



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

January 08, 2025, at 3:00 PM

[www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab)

Meeting Minutes

Board Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Enrique Bargioni, Vice Chair	P	4	1
Jay Adams	P	9	1
William Feinberg	P	16	1
Russ Klenet	P	8	3
Nicolas Kollias	P	7	2
Marianna S. DeJager	P	7	1
Latasha Gorman	A	3	2
Allyson Meyers	P	1	0

**Staff**

- Von Howard, Administrative Supervisor (Present)
- Daphnee Sainvil, Public Affairs Division Manager (Not Present)
- Ashley Dixon, Management Analyst (Not Present)
- Melissa Mata, Management Fellow (Present)

**I. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum**

With Chair Stara not being present at the meeting, Vice Chair, Enrique Bargioni called the meeting to order at 3:08 PM. Roll call was issued, and it was noted that quorum was established.

With the termination of Chair Stara’s term in the Board, Vice Chair Bargioni presided over the meeting. The quorum was established at 3:09 PM.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Vice Chair, Enrique Bargioni, carried out a motion to approve the EDAB Minutes from the meeting that took place on Wednesday, November 13, 2024. Motion moved by Member Feinberg and seconded by Member Kollias. Motion passed; EDAB Minutes were approved at 3:10 PM.

**III. Reminder of EDAB 2025 Meeting Dates & Attendance Policy**

The agenda began by City Liaison, Melissa Mata, reminding the Board of the EDAB Board’s 2025 schedule. Ms. Mata reminded the Board that the Board members may miss up to four (4) meetings and only three (3) consecutive meetings. After three consecutive absences, the Board members were automatically resigned. It was reminded to the members by City Liaison, Von Howard, to let City Staff know if they were to be absent 48 hours prior to the meeting. Notifying city staff provides the opportunity to be approved for digital participation for that meeting date. Members agreed and had no discussion to change any meeting dates.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

January 08, 2025, at 3:00 PM

[www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab)**Meeting Minutes**

---

**IV. Member Introductions**

Vice Chair Bargioni, asked the Board if they could introduce themselves to welcome the new member, Allyson Meyers, to the Board. The members provided a brief background of their occupation, how long they have served the board, who they were appointed by, and their concentration area. Allyson Meyers, the new board member, introduced herself by stating she is a retired broadcaster and a Fort Lauderdale resident. Ms. Meyers appreciated the introduction and was happy to be involved with the EDAB Board. Members welcomed Ms. Meyers to the meeting.

**V. New Chair Vote & Discussion**

City Liaison, Ms. Mata, asked Vice Chair Bargioni if she could start the meeting discussions with the New Business agenda item before proceeding to the Old Business items. Vice Chair Bargioni accepted. Ms. Mata began to explain that the EDAB Board members needed a new Board Chair. Members asked about Member Stara. Ms. Mata announced to the board Member Stara's term had ended and upon his decision to not be reappointed, the Chair's position was vacant. She continued the item by suggesting to the board to discuss and nominate who they would like as new Board Chair. The discussion was opened to the board and the board begin to nominate members. Member Feinberg opened the discussion by stating Member Bargioni has done a great job as Vice Chair and provides great experience and knowledge to the board. Member Feinberg continued by stating Mr. Bargioni could make a difference in acting in supporting the Board's new priorities and would like to nominate him as Board Chair. Member DeJager agreed to Member Feinberg's comments and nominated Mr. Bargioni as Board Chair. Vice Chair Bargioni felt appreciated by the board and stated it was a team effort to support the Board's priorities and to make a difference in the community of Fort Lauderdale. Member Bargioni accepted the nomination as Board Chair. Member Kollias continued the discussion by agreeing to the comments made by Member Feinberg and Member Bargioni. City Liaison, Von Howard, proceeded to have the members vote for the nomination of Member Bargioni as the new Board Chair. With a full vote of participation, all members voted in approval to appoint Mr. Bargioni as new Board Chair.

Ms. Mata congratulated Mr. Bargioni for his engagement with the Board and mentioned she would report the vote back to the Clarks office. Continuing the agenda item, Ms. Mata asked the Board to have an additional discussion to nominate and vote for a new Vice Chair to complete the vacancy of the position. Member Feinberg opened the discussion by acknowledging the expertise and knowledge Mr. Klenet holds and brings to the community and nominated him as Vice Chair. Mr. Bargioni reaffirmed the comments made by Mr. Feinberg and nominated Mr. Klenet as Vice Chair of the Board. Mr. Klenet accepted the nomination and Mr. Howard proceeded with having the Board members vote for Mr. Klenet to be the new Vice Chair for the EDAB Board. All members voted in approval to have Mr. Klenet as the new Vice Chair.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

January 08, 2025, at 3:00 PM

[www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab)**Meeting Minutes**

---

Mr. Howard stated that for the public record, it was voted upon the members to have Mr. Bargioni as Chair and Mr. Klenet as Vice Chair for the EDAB Board. Members closed the item by congratulating the members.

