



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
914 SISTRUNK BOULEVARD, SUITE 100
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33311
MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2025 – 9:00 A.M.**

Cumulative

AHAC Committee Members	2025 Attendance	Present	Absent
Susan Spragg, Chair	P	4	0
Shantel Jairam, Vice Chair	P	3	1
Commissioner Dr. Pamela Beasley-Pittman	P	4	0
William Condon	A	3	1
Rich Degirolamo	P	4	0
Mindy Figueroa	A	2	2
Willie McKay	P	4	0
Roderick Newkirk (arr. 9:20) <i>(1/25 absence excused)</i>	P	3	1
Agustina Sklar (via Zoom)	P	3	0
Amanda Wilson	P	4	0

Staff

Avis Wilkinson, Assistant Housing and Community Development Manager/Staff Liaison
Rachel Williams, Housing and Community Development Manager
Adam Schnell, Interim Liaison/Planner II
Angella Walsh, Administrative Assistant
K. Cruitt, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

Also Present

Patrice Paldino, Director, Broward County Housing Options, Solutions, and Support Division (HOSS)
Felicia Newkirk

Communication to the City Commission

Motion made by Ms. Wilson, seconded by Ms. McKay, to create a communication requesting follow-up on the three items that were discussed at the joint Commission workshop on February 18. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

I. ROLL CALL / DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 9:08 a.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

Ms. Wilkinson noted that Ms. Sklar’s request to attend the meeting via Zoom must be approved by the City Clerk’s Office before the Committee may vote to allow her to

participate. She further clarified that members attending meetings via Zoom may not be counted toward a physical quorum.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman advised that the City Commission recently voted to allow City Commissioners who attend via Zoom to vote on actionable items. It was confirmed that advisory body members may vote as well.

Chair Spragg and the Committee members extended best wishes and thanks to Ms. Wilkinson, who will retire on May 1, 2025. Ms. Wilkinson thanked the members for their service as well. It was clarified that Adam Schnell, Planner II with the Department of Sustainable Development, will serve as Interim Liaison beginning in May.

It was clarified that Ms. Sklar's attendance via Zoom was approved by the City Clerk's Office.

Motion made by Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman, seconded by Ms. Wilson, to admit Agustina Sklar on Zoom. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **March 10, 2025**

Chair Spragg requested the following changes to the March 10, 2025 minutes:

- P. 6, paragraph 8: change "the Chair and one other Committee member" to "two Committee members," and clarify that the Chair and Vice Chair paid their own way to the conference
- P. 7, paragraph 1: clarify that the City will pay for two members to attend the 2025 conference

Mr. Newkirk arrived at 9:20 a.m.

Chair Spragg also requested that members of the public attending Committee meetings be listed as present.

Motion made by Ms. Wilson, seconded by Vice Chair Jairam, to accept the minutes as amended. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- **Affordable Housing Trust Fund Balance update**

Ms. Wilkinson reported that she received an email on March 25, 2025 from the City's Finance Department, clarifying that the current balance of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund is \$831,280.27, which differs from the amount cited at the March 10, 2025 meeting. She has requested itemization of that amount, but was not provided with that breakdown

in time for today's meeting. She will continue to work with the Finance Department to clarify this amount for a future meeting.

- **June 30, 2025 AHAC Commissioner Joint Meeting**

Chair Spragg stated that the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee's (AHAC's) joint workshop with the City Commission has been scheduled for Monday, June 30, 2025 at 11:30 a.m. She strongly encouraged the members to attend this workshop.

The following Items were taken out of order on the Agenda.

- **Discuss 2 AHAC members attending the conference in Orlando August 25-27, 2025**

Ms. Wilkinson advised that following an assessment of the City's State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) budget, it was determined that there is insufficient funding available to pay for either Committee members or City Staff to attend the Florida Housing Conference scheduled for August 25-27, 2025 in Orlando, Florida. Any members wishing to attend this year's conference will need to do so at their own expense.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- **Guest Speaker Patrice Paldino**

Patrice Paldino, Director of Broward County's Housing Options, Solutions, and Support Division (HOSSD), explained that this division addresses all issues related to homelessness. They receive general funds as well as federal and state dollars. These funds are allocated to different providers of services to Broward County's homeless population. They also provide some direct client services in-house.

The HOSSD staff consists of roughly 60 individuals and also includes the County's human rights section, which investigates all complaints of housing violations, such as discrimination. They also manage the County's Continuum of Care (CoC), which oversees the work of all service providers in the County. There are several subcommittees of the CoC which manage various aspects of that continuum.

