



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
November 17, 2025 – 6:00 PM

Cumulative Attendance					
1/2025 through 12/2025					
	Members	Appt by	Attendance	Present	Absent
1	Robert Daoust, Vice Chair (arr. 6:04)	II	P	7	2
2	Kelly Charles	IV	P	9	0
3	David Blattner, Chair	I	P	9	0
4	Suzee Bailey (arr. 6:05)	C	P	8	1
5	Spencer Lasday	II	P	7	1
6	Vacant	III	-	-	-
7	Nicole Barnett	M	P	8	1
8	Sarah Rahmankhah	IV	P	6	0
9	Idan Straus	M	P	2	0
10	Vacant	III	-	-	-
11	Vacant	II	-	-	-
12	Parker Jacobson-Bertanzetti, Non-Voting Youth Chair	C	P	6	3

*attending via Zoom

Staff Present

Glen Hadwen, Sustainability Manager

Nancy Gassman, Ph.D., Deputy Parks and Recreation Director/Chief Resilience Officer
(via Zoom)

Luz Ramirez, Sustainability Administrator (via Zoom)

Silvia Duque Anez, Sustainability Coordinator (via Zoom)

Talula Thibault, Sustainability Analyst, SAB Liaison

Melissa Doyle, Division Manager / Solid Waste and Recycling (via Zoom)

Laura Tooley, Urban Forester

K. Cruitt, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

Also Present

Ted Inserra, President, River Oaks

Stacey Miscisin, Senior Administrative Assistant

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes

- **October 27, 2025**

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

III. Liaison Report

- **Net Zero Resolution**

Ms. Thibault reported that the Net Zero Resolution has been postponed indefinitely at this time.

- **Urban Forestry Master Plan Communication and Presentation 11/18**

The Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) will be presented to the City Commission at their November 18, 2025. Ms. Rahmankhah will speak on this Item on behalf of the Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB).

- **1st Annual South Florida Sustainability Summit 11/19**

This event is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2025 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Ms. Thibault noted that while Vice Chair Daoust had volunteered to attend, he may be unable to do so. Ms. Rahmankhah offered to attend if the Vice Chair cannot.

- **Board Member Training 11/24**

Training for members of all City advisory boards and committees is scheduled for Monday, November 24, 2025. The session is optional, but encouraged. Training will be held on the 11th floor conference room of the 101 Building. A Zoom link will be provided for individuals who cannot attend in person.

Vice Chair Daoust arrived at 6:04 p.m.

Ms. Bailey arrived at 6:05 p.m.

IV. Presentations

- **Students 4 Resilience Innovation Challenge (Parker Jacobsen-Bertanzetti)**

Ms. Jacobson-Bertanzetti gave a presentation on the Students 4 Resilience Innovation Challenge, which is an immersive cross-disciplinary challenge that inspires students to drive real-world impacts through innovation in science, communication, and sustainability. The mission of Students 4 Resilience is to combat climate change through local solutions.

Each participating team includes an advisor from the school, a student ambassador, and a number of students. The advisors and student ambassadors assume leadership roles and work directly with participating residents. They also participate in a leadership committee and arrange meetings with Residents 4 Resilience, which has an advisory committee consisting of professors, marine experts, and City and County leaders.

Ms. Jacobson-Bertanzetti distributed a list of 10 project tracks, which she briefly reviewed with the Board members. All of the projects target at least one of the four critical water issues addressed by Residents 4 Resilience, which are:

- Polluted waterways
- Coastal flooding
- Storm surge
- Safe drinking water

Project tracks include:

- Living seawalls and panels
- Oyster restoration innovations
- Stormwater filtration
- Educational marine water research center concepts
- Monitoring and sensing technologies
- Canal access and engagement
- Mangrove restoration and design
- Storytelling and design promotion
- Construction, pollution, and dredging solutions
- Advocacy

The project tracks offer a range of options for different types of students, including data collection, field work, community outreach, media and social media, public policy, and more. Students may submit designs, videos, or presentations which highlight their concepts and how they would benefit the community.

Ted Inserra, president of the River Oaks Civic Association, asked if the projects will receive funding. Ms. Jacobson-Bertanzetti explained that the projects deal more closely with ideas and concepts which can be brought to life with assistance from Residents 4 Resilience. Students 4 Resilience is sponsored by local schools, with a teacher as advisor and a student ambassador, as well as any students who wish to participate. At present, Students 4 Resilience has a presence at Pinecrest, American Heritage, and St. Thomas high schools. They hope to expand into public schools as well. There is a

Students 4 Resilience link on the Residents 4 Resilience website where students can sign up for project teams.

Ms. Thibault asked if Ms. Jacobson-Bertanzetti's student peers are discussing climate change. Ms. Jacobson-Bertanzetti explained that students in advanced placement (AP) science courses are presented with the facts of climate change, and students study the effects of climate change at the collegiate level as well.