**VI. Board Priorities & Discussion**

Now Chair, Member Bargioni, continued to the next item. Ms. Mata showed the members the current list of the Board's priorities on the big screen for all the members to see. Mr. Howard suggested implementing a quarterly communication process with the City Commission to revisit two or three unresolved issues from the previous year. Member DeJager emphasized the importance of small business assistance as a top priority, advocating for collaboration with code enforcement and development teams to streamline the startup process. Vice Chair Klenet noted the city's investment in online permitting systems, while Member Adams raised concerns about delays in the Development Review Committee (DRC) and the prolonged permitting process at the county and with Planning and Zoning (P&Z) mentioning it can take up to a year and a half. Member Feinberg echoed these concerns, emphasizing that permit processing times were excessively long.

To address these issues, Vice Chair Klenet proposed organizing a roundtable discussion with architects, engineers, and city staff to assess the length of the permitting process and recommend corrective actions. Member Feinberg noted that the current process is faster than before since approvals now go through the city before reaching county, P&Z, and fire departments. Mr. Howard suggested distinguishing between small and large projects and identifying the minimal requirements needed to initiate projects efficiently. Member Feinberg also proposed grandfathering in some projects to prevent an increasing number of regulatory requirements. Member Adams pointed out the difficulty of changing a business location under current regulations, while Member Feinberg highlighted the limited authority of city commissioners over these policies.

Member DeJager stressed that zoning and other permits must also be considered beyond just coding regulations. Mr. Howard supported the idea of a roundtable discussion, and Chair Bargioni advocated inviting relevant officers to the meeting. Member DeJager suggested including community members and business owners who have struggled with these processes, while Chair Bargioni cautioned against allowing the conversation to drift away from the board's main focus. Member Feinberg remarked that inefficiencies in permitting were not unique to the city and could be influenced by county regulations. Vice Chair Klenet suggested holding a separate meeting with DSD and community members to make clear recommendations.

Members continued to emphasize the need to streamline small business processes by engaging city officials. Vice Chair Klenet recommended identifying key issues and working with the City Attorney's Office (CAO) to build informed recommendations. Member DeJager acknowledged

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

January 08, 2025, at 3:00 PM

[www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab)**Meeting Minutes**

---

that exceptions to regulations had been made in the past, referencing past examples from FDOT, CRA, and TAM. Chair Bargioni repropoed organizing an initial roundtable to formalize discussions, with a focus on identifying key participants. Mr. Howard suggested involving representatives from the business community & finance, startups, and small development projects, as well as officials from the Office of Economic and Small Business Development (OESBD) and DSD. Member Feinberg supported the idea and recommended bringing in a commercial contractor for additional insights.

Member DeJager discussed the potential for an old code revitalization district, explaining that certain codes could be fast-tracked. Mr. Howard suggested inquiring with DSD and the attorney's office about this possibility prior to any next steps. Member DeJager recommended consulting with Public Affairs Division Manager, Daphne Sainvil, to identify the best person to provide information on coding and policy oversight. She continued to suggest having a representative from the county and DSD attend the next meeting to share insights and experiences. Chair Bargioni noted that these discussions would likely require multiple meetings.

The next priority brought into subject by Member Kollias was the issue of unhoused individuals in the downtown area, which Member DeJager suggested revisiting in March based on requests from local business owners. Vice Chair Klenet raised concerns about homelessness, noting that the issue has challenged both government and nonprofit organizations. He mentioned that businesses looking to establish themselves in Fort Lauderdale have been affected by the problem. Member Feinberg suggested engaging with Susan Leon and the Education Advisory Board to work with the school superintendent and Wanda to create an economic task force focused on addressing the issue. He also proposed asking commissioners to set aside time to discuss EDAB's concerns and priorities.

Vice Chair Klenet informed the board of an upcoming Broward Workshop Urban Corridor meeting at Riverside on January 24, where Commissioner Glassman and other officials, including Commissioner Sorensen, had been invited community activists to discuss priorities. The board also addressed traffic synchronization concerns, with Member DeJager pointing out the existence of a local board responsible for addressing these issues. There was a discussion about updating the priority list and to remove the traffic-related concern; and shifting focus to educational opportunities in downtown areas, particularly around housing affordability.

Mr. Howard will inquire about transportation boards mentioned by EDAB and sought clarification on whether a specific transportation board existed to address walkability. He continued to mentioned that DSD provided an update on the Himmarshee revitalization project, noting that Legacy Partners was managing the project but had not yet submitted a site plan for approval.

For recording purposes, the board finalized the agenda item by requesting a planned meeting in



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

January 08, 2025, at 3:00 PM

[www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/edab)

### Meeting Minutes

---

February with (OESBD) and the City of Fort Lauderdale's DSD to focus on coding and policies for startups, permitting, and licensing. Other scheduled agenda items included requesting commissioners to attend an EDAB meeting; invite the Education Chief Officer, Susan Leon to understand the Education Advisory Board's (EAB) objectives to consider future collaborations with EDAB and EAB; updates on the Himmarshee revitalization project; and to restructure the board's priority list.

#### VII. Areas of Concentration

There were no reports or updates provided by the members.

#### VIII. Division Reports

There were no Division reports.

#### IX. Meeting adjourned at 4:20 PM.

With no further business, Chair Bargioni motioned to adjourn the meeting. Motion was made by Member Feinberg and seconded by Member DeJager. The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 PM.

**The next EDAB meeting will be February 12, 2024, at DSD Building.**

*Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.*