



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**COMMUNITY APPEARANCE BOARD MEETING  
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
FIRE STATION 2  
528 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> STREET  
NOVEMBER 8, 2023 – 5:30 P.M.**

**Board Member**

**Attendance**

Cabot Edewaard, Chair	P
Jack Plakotaris, Vice Chair	P
Chauncell Dean	P
Siran Derbedrossian	A
James Hawkins	A
Elka Keimel	P
Vida Maus	P
Rex Nichols	P
Miguel Wright	P
Sally Zubero	P

**Staff Attending**

Safeea Ali, Senior Strategic Communications Specialist  
Carla Blair, Prototype, Inc.

**Communication to the Commission:**

**Motion** made by Mr. Nichols, seconded by Ms. Keimel, to request a joint meeting with the City Commission to talk about funding and Board membership. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:41 p.m. by Vice Chair Plakotaris. Roll was called, and it was determined a quorum was present.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

- **August 9, 2023**

**Motion** made by Mr. Nichols, seconded by Mr. Plakotaris, to approve the August 9, 2023, minutes as presented. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

### **III. Chair Update**

Chair Edewaard stated the main order of business was working on getting the next set of annual Community Appearance Awards through so they can get back to a normal planning cycle.

Ms. Ali noted that at the previous meeting, the Board had discussed a Communication to the Commission to request a joint meeting to discuss membership and funding opportunities.

Vice Chair Plakotaris provided additional clarification that the Board was intended to have 25 members, and with 10 it would be difficult to raise the funds needed for the awards, let alone the full banquet.

Mr. Nichols shared that he had lunch with Mayor Trantalis recently and had asked him about funding for the Board, and the Mayor had been surprised because there had previously been money.

Ms. Ali noted that some of the transactional history may have been lost with employee and board member turnover. She stated the Development Services (DSD) and Communications departments had picked up the cost of the WOW awards, meeting minutes, and annual award costs, however per the ordinance, the Board is authorized to solicit and expend funds for Board activities and functions. Any donated funds received are deposited to and disbursed from a City account, known as the Community Appearance Board Trust Account. To date, no funds have been received.

Discussion continued regarding City boards, including funding and membership criteria.

Chair Edewaard provided a brief history on the actions of the Board over the past few years for the newer members and reiterated his suggestion that the annual awards be distributed at a Commission meeting so the Board could get back on a normal planning cycle and think about the 2024 event. Discussion continued on potential sponsors to follow up with and the direction of the Board.

Ms. Keimel highlighted previous discussions about holding the annual awards at the YMCA, which would be free to the City.

Chair Edewaard argued the issue was not just the cost, but the planning time required. He suggested the Board should be talking about reserving the YMCA and catering for next year's event, while moving the current winners through the City Commission.

Ms. Keimel pointed out that when they start discussing the planning, it brings the issue back to the shortage of Board members.

Ms. Zubero noted there was a new Board member, Vida Maus.

Ms. Maus introduced herself, sharing that she had been in Fort Lauderdale since 1969. The other Board members introduced themselves briefly.

#### **IV. Liaison Report**

- **Communications vs. Joint Meeting**

The Board discussed language for a Communication to the Commission to request a joint meeting to discuss membership of the Board and possible funding.

Mr. Wright asserted the language of the ordinance may also need to be discussed, as it was possible it was from a different time, when galas were a standard and people were more likely to write a check to support one. He stated they may need to evolve.

Ms. Zubero pointed out someone had brought up adding an extra dollar to the permit fees through DSD for the annual awards and suggested that idea also be brought to the table.

Ms. Ali briefly outlined the process for a joint meeting with the Commission.

Chair Edewaard suggested Community Appearance could be funded through the City's tree canopy fund, and that might be an easier sell than adding a new fee. He noted the connection between the Board's purpose and that fund.

Ms. Ali advised this would be a good topic to bring up at a joint meeting, as the Directors would also be present and could answer questions.

Discussion continued as to the membership of the Board and the number of members needed to be successful.

Chair Edewaard stated he would like to see the details of the annual awards event nailed down in the first quarter of the year, so the balance of the year is fundraising and submitting properties. Discussion ensued regarding potential locations.