Ms. Rahmankhah suggested that Students 4 Resilience might wish to consider adding a project track related to the green economy, which could involve trades that work within this economy. This could help students work toward possible future careers. Vice Chair Daoust also suggested expansion of the project tracks to include green infrastructure, including stormwater management and/or wastewater treatment. This track could offer opportunities to prospective engineering students.

Mr. Lasday asked how Students 4 Resilience would encourage participants to become involved with the project tracks. Ms. Jacobson-Bertanzetti replied that teams are still being assembled at the participating schools, and suggested that if the teams need expert advice on their projects, members of the public with expertise in those areas could help through mentoring.

Ms. Bailey thanked Ms. Jacobson-Bertanzetti for her involvement with the SAB and presented her with a certificate of achievement.

V. New Business

- **2026 Meeting Schedule**

Ms. Thibault presented the Board members with the proposed 2026 meeting dates. The Board normally meets the fourth Monday of each month. Ms. Thibault identified three of those dates that the Board may want to adjust due to proximity to holidays. The members agreed by consensus to make the following changes due to potential conflicts with holidays:

- May 25: change to May 18, 2026
- November 23: change to November 16, 2026
- December 28: change to December 14, 2026

VI. Old Business

- **Sustainability Advisory Committee Coalition (SACC)**

Ms. Rahmankhah reported that at the most recent Sustainability Advisory Committee Coalition (SACC) meeting, a list of prospective Code Compliance initiatives related to sustainability had been compiled, and the attendees were provided with Code Compliance and waste management/recycling contacts at the County level.

The Broward County Solid Waste Authority (SWA) is preparing a Waste Master Plan and is currently taking public comment at browardswa.org. It was suggested that all the sustainability advisory bodies recommend adoption of that Master Plan to their respective governing bodies.

Ms. Bailey advised that a group from the City of Sunrise is interested in providing a presentation to the SAB on the Waste Master Plan in order to encourage Fort Lauderdale to participate in the Plan.

Urban Forester Laura Tooley noted that Fort Lauderdale is the endpoint for many Broward County waterways that cross other municipalities as well, which means they carry runoff from those other municipalities.

Ms. Rahmankhah continued that one suggestion raised at the SACC meeting was a proposal to request that cities designate at least one City-owned park as a permanent community compost area.

- **Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP)**

Mr. Hadwen stated that the UFMP will go before the City Commission at their November 18, 2025 meeting. Ms. Rahmankhah will be present at that meeting on behalf of the SAB, which has sent a communication to the City Commission encouraging adoption of the Master Plan. The UFMP will be presented to the Commission by the consultant, Resource Environmental Solutions (RES).

Mr. Lasday recalled that he had raised a concern regarding mangroves, and had learned that the County rather than the City regulates activity related to mangroves. He suggested that the City send a letter to Broward County requesting that they take a stronger stance in regulating replacement of mangroves, as the City lacks the legislative authority to take action.

Ms. Tooley advised that the City is collaborating with the County on other efforts, and she felt the County would be willing to work with the City regarding mangroves as well. Mr. Lasday explained that he would like to see a formal request from the SAB that the City make a good faith effort to follow up on and improve mangrove restoration.

Ms. Tooley clarified that the state of Florida has delegated authority to Broward County for permitting related to mangrove planting and removal. The UFMP provides a general framework for urban forestry activity. She suggested that as the Plan's elements are prioritized, its component on mangroves can be enhanced as an area of focus.

- **Sustainability Advisory Board Topics for 2026**

Mr. Hadwen advised that over the past year, the SAB has sent successful communications to the City Commission related to the proposed electrification of the City's fleet, as well as encouraging adoption of the Net Zero Plan and the UFMP. Staff suggested that the SAB topics be organized along three themes Sustainability, Forestry and Resiliency. He provided the following suggestions of topics to be discussed by the Board in 2026, including:

- January: reducing single-use plastics at City events and facilities
- February: Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) priorities
- March: aligning the UFMP's and SAB's priorities, and offering a recommendation to the Commission which could advance these priorities
- April: discussion of City tree plantings and giveaways as well as plans regarding mangroves
- May: discussion with the City's Sustainability Coordinator for Resiliency Outreach and the City's Floodplain Manager on private resiliency
- June: Presentation of low-impact development and discussion of the Design Construction Manual (DCM)
- July: possible summer break
- August: update on the City's resiliency efforts, including the Fortify Lauderdale program
- September: new sustainability initiatives under the Net Zero Plan, including development of a community strategic energy efficiency plan
- October: use of the City's Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR) to promote more mixed-use development, reduce transportation impacts, and encourage use of less energy
- November: sustainable tourism or further ULDR incentives
- December: water conservation and smart irrigation systems

Ms. Bailey suggested that the Board hear presentations from non-City Staff members in order to become more aware of other opportunities to improve resilience. She also recommended discussion of plastic grass when considering the proliferation of plastics in the community.

Dr. Nancy Gassman advised that the state of Florida is moving toward preemption of local governments' regulations of landscaping materials, which may place additional constraints on the City. She added that some City parks continue to use artificial turf on their playing fields, as it is proven to be helpful with a number of issues associated with the operation and management of those fields. There is an expectation that the City will continue to install additional artificial turf fields.

