



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**MEETING MINUTES  
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD**

Tower 101, Suite 1100

101 NE 3rd Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

April 28, 2025 – 6:00 PM

Cumulative Attendance					
1/2025 through 12/2025					
	Members	Appt by	Attendance	Present	Absent
1	Robert Daoust, Vice Chair	II	A	1	2
2	Kelly Charles	IV	P	3	0
3	David Blattner, Chair*	I	P	3	0
4	Suzee Bailey	C	P	2	1
5	Spencer Lasday	IV	P	1	1
6	Robert Landers	III	A	1	2
7	Nicole Barnett	M	P	3	0
8	Vacant	I	-	-	-
9	Vacant	M	-	-	-
10	Vacant	III	-	-	-
11	Vacant	II	-	-	-
12	Parker Jacobson-Bertanzetti, Non-Voting Youth Chair	C	A	2	1

\*attending via Zoom

**Staff Present**

Glen Hadwen, Sustainability Manager

Mallory Jones, Sustainability Administrator, Interim Board Liaison

Drew Newstrom, Fleet Manager

Dr. Nancy Gassman, Deputy Director of Public Works/Chief Resilience Officer –  
Sustainability (via Zoom)

Melissa Doyle, Sustainability Division Manager (via Zoom)

Jamie Opperee, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

**Motion** made by Ms. Barnett, seconded by Ms. Charles, that we allow the Chairman to participate virtually. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

- February 24, 2025

**Motion** made by Mr. Lasday, seconded by Ms. Barnett, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

- March 24, 2025

**Motion** made by Ms. Bailey, seconded by Mr. Lasday, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

New Board member Spencer Lasday introduced himself at this time.

### III. Liaison Report

- SAB Establishing Ordinance

Ms. Jones advised that the City Attorney, in conjunction with the City Clerk's Office, holds annual Board and Committee member training sessions, which can be attended either in person or online. Copies of the recorded session are available upon request. She added that each member should have received a copy of the Sustainability Advisory Board's (SAB's) establishing Ordinance with their welcome packets.

- SAB Start Date and Time

Ms. Jones continued that she has spoken with the City Clerk's Office to determine whether different meeting dates and times are available to the Board as a possible way to increase attendance. She noted that she has also reached out to the offices of Commissioners who may make appointments to the Board to fill existing vacancies.

It was determined that Ms. Jones would email all members requesting their input on meeting dates and times.

### IV. Presentations

- Fort Lauderdale Green Fleet (Drew Newstrom, City of Fort Lauderdale)

Drew Newstrom, Fleet Manager for Fort Lauderdale, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the City's fleet, stating that at present, five vehicles in the fleet are electric vehicles (EVs). He emphasized that he has strongly encouraged the City to move toward hybrid and/or electric vehicles during his tenure.

Mr. Newstrom reported that one goal of the City's 2024 Strategic Plan is to reduce fuel usage by 20%. While the City did not reach this goal, they have made progress by switching City vehicles away from diesel or gas use. 21% of City vehicles now have over 30 miles per gallon, which is a significant improvement.

Other efforts to move the fleet toward greener vehicles include offering “loaner” cars that are EVs, installing EV chargers throughout City facilities, and updating the City policy to encourage drivers to turn off their cars when idling for more than 30 seconds.

In order to switch the City’s fleet to EVs by 2035, a comprehensive fleet plan and policy would be needed. Appointment of a task force to develop fleet procurement policies and regulations that will encourage a shift toward EVs would help in this process.

Mr. Newstrom continued that it is possible to switch non-emergency vehicles to EVs by 2035. Vehicles such as Police cars, Fire trucks, and heavy vehicles would be exempt from this change. The Strategic Plan includes policies which would explore opportunities to increase EV technology within the City, as well as policy encouraging and incentivizing residents to move toward EVs as well.