**Motion** made by Mr. Nichols, seconded by Ms. Keimel, to request a joint meeting with the City Commission to talk about funding and Board membership. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

#### **V. New Business**

Chair Edewaard stated there are only nine (9) nominations over 20 categories, so the Board may need to fill the nominations before going before the City Commission to make a presentation.

Ms. Zubero noted the submissions were closed. Ms. Ali stated she would check with IT to make sure the portal was open.

Chair Edewaard asked whether the Board wanted to assign categories for follow up as they had with the last awards.

Ms. Zubero asked whether they should consider that if there were not nominations in particular categories, those awards would not be given.

Chair Edewaard advised that those interested may not have had the information to nominate because the Board had not gotten its process under control. He suggested that once the system is back on track, the Board will see more and more interest. He asserted the Board should focus on filling in the categories and getting on the City Commission agenda for the earliest date the process would allow for, potentially in February or March.

Mr. Nichols stated since the Board had not hosted a successful event in several years, he liked the idea that had been discussed in August of hosting a lunch event in 2024. He noted he is on the AIA Board, and they had recently hosted an event following a year or more of planning. Discussion ensued regarding rules restricting committees in City government.

Ms. Zubero shared that she had reached out to several restaurants and had been met with apathy.

Chair Edewaard suggested getting the address and picture of properties to nominate, and then working with the owner to fill in the information only after they are selected as the winner.

Vice Chair Plakotaris highlighted the importance of recognizing the sponsors. Discussion continued as to how to incorporate business logos into the materials for the event.

Ms. Ali clarified that the event had never been a dinner, it had previously been passed hors d'oeuvres and beverages, then seating in rows of chairs for the program. She noted there was also a charge for tickets, including for nominees.

Chair Edewaard suggested asking the Commission for date in October or November 2024 so the Board can work to secure either the YMCA or the parking garage.

Mr. Wright agreed, noting he would like to set a precedent for the time of year and location for the annual awards that people can plan for.

**Motion** made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Nichols, to revise the original plan for the 2023 Annual Community Appearance Awards to present the awards at a regular City

Commission meeting in February or March 2024. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Discussion ensued regarding a preference for a meeting that is held in a higher-end location such as The Parker Playhouse.

**Motion** made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Ms. Keimel, for the Board to begin planning the 2024 Annual Community Appearance Awards event and related nomination procedures for an event to be held in October or November 2024. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

## VI. Old Business

Chair Edewaard suggested the Board divide the categories to pursue additional nominations. Ms. Ali noted this information was included in the July minutes, but there were several Board members not present.

Discussion continued and the categories were divided as follows:

- Commercial
  - Low-rise (5 stories or less) – Jack and Rex
  - Mid-rise/high-rise (6 stories or more) – Rex and Cabot
- Institutional – Miguel and Jack
- Landscape/Garden – Jack and Chauncell
- Multifamily Residence
  - Low-rise (5 stories or less) – Elka and Miguel
  - Mid-rise/high-rise (6 stories or more) – Elka and Miguel
- Municipal Facilities and Parks & Recreation Projects
- Single Family Residence
  - 2,500 square feet or less – Cabot and Elka
  - 2,501 square feet or more – Cabot and Elka
- Retail – Jack
- Restaurant – Sally
- Sustainability Excellence – Jack, Miguel, and Sally
- Special Projects – Cabot

Mr. Nichols asked for clarification on the eligible dates. Ms. Ali confirmed the previously discussed end date was September 30, 2023.

Ms. Ali stated she would email the Board with the list of eight (8) properties that had already been submitted.

## **VII. Communications**

**Motion** made by Mr. Nichols, seconded by Ms. Keimel, to request a joint meeting with the City Commission to talk about funding and Board membership. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

## **VIII. Items for Next Meeting**

Ms. Zubero asked if the Board would be processing monthly WOW Awards.

Chair Edewaard stated there were previously submitted winners that had not been awarded by the Commission.

Ms. Ali stated she would investigate. She noted there was a recent discussion that presentations were no longer to exceed five (5) minutes, so the process may need to be reconsidered.

## **IX. Adjourn**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m. The next Regular Meeting of the CAB is scheduled for December 13, 2023.