will be publicly noticed and notes will be taken, which she felt would fulfill the Sunshine Law's requirements.

Mr. Stresau asked if there will be additional public discussion of the architecture of the building and its impression on the community. Ms. Dickey replied that a whiteboard with multiple topics will be provided at subsequent workshops to note discussion of topics not specifically addressed at those workshops, and she will ask for additional examples of architectural styles. It was also noted that some of the styles shown at the introductory workshop may not be possible in South Florida due to heat and climate concerns.

Ms. Reczko noted that City Halls often function as emergency operations centers (EOCs) for their communities during extreme weather, and expressed concern that buildings constructed with significant glass may not be appropriate for this use. Dr. Gassman stated that there will be an EOC in the City's new Public Safety building; however, its main EOC is located at the Fire Safety building, as the Downtown area is too flood-prone to be an appropriate setting.

Ms. Reczko explained that her concern was for function and the possible need to move City Hall operations during an emergency event. Dr. Gassman pointed out that EOCs have special equipment and backup energy generation, which means it can cause additional work to provide these functions at multiple locations. She confirmed that there have been no discussions to date regarding establishing an EOC within City Hall.

Ms. Reczko also cautioned that creating a multi-use facility could lead to misuse: if a City Hall building provides space for functions that is already available elsewhere in the City, this may not be an appropriate use. She emphasized the importance of maintaining City Hall as a government building.

Chair Mammano stated that another consideration is that there may not be sufficient broadband access throughout the City for all Staff's and residents' needs to be met online. While the City may be trending in the direction of more electronic communication over the next several years, it is not there yet.

Mr. Stresau advised that he has spoken to representatives of various City departments, and many directors feel there will still be significant value in being in the same room to share information, generate shared ideas, and move the management process forward. Chair Mammano asked if this issue should be addressed by the City Manager in discussions with his staff rather than through the workshops. Mr. Stresau felt this information will be necessary in addition to what the public has said.

Chair Mammano concluded that after the holidays, the Committee should consider the form they would like their recommendation to take.

3. New Business

Chair Mammano noted that there are numerous pressing issues to be discussed by the Committee under New Business, such as seawalls, water, and mapping of City systems,

as well as multiple capital projects, such as the progress of the new water treatment plant. She cited Broward County's Comprehensive Resiliency Plan as an example of the latter.

Mr. LaBrie stated that he would like to discuss sidewalks, including the Sidewalk Master Plan, at the next meeting. Chair Mammano agreed that the Committee should hear this information in January. She added that she would like to invite Dr. Jennifer Jurado, Deputy Director of Broward County's Resilient Environment Department, to give a presentation at a future meeting.

Dr. Gassman advised that an informational memo has been drafted for the City Commission which is intended to specifically address the City's coordination with regional entities. This will include how Fort Lauderdale can discuss concerns with these regional plans, such as its ability to drain water discharges from the western portion of Broward County. She emphasized that City management shares the Committee's concerns with these issues. The memo can be included in the Committee's backup documents for the next meeting.

Omar Castellon, Assistant Director of Public Works (Engineering), stated that a report can be provided to the Committee in February 2024 regarding the new water treatment plant.

4. Public Works Update

i. CIP Financial Report

ii. Water & Sewer Breaks Report w/Mapping

5. General Discussion and Comments

i. Committee Members

Mr. LaBrie suggested that the Chair address the surveys and City Hall workshops at the next meeting of the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations. Fliers on the workshops could also be provided at that meeting to stimulate public interest. Chair Mammano replied that she would look into this further.

Ms. Reczko noted that after the recent rain event, wastewater was released into the Intracoastal Waterway, and proposed that the Committee hear an update on this, as it was the second time in one year that a severe rainfall could not be accommodated within existing systems. Chair Mammano requested a summary of the number of releases due to severe rainfall into this waterway in calendar year 2023, as well as the volume of these releases. She felt this could be coupled with a discussion of replacing the pipe which leads to the City's injection wells. Mr. Castellon advised that a new injection well will be required, and the City is working to address infiltration and inflow (I&I) as well; however, it will take some time for significant improvements to be seen.

Ms. Reczko recommended that a wastewater capacity update be included with the planned February 2024 water update.

Vice Chair Partington requested additional information on the water released into the Intracoastal Waterway during severe rainfall events, including the extent to which this water has been treated before it is released.

Dr. Gassman stated that when water is discharged from GTL into the Intracoastal Waterway, it has been fully treated to the standard the City is required to meet. This discharge occurs when deep wells cannot handle the additional flow. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is looking at the number of discharges the City has made during the last year, particularly in conjunction with the number of extreme rainfall events that have occurred.

Vice Chair Partington asserted that he would like to hear more information regarding the standard to which water is treated. Dr. Gassman advised that the City may discharge into the waterways only in an emergency situation, and the discharge still constitutes a violation. The standard to which water must be treated for injection into a deep well is not the same standard applied to discharge into a waterway. Full disinfection is required in both cases.

Chair Mammano requested that an update on the wastewater treatment plant, including new lines to the injection wells, the lifetime of those wells, and the functioning of the plant, be provided at the March 2024 meeting. Mr. Zeltman requested that this update also include information on how to address peak flooding problems, as sewer drainage systems fail when they are saturated by water. He also wished to hear more information on the progress of lining gravity sewer mains to stop I&I, which will help reduce the need for an additional deep injection well.

ii. Public Comments

None.

6. Adjournment – NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE: Monday, January 8, 2024

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 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.]