The City’s fleet currently includes approximately 1800 vehicles, which range in size from mowers to fire ladder trucks. Of those, roughly 1100 can be switched to EVs. Mr. Newstrom noted that if the 476 marked Police vehicles are excluded from the 2035 plan, that would leave over 600 vehicles that can be switched in order to reach the goals of the Strategic Plan.

At present, marked Police vehicles would be excluded from consideration for EV conversion due to the necessity of ensuring these vehicles are always available on a 24-hour seven-day basis. If the vehicles require charging, this could hamper operations, particularly during emergencies. Mr. Newstrom pointed out that the City is still encouraging Police use of some EVs, such as park rangers’ vehicles.

Dr. Nancy Gassman, Deputy Director of Public Works/Chief Resilience Officer - Sustainability, added that the Police Department’s Detective Bureau was among the first City entities to encourage the use of hybrid vehicles for that division. She further clarified that there are currently few good choices of hybrid or EV pursuit-rated vehicles. Because marked vehicles are also take-home vehicles, City policies would have to be amended to address the need to charge these vehicles at home.

Mr. Newstrom advised that he felt the next step for the Police Department should be a shift to hybrid vehicles, as this would significantly decrease fuel consumption and save the City money in addition to their more positive impact on the environment. He pointed out that Code Compliance has already shifted many of its vehicles to hybrids.

Mr. Newstrom continued that the availability of EV infrastructure is improving, and different types of vehicles, including trucks, are being added to the market. Many EVs are now the same price as gas-powered vehicles.

A question was asked regarding the costs of infrastructure over the vehicles’ life cycle. Mr. Newstrom estimated that this would not differ significantly from the costs associated with gas fuel and storage. The City currently spends approximately \$4.2 million on gas and diesel and goes through 1.4 million gallons per year.

Dr. Gassman advised that the life cycle costs of EVs typically include less maintenance, and lower fuel costs. Additional intangibles include the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as a result of the conversion of the City's fleet. Mr. Newstrom also observed that a lack of "downtime" is associated with EVs, which have significantly fewer maintenance issues.

With regard to maintenance, Mr. Newstrom added that the change to maintenance requirements for EVs has been significantly larger than anticipated. Specialized training and equipment are required. There have been no issues with EV batteries related to severe flood events thus far. EV chargers last for approximately five years.

Mr. Newstrom concluded by saying that his program team strongly encourages EV use, providing demonstration vehicles when possible. He was confident that with a plan in place, the City can convert its remaining 630 vehicles by 2035.

Mr. Newstrom requested that the SAB asking the City Commission to adopt a policy to electrify the City's non-emergency fleet. He also asked for the Board's support in advocating for the allocation of funding for conversion to an EV fleet.

Ms. Charles asked if tax credits or other incentives are available for commercial vehicles such as the City's fleet. Sustainability Manager Glen Hadwen stated that the previous presidential administration had offered a program which allowed local governments and nonprofits to receive a direct cash payment for the purchase of eligible EVs. The maximum credit available for EVs is \$7500. He noted, however, that this program may be eliminated in the future by the current administration.

Ms. Charles asked if it would be possible to install solar carports in City parking lots, which could assist with charging. Mr. Hadwen replied that this could be an opportunity to implement solar power, but noted that installing solar panels on rooftops is generally cheaper than carports in parking areas. Dr. Gassman pointed out that most of these structures are not rated to withstand hurricanes.

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

## **VII. Proposed Communication**

- EV Fleet Policy

Ms. Jones reviewed potential language for the Board's communication to the City Commission, explaining that the intent of the communication would be to reinforce implementation of one of the City's stated goals. The members also briefly discussed how the goal of conversion to an EV fleet might be funded, concluding that funding would be a consideration once a conversion plan has been adopted and is in process. It was determined that language addressing fuel and maintenance costs would also be added to the communication. The language below was reviewed by the Board.