Ms. Paldino stated that as Director of HOSSD, one of her primary areas of focus is on what can be done differently than in the past. One of these areas of focus is working in collaboration with Broward County's municipalities, and with Fort Lauderdale in particular. She cited the example of a former hotel property on Broward Boulevard which was purchased by the AIDS Health Foundation. This property includes 140 traditional hotel rooms at a price point of \$750/room.

Additional considerations include the North and Central Homeless Assistance Centers (HACs), both of which are owned by Broward County. HOSSD contracts with Broward

Partnership for the Homeless for the operation of these facilities. The cost of maintaining an individual in a shelter, including housing, food, case management, and other on-site services, is approximately \$16,000/year.

Between January and June 2024, HOSSD paid the first month's security deposits to house 11 families of four in the former hotel property. Ms. Paldino emphasized that these families earned income that could be saved toward more permanent housing. The families were assigned case management services and provided with incidental expenses. This program has been successful thus far. The property currently raises \$1.2 in annual revenue to support the program. Other concepts may include safe parking facilities for unsheltered individuals or families who are sleeping in their cars.

Ms. Paldino stated that HOSSD also considers statistics provided by Legal Aid, which assists a number of households by preventing eviction through their rental assistance program. She pointed out that households must be sustainable in order to receive this assistance: the program may pay an individual's or family's rent for one month, but they will need to be able to pay their own rent thereafter.

Ms. Paldino also noted that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is currently experiencing a lack of stability, with several field offices across the nation either closed or proposed for closure. Federal emergency housing vouchers issued during the COVID-19 pandemic will no longer be funded, which will affect approximately 160 families served by the Broward County Housing Authority by 2026. Another 78 families are similarly assisted by the Fort Lauderdale Housing Authority. There is no indication that rents can be expected to decrease in the future.

Mr. Newkirk asked if families who receive these vouchers would lose their housing. Ms. Williams explained that participants in the voucher program are required to sign agreements acknowledging that their housing support is based on funding availability. Once the funding is gone, the families will no longer receive it.

Mr. Degirolamo asked what systems are in place to communicate with those families and inform them of alternatives. Ms. Paldino replied that this is the responsibility of HUD. The County does not have funds to absorb this large number of clients. Ms. Paldino pointed out that the Broward County Housing Authority may not be authorized to share the list of families with other entities, but noted that they are generally a communicative entity.

Ms. Williams emphasized that agencies are currently being informed of these and other changes through informal channels; until they receive formal communication from federal sources about these changes, it is difficult to develop an appropriate response. Ms. Paldino noted that the proposed cuts are among many challenges that face organizations which provide housing assistance.

Ms. Wilson asked if there is an estimated number of unsheltered individuals in Broward County. Ms. Williams explained that not all individuals allow themselves to be counted,

although the County-wide population is estimated at over 2000. Fort Lauderdale's homeless population is estimated at over 700, based on point-in-time counts. Different entities may also use different definitions to determine homelessness.

Mr. Degirolamo asked if the County has considered selling some of its real estate properties or investing in a public-private partnership (P3) to provide affordable housing or other means of assisting the homeless population. Ms. Paldino replied that the County has identified six prospective areas for the possible location of pallet shelter housing; however, not all available County properties are viable or cost-effective for this type of use. In addition, the creation of shelters requires infrastructure that can be very expensive. They must also be located in municipalities that will accept these forms of shelter.

Ms. Paldino continued that both Broward County and Fort Lauderdale have either "set-aside" affordable units that are part of new developments or payment in lieu funds that are set aside. HOSSD is advocating for a subset of those set-aside units to be used as part of the CoC for homeless individuals or families. She emphasized that most unsheltered households have income, but cannot find housing at an affordable price point. She added that these units would be on scattered sites, which may be more palatable for the County and City, as it would mean the units are not concentrated in a single area.

Mr. Schnell advised that one option could be to bifurcate units that are funded through federal and state sources. This would require modification of local ordinances to set aside a percentage of the set-aside units for households at lower income levels.

Ms. Williams further clarified that Ms. Paldino's recommendation was not for additional units to be set aside as affordable, but for some of the units already set aside to be available to Broward County. Ms. Wilkinson emphasized that the allocation of affordable units would be based on household income. Mr. Schnell added that it may be easier for developers to reach out to contacts at the County who could place households with low or very low incomes in the set-aside units.

