



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**DRAFT**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**HOMELESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HAC)**  
**TOWER 101 – 101 NE 3RD AVENUE**  
**SUITE 1100 CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33301**  
**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2025 – 1:00 P.M.**

<u><b>Committee Members</b></u>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>#Present</b>	<b>#Absent</b>
Paula Yukna, Chair	P	1	0
Robin Martin, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Ray Dettman	P	1	0
Michael O'Brien	P	1	0
Amy Schimelfenyg	A	0	1
Jamie Sturgis	A	0	1
Colby Williams	P	1	0

**Staff**

Chris Cooper, Acting Assistant City Manager  
Luisa Agathon, Neighbor Support Manager  
Carole Mitchell, Homeless Initiatives Program Manager I  
Kayla Weinberg, Homeless Initiatives Senior Administrative Assistant  
Marco Aguilera, Homeless Initiatives Administrative Supervisor  
K. Cruitt, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

**Guests**

Goldie Weakland  
Antonio Docal  
Juan Saavedra

**I. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Yukna called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Martin, seconded by Mr. O'Brien, to change the meeting date from February 13, 2025, to February 6, 2025. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**II. Determination of Quorum**

Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

**III. Public Sign-In**

**IV. Approval of December Minutes**

Mr. O'Brien's attendance should show present for three meetings, zero absences.

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Martin, seconded by Mr. Dettman, to approve the minutes as amended. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**V. Agenda Items:**

**a. Welcome Mr. Colby Williams – Dist. 1 HAC Appointee**

The Committee welcomed new member Colby Williams.

**b. Motion and Vote:**

1. Meeting date change from February 13<sup>th</sup> to February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – previously addressed

a. 2025 Meeting Dates – motion and vote deferred to the end of the meeting.

**c. City Updates:**

1. HB 1365 Updates

Marco Aguilera provided updates on House Bill 1365 and the status of homeless-related requests. He presented a detailed chart summarizing the requests received in January. Mr. Aguilera explained the chart's data, highlighting the total number of requests, the average closure time, and a breakdown of request types, including general homeless concerns, outreach inquiries, and public sleeping complaints. He also noted the District with the fewest requests and the substantial increase in requests from December to January. Furthermore, Mr. Aguilera addressed the nature of comments received through the related app, noting instances of test submissions and accidental entries. He also mentioned ongoing monitoring of public records requests and inquiries from the *Sentinel* regarding the statistics collected.

Discussion followed regarding the content of the requests, prompted by Chair Yukna's questioning whether they included inquiries about legal action against the City. Mr. Aguilera clarified that many comments indeed encouraged legal action, while others sought information about responding officers. Vice Chair Martin offered the perspective that some individuals might be attempting to document repeated incidents to build a case. This led to a discussion about the City's process for responding to such requests and questioning the potential need for outside counsel. It was noted that the City Attorney's

office would manage responses and determine the appropriate legal resources. The significant increase in requests from December to January was attributed by Mr. Aguilera to the implementation of HB 1365 and increased public awareness. Vice Chair Martin added that the ease of reporting through the app likely also contributed to the increase.

A key concern raised by Vice Chair Martin was the lack of placements into shelters or housing despite the increased reporting, emphasizing the need for effective solutions. The discussion further delved into the specifics of the City's response to the reported incidents, with Vice Chair Martin seeking clarification on whether police visits were conducted for each request. Mr. Aguilera confirmed police involvement and clarified the distinction between police responses and staff-handled outreach inquiries. The meaning of "notice to appear" within the report's context was also clarified, ensuring a shared understanding of the data presented.

The Committee decided to move forward with the Broward County reports ahead of Mr. Cooper's updates.

Vice Chair Martin introduced the reports, providing context about their origin and purpose. He further elaborated on the reports, recommending that the Committee align its recommendations with the County's broader goals. Mr. O'Brien commended the quality of the reports, expressing surprise at the reported scale of homelessness in Broward County. A clarifying discussion ensued regarding the interpretation of the numbers, distinguishing between sheltered and unsheltered populations and addressing the different definitions used by various agencies. The timing of the County's recent point-in-time count and its absence from the report was questioned.

The discussion then turned to the methodology of the count, with Mr. O'Brien questioning whether transients were included. Vice Chair Martin provided a detailed explanation of the process. The conversation returned to the critical issue of shelter bed availability, highlighting the current inadequacy and the need for a comprehensive approach to providing different types of housing solutions.

## 2. Affordable Housing

Upon Mr. Cooper's arrival, the conversation shifted to affordable housing initiatives. Mr. Cooper addressed the challenges of working within HUD's rent regulations and detailed the City's efforts to incentivize affordable housing development. He explained various programs and incentives, including density and height bonuses, the Geller Amendment, and the payment-in-lieu option.

A discussion followed regarding the financial implications of these programs, including questions regarding the adequacy of the payment-in-lieu amounts. Mr. Cooper acknowledged the concern and explained the limitations imposed by the County. The control and distribution of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund were also discussed, with Mr. Cooper clarifying the roles of the City and County. He further detailed the City's ad

valorem tax rebate program and expressed interest in exploring its potential application to existing housing units, a point raised by Mr. Dettman. A proposed potential solution was put forward involving non-profit partnerships with landlords, while Mr. Cooper mentioned a program focused on rehabilitating existing properties. The importance of ongoing monitoring and verification in such programs was emphasized.

### 3. Salvation Army Proposal

The Committee then considered a proposal from the Salvation Army to convert existing family shelter space into a congregate facility for individuals. Mr. Cooper outlined the proposal and its associated funding needs. Vice Chair Martin expressed reservations, citing the loss of valuable family shelter units. A discussion ensued regarding the rationale behind the Salvation Army's proposal and the need for a detailed budget breakdown. The conversation highlighted the critical need for family shelter spaces and the potential negative impact of the proposed conversion. Alternative solutions were discussed, including providing supplemental funding to maintain the existing family shelter.

The meeting continued with updates on other initiatives, including collaboration with the United Way and the status of state funding requests.

Vice Chair Martin shared positive news about the acquisition and repurposing of the old Days Inn hotel for affordable housing, prompting a discussion about similar initiatives and the potential of utilizing vacant hotel rooms during the off-season.

#### **d. Broward County Reports:**

1. Pallet Sheltering Feasibility Study Report – July 2024
2. Homeless Continuum of Care Analysis – August 2024

Previously discussed.

#### **e. Announcements:**

1. Neighbor Support Night, February 13<sup>th</sup> (5:30-8:00pm)

Neighborhood Support Night was announced, with encouragement for Committee members to promote the event.

Discussion then returned to Item V, 2025 Meeting Dates.

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Martin, seconded by Mr. Dettman, to approve the 2025 calendar. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. O'Brien commended the City staff and police for their efforts related to homelessness.

Concerns were raised about the need for clearer direction from the City Commission and the challenges posed by repeat offenders. Mr. Dettman suggested the concept of designated zones with stricter enforcement for repeat offenders.

**VI. Public Input**

None.

**VII. Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

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

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 13, 2025, AT 1:00 P.M.**

[Minutes prepared by L. Tayar, Prototype, Inc.]