## **Communication to the City Commission**

*On April 28, 2025, the Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) received a presentation from Drew Newstrom, City of Fort Lauderdale's Fleet Manager on City's Electric Vehicle (EV) Fleet. This presentation outlined the City's EV Fleet numbers department wide, highlighting critical need for developing EV City Fleet policy to address climate challenges and advance Fort Lauderdale's Net Zero goals. Conversion of City to EVs will offer lower maintenance cost, fuel cost and decreased greenhouse gases. The SAB recommends that City adopt a policy with a goal of converting all nonemergency light duty vehicles to EV by 2035.*

*Additionally, an EV Fleet Policy would advance the City's existing goals to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for government operations by 2040 and community-wide by 2050. An EV Policy is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, Press Play Fort Lauderdale and Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2029 Strategic Plan.*

*The Sustainability Advisory Board urges the City Commission to adopt an EV Fleet Policy.*

### **Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan**

- *The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area*
  - *Conservation Element*
    - *Goal 2 Protect and monitor air quality to provide a higher quality of life for the City's residents and visitors.*
- *The Infrastructure Focus Area*
  - *Climate Change Element*
    - *Goal 1: Develop mitigation and adaptation strategies to reduce emission that contribute to climate change.*
    - *Goal 2: Achieve a climate-resilient community through the protection and adaptation of public infrastructure, services, and natural resources from adverse climate change impacts.*
    - *Goal 3: Preserve and enhance the quality of life through advance planning, improved coordination with businesses and local and regional governments, better monitoring of evolving conditions, and equitable provision of resources to address issues related to climate change, and hazard and natural disaster resiliency and recovery.*
  - *Transportation and Mobility Element*
    - *Goal 1: Ensure the equitable development of a Complete Network for transportation that prioritizes Safety and emphasizes multimodal mobility and accessibility*

### **Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2029 Strategic Plan**

- *The Infrastructure and Resilience Focus Area*
  - *Goal 3: Build a sustainable and resilient community*
  - *Goal 4: Facilitate an efficient, multimodal transportation network*

**Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Ready.**

**Motion** made by Mr. Lasday, seconded by Ms. Charles, to adopt the above Communication to the Commission with the changes incorporated. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

## **V. New Business**

None.

## **VI. Old Business**

- Sustainability Advisory Committee Coalition

Chair Blattner recalled that at the March 2025 meeting, there had been discussion of a Board member attending the County's Sustainability Advisory Committee Coalition, which includes members from Broward municipalities' sustainability advisory bodies. It was clarified that only one Board member may attend.

Ms. Barnett offered to attend future Coalition meetings. It was determined that she would coordinate with Ms. Jones on further details.

- 2025 SAB topics and Guide for Board Members

Ms. Jones advised that these documents were included in the Board members' welcome packets via hyperlink. She added that when new business is brought forward at a meeting, it must be voted upon before it can be added to the Agenda of the next month's meeting in order to ensure appropriate public notice.

## **VIII. Comments**

Ms. Bailey recalled that one upcoming topic for the Board is discussion of the more innovative flood mitigation and storm resiliency measures other Broward municipalities have adopted. Ms. Jones confirmed that this was one of the Board's 2025 topics, which were voted upon in November 2024, and would be addressed from May through August 2025. Information on upcoming meetings will be shared with the Board members each Friday preceding the Monday meeting.

Mr. Hadwen recalled that the Board had previously received a presentation on the City's Community Rating System (CRS). While there are no direct actions the SAB can take to affect Fort Lauderdale's rating, information on this system can be shared with the members. Ms. Jones added that another upcoming speaker for a consulting firm that is working with the City's engineering team on public outreach and education for resiliency.

Dr. Gassman suggested that at the May 2025 meeting, Ms. Jones's Liaison Report can include the current status of the CRS program.

**IX. Items for Next Meeting**

It was clarified that the May 2025 meeting is scheduled for the third rather than the fourth Monday, May 19, of the month in observation of the Memorial Day holiday.

**X. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 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.]