Ms. Bailey expressed concern with this plan, asking if it would be possible for the Board to intervene in these plans. She pointed out that there are several drawbacks to the use of artificial turf, which is being used less in professional sports due to injuries. It was determined that plastic grass would be added to the list of items to be discussed in

2026, although Mr. Hadwen cautioned again that the City may be unable to address the use of this material if the state preempts home rule.

There was also additional discussion of when to address sustainable tourism in light of the timing of spring break, as it could be useful to send a communication to the City Commission in advance of that season. It was also proposed that the City consider ordinances already in place in neighboring municipalities. These regulations could be compared to the City's ordinances.

Vice Chair Daoust addressed plastic grass, noting that there is also an economic aspect to this discussion. He recommended that the Board hear a more detailed discussion of these economic impacts, which could inform any communication the Board may wish to send to the City Commission on this issue.

Luz Ramirez confirmed that in the past, the Board has seen presentations from other municipalities and individuals who are not part of City Staff. She requested that any speakers the Board members may wish to recommend be transmitted to the Staff Liaison for further consideration.

Mr. Straus pointed out that the City's beaches are often polluted with plastics following spring break, and was in favor of recommending that the Commission consider implementing additional trash cans or improving Police enforcement to address this.

Ms. Tooley explained that some 2026 discussion items were planned earlier in the year due to the City's budget process, as there are certain issues for which Staff may need to request funding. These will need to be addressed earlier rather than later in the year. Mr. Hadwen cited the proposed presentation on single-use plastics as an example, suggesting that this may provide an opportunity for the Board to communicate with the Commission prior to spring break. Ms. Bailey pointed out, however, that some of the items proposed for later in the year may include potential "quick wins" if the Board wishes to send communications to the Commission in relation to them.

Dr. Gassman advised that Staff is already reviewing plastic-related ordinances from other local municipalities and will be able to provide the Board with this analysis by the January 2026 meeting.

Mr. Hadwen proposed that the list of potential items for 2026 be revisited and finalized at the December 2025 meeting.

Ms. Jacobson-Bertanzetti noted that while the Board regularly sees presentations, they do not always take action afterward. She recommended discussion of these topics after they are presented, even if no action is ultimately taken, proposing that presenters be asked what action they might like the Board to recommend to the City Commission.

The Board members discussed their role in making recommendations to the Commission. Mr. Hadwen recalled that in the past, the Board regularly offered communications to the City Commission on a monthly basis; however, those communications were not consistently successful. He felt the Board may be better served by selectively sending quarterly well-crafted communications on the issues they feel are the most important.

Ms. Charles suggested that the proposed January 2026 discussion of single-use plastics also consider a ban of these items on parks and beaches. It was noted that this would be very difficult to enforce; in addition, the state of Florida has taken steps to prevent municipalities from passing legislation against single-use plastics in public places.

Dr. Gassman advised that these are among the topics Staff is currently researching, with the expectation of bringing answers back to the Board at a later date. She pointed out that a first step to regulate single-use plastics appears to be regulation at City events, which could be followed by more comprehensive restrictions. Staff is also looking into nuances between City events and City properties.

Mr. Straus proposed a recommendation to add more garbage cans to the City's beaches. Solid Waste and Recycling Division Manager Melissa Doyle explained that the Public Works Department is responsible for all beach sanitation operations. She observed that even when there are several trash and recycling receptacles, the public does not make a thoughtful selection of what they place in these containers. For this reason, it was determined that Staff labor is better spent servicing existing trash cans on the beach rather than installing new ones.

Mr. Hadwen concluded that the list of suggested topics for 2026 will be updated and reviewed again at a subsequent meeting. He characterized the list as a living document that can be updated throughout the year.

Ms. Bailey asked if any areas of the City use pervious sidewalks. Dr. Gassman replied that this topic was recently raised before the City Commission, with the expectation that a presentation or letter will be given to the Commission regarding the pros and cons of pervious pavement. She confirmed that there are areas in the City where pervious pavement has been used for sidewalks; there have also been pilot projects which used pervious asphalt.

Dr. Gassman continued that one challenge is the requirement of a different frequency of maintenance for pervious surfaces, particularly if they are used in roadways. Pervious surfaces require the use of specialized equipment in which the City has not invested. On sidewalks, another consideration is the maintenance of various utilities: when this maintenance disrupts the integrity of the pervious pavement, it is typically patched with asphalt, which results in a patchwork of materials. Some of these surfaces in the City were ultimately removed and replaced with traditional sidewalk or asphalt.

VII. Proposed Communication

None.

VIII. Items for Next Meeting

- **December 15, 2025**

Mr. Hadwen advised that the December 15, 2025 meeting will include review of the proposed 2026 topics, as well as election of the Chair and Vice Chair for 2026.

Mr. Lasday volunteered to attend next month's SACC meeting and report back to the Board.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 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.]