Mr. Newkirk pointed out the challenge of encouraging developers to build more units that are affordable to households with lower incomes. Ms. Paldino agreed that providing small numbers of affordable units would not adequately address the affordable housing crisis, as even large affordable developments receive far more applications than they can accommodate.

Ms. Paldino continued that if a family earning income but living in a shelter can be moved into an affordable unit, that creates more space in the shelter for other individuals or families that are unhoused. She emphasized the need to no longer use shelter space as housing for households that are able to pay some level of rent.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman stated that it is important for all to understand that the current homelessness crisis is actually a housing crisis. She stressed the importance of changing the mindset of neighbors and residents so they understand the need for affordable housing as a way to alleviate homelessness. Ms. Wilson observed that the public may have views of the homeless population that do not take the need for affordability into account, as they may not be aware that families earning income may also be unsheltered.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman encouraged the Committee members to attend a CoC meeting if possible, as this will allow them to see the steps the County is taking. This may also help the Committee to more closely align with what the County is putting into place.

Ms. Wilkinson advised that in addition to families, another population of concern is senior citizens who are having difficulty living on low fixed incomes. Ms. Paldino stated that the County is working toward shared housing options, which would allow multiple individuals to share housing units at a lower price. This is one option for seniors, some of whom may need case management services.

- **Joint Meeting with Budget Advisory Board**

Chair Spragg reported that on March 27, 2025, she met with Ralph Stone, Director of Broward County Housing, Finance, and Community Development. Broward County is working to develop a public “scorecard” to be used by local governments to track their affordable housing efforts. The scorecard is expected to be rolled out in September 2025. She stated that Mr. Stone recommends the Committee use that scorecard to track and establish goals for affordable housing in Fort Lauderdale.

Chair Spragg continued that Mr. Stone also clarified the payment in lieu fees the City receives in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund must be used for the construction of new affordable units or home repairs. This means there would need to be a change to the Trust Fund policy in order to segregate where money is coming from, as payment in lieu dollars cannot be used toward all goals.

Chair Spragg advised that the 10-year Affordable Housing Master Plan adopted by Broward County in 2024 calls for all 31 Broward cities to establish their own Affordable Housing Trust Funds at a rate of \$10/person based on their existing populations. This funding is expected to come from sources other than payment in lieu fees.

Chair Spragg continued that she had also met with Fort Lauderdale City Commissioner Steven Glassman to discuss the strategies included in the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan. She recalled that the Commissioner had indicated it would be difficult to allocate general revenue toward affordable housing as part of the City’s budget, and had recommended a joint meeting between AHAC and Fort Lauderdale’s Budget Advisory Board. This would ensure the Budget Advisory Board (BAB) is aware of the Committee’s goals and could further elevate the issue of affordable housing.

Chair Spragg stated that she felt a meeting with the BAB would be an appropriate use of AHAC's time and resources, as it would allow them to discuss issues that are recommended but not mandated. She added that Commissioner Glassman had also recommended that AHAC continue to hold joint workshops with the City Commission, and that they send communications to the City Commission on a bi-monthly basis, with each communication including one to two ideas. This would ensure that the Committee's work is regularly seen by the Commission and can be discussed on their agenda.

Chair Spragg recalled that a consortium of local churches committed to advocacy was recently able to extract a commitment from Broward County's Mayor to bring forward a proposal for the use of expiring Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) tax increment funding (TIF) as a source for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. All of these funds would be earmarked for affordable housing for households with very low incomes, which are defined as earning 50% of area median income (AMI) or lower.

Chair Spragg concluded that she had also met with the acting City Manager to follow up on information about payment in lieu projections and an inventory of publicly owned land. She has not yet received this information.

Chair Spragg recalled that at their February 18, 2025 joint workshop with the City Commission, the Committee had discussed three strategies from the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan:

- Expedited permitting process
- Fee waivers
- Reduced parking requirements

Chair Spragg asked if City Staff had heard any response on these issues thus far. Mr. Schnell confirmed that there have been internal discussions of fee waivers, including the allocation of resources toward analyzing this option.

Chair Spragg referred to the Committee's scheduled workshop with the City Commission on June 30, 2025, suggesting that at their regular May meeting, the Committee determine what they would like to discuss at that workshop. They could then finalize their plans for the upcoming workshop at their regular June meeting. She suggested discussion of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), which are the focus of two bills currently making their way through the Florida Legislature. If the Committee meets with the BAB before the joint workshop, there may be additional items to discuss.

The Committee members agreed by consensus to propose a joint meeting with the City's Budget Advisory Board. Ms. Wilkinson stated that this will require the same procedure that led to the Committee's previous joint meeting with the Homeless Advisory Committee, which begins with a communication to the City Commission requesting the joint meeting.

Mr. Degirolamo advised that he is a member of the BAB, and recommended that the joint meeting be considered later in the year, after the conclusion of the City's budget season. He pointed out that the BAB's time is strictly scheduled throughout the next few months as the City prepares its budget.

Ms. Wilkinson also reminded the Committee members of the upcoming Affordable Housing Incentive Plan, which is mandated by SHIP as the Committee's core responsibility. She recalled that this document requires a public meeting and must be annually submitted to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, and recommended that the Committee address this Plan well in advance of its deadline.

The Committee further discussed the June 30 joint workshop. Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman proposed including a request for an update on any action taken toward the three topics discussed at the February workshop. It was clarified that the members would email their suggestions to Ms. Walsh. Ms. Wilkinson briefly reviewed the requirements of Florida's Sunshine Law.

It was clarified that the Committee would reach out regarding a joint meeting with the BAB in advance of the 2027 budget year.

- **Draft Affordable Housing Trust Fund Policy**

Chair Spragg recalled that at the previous meeting, the Committee had discussed emailing any proposed changes to the draft Affordable Housing Trust Fund policy to Ms. Wilkinson's office. Ms. Wilkinson advised that she had submitted the recommended changes for incorporation into the policy.

- **Submitting Bi-monthly communications to Commission**

The Committee discussed options for bi-monthly communications, with Ms. Wilkinson emphasizing the need to include key items only. Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman requested clarification of the objectives of bi-monthly communications. Chair Spragg recalled that Commissioner Glassman had indicated these should either follow up on previously discussed items or include information of a timely nature. Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman suggested that the communications could also be used to inform the Commission of potential topics for the upcoming joint workshop so they are prepared for that discussion.

Chair Spragg proposed that this month's communication request an update on the items discussed at the February joint workshop, which were fee waivers, expedited permitting, and parking reductions for affordable housing. Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman agreed that this would demonstrate the Committee was following up on its recommendations.

Chair Spragg requested guidance of whether or not to continue to pursue the topics she had raised with the interim City Manager, although these had not been part of the

conversation at the February workshop. Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman recommended continuing outreach to the interim City Manager.

Ms. Williams explained that a formal communication to the City Commission must be submitted as part of the meeting minutes. The Committee must vote to send the communication.

Motion made by Ms. Wilson, seconded by Ms. McKay, to create a communication requesting follow-up on the three items that were discussed at the joint Commission workshop on February 18. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Ms. Sklar left the meeting at 10:49 a.m.

Chair Spragg addressed the Affordable Housing Trust Fund policies and procedures document, requesting any additional recommendations for revisions. It was clarified that Article 9 would be removed from the policies and procedures. Ms. Wilkinson confirmed that the change would be made and the revised document sent once again to the Committee members, who were asked to send back any additional comments for incorporation no later than April 21, 2025.

V. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE – MAY 12, 2025

Chair Spragg advised that Sandra Veszi Einhorn will be a guest speaker at the May 12, 2025 meeting. The Committee will also prepare a preliminary outline of the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan.

Mr. Degirolamo suggested that the Committee invite a market-rate developer to speak at a future meeting. This could clarify some of the challenges facing developers as well as the decisions they make regarding the development of affordable housing within market-rate projects. He added that an affordable developer could also provide valuable information to the Committee. Ms. Wilkinson recommended that members provide contact information for prospective guest speakers to Ms. Walsh.

Ms. Williams proposed that the Committee consider adding For the Good of the Order as a regular Agenda Item going forward, as this would provide an opportunity to discuss additional information. She also suggested that they add Items for the Next Agenda, which would allow for discussion of pending items for the next meeting. These additions would improve continuity and would also assist Housing and Community Development Staff in preparing for upcoming meetings. She noted that this Department is currently working with a more streamlined Staff.

The Committee reviewed the following items for the May 12, 2025 meeting Agenda:

- Sandra Veszi Einhorn as guest speaker
- Preparation for the June 30 joint workshop with the Commission
- Follow-up on bi-monthly communications to the Commission

- Initial discussion of the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan
- Coordination of future guest speakers such as developers or builders
- Chair update
- Good of the Order
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund policies and procedures
- Follow-up on affordable units being constructed
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund balance update

Chair Spragg recalled that Mr. Schnell had previously provided a document listing the status of affordable units, and requested a follow-up discussion of this document. It was clarified that the Committee wished to have more information on projects funded with SHIP dollars.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.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.]