



THE COUNCIL OF  
FORT LAUDERDALE  
CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS

Minutes of General Membership Meeting

October 8th, 2024, at 6:30pm  
Via Zoom – Thanks to the Weather  
30 in Attendance by Zoom

Opened by Mary Peloquin at 6:32pm

At least everybody can be a little more relaxed by Zoom and not have to be quite as dressed up as normal. Please put your name and your neighborhood in the chat.

We have our State Representative Chip Lamarca and Fort Lauderdale Public Affairs Manager, Daphnee Sainvil.

Representative Lamarca - Thank you, Mary, and all the community leaders. I had the privilege of representing you in Tallahassee.

A little fun fact is I had the privilege of working with Daphnee back in my, I think, the entire eight years I was on the county commission. If you have the PowerPoint up I'll let her get rolling with the first slide and information, and then we'll kind of wrap up with what we think might happen next year.

Daphnee Sianvil - This is the 2024 state session. The first thing on the report is the broadband and cybersecurity funding. There was broadband equity access and deployment funding where there was \$100 million allocated. For cybersecurity grants, \$40 million was provided for the local government cybersecurity grant program. That one was close to being unfunded, but we made a final advocacy push being pushed with leadership in making sure that it came back in order to ensure that our local government systems were secure.

That \$40 million goes a long way in ensuring that our systems are secure. And then the four-year extension of the promotional pull attachment rates for the underserved areas to ensure that broadband is equitable and easy to access

everywhere throughout the city. I think one of those organizations that was hacked was the Broward School Board as well.

Then there was the Affordable Housing Initiative, which is Senate Bill 328. This is the glitch. Well. We call it the glitch bill for live local, but in reality, it's just fixing certain things that the cities and counties were not happy with. One of them was in order to regulate the development height in specific situations. That was a major concern for a lot of municipalities.

Representative Lamarca - It really covers all areas where we need. We need accessibility and workforce housing. And it could be up in Betty's neighborhood. It could be downtown. more in the dense urban populations but what that bill did is allowed developers and cities to, bring a project forward and if there was 40 percent of the overall units were workforce housing and just to be clear workforce housing in this case is 80 percent of the average median income and the average median income of Broward households is 89 nine thousand dollar range per household so we're talking about um, you know as much as roughly a hundred thousand dollar income units. So, we're talking about people who work at Broward Health, people who serve at the city level and our first responders, teachers and many many other people in the tourism and hospitality positions so that was kind of the basis of this bill two years ago. development, we.

We were able to make some changes in height regulation where we keep the higher buildings away from residential neighborhoods like a lot of you are in, and have it in areas where it's more compatible, and then some tax exemptions for other types of projects for charitable properties. The city and your commissioners and residents care deeply about preserving a local charm in a lot of our neighborhoods.

Daphnee - The Public Camping and Sleeping Regulations, HB 1365, where now in October the bill became effective. However, residents can bring civil action against counties allowing for unlawful public camping in January. So basically, the bill says that counties are prohibited from authorizing regular camping or sleeping on public property, at public buildings, or on public right-of-ways within their jurisdictions. And it wouldn't apply where there is a state of emergency or where local officers have declared a state of emergency, such as in this case with Hurricane Milton coming. This law is temporarily suspended. So people sleeping... in public right-of-ways or in public buildings and spaces would still be allowed to do it. And counties are authorized to designate a public property, so they can take a piece of land, designate that as the camping space for individuals. However, the municipality has to agree if it's within the county's jurisdiction. So if there's a place in Fort Lauderdale, Fort Lauderdale has to agree that that is the designated place with the county, and then it goes through the DCF requirements. And that is it in a nutshell. Right now, the city is going through a public hearing for an ordinance that we're going to put in place that outlines what reasonableness is when receiving a complaint and then responding to the complaint as well.

Representative LaMarca - I've had the opportunity to listen to most of the city commission's meetings. hear the debate, hear the conversation, and having grown up in northeast Fort Lauderdale and still spending a lot of time there, I'm acutely aware that a lot of the population that we're dealing with that is either homeless or suffering from other issues that has them it affects Fort Lauderdale the most. Because of Broward Health Medical Center, the jail, facilities that are there, and when they're released or when they leave on their own, they're in Fort Lauderdale.

So, one of the toughest questions as a legislator is the question of why are we not able to get insurance rates down? And there's multiple parts to that answer. One was, I would say of why insurance is expensive in Florida is we had a lot of lawsuits and litigation that did not need to necessarily take place.

When someone says they're going to give you a free roof and then they don't give you a free roof. You might get the roof at the end of the day, but we all get a little bit of legal fees to fight for it. And so we got rid of that piece. There's some tort reform there, but that's not the only issue. Obviously, we have, and God willing, no one gets hurt, but we have a storm coming our way. Insurance carriers will tell you this too, is make your home as strong as possible. Make it the most resilient structure you can have. In other words, keep the water out. Make sure you have impact windows and doors. Make sure your roof is solid.

I do see that Jim LaBrie has another question. I think the My Safe Florida Home program was a really good start. Wasn't there an income limit, though, on whether you could receive grants?

Representative LaMarca, Thank you, Jim. The year we did it there was no income income restriction what what it so what it is to be clear it's if you have citizens or your home structure is that \$700,000 or below you can qualify for the grants.

Representative LaMarca – Short Term Rental Bill - I fought this bill every year. I work on leading a coalition of enough Republicans to not vote for or vote against these bills. And then I've got the support of all the rest of the Broward delegation. On the Democrat side, and we just try to beat the crap out of these bills, well, this one got through on about a one or two vote margin this year. It might have been three or four. And it passed in the House, passed in the Senate. And what happens with the bill after that?

Well, it could get sent to the governor, and the governor can ignore it, and it will become a law in 14 days. Otherwise, he can decide whether or not to sign it or veto it. And if we were at meetings, and I know I said it at the gulf. I probably said it at Imperial Point and Coral Ridge. If you have, and I see Karen on here from Coral Ridge, if you have a minute, write an e-mail, make a phone call to the governor's office, and ask him to veto this bill. The good thing in this case is the Florida realtors were very, very much on board with making sure they vetoed this bill.

The only stipulation I would say is that without a condo board or a neighborhood association, the vast majority of places couldn't ban them completely. But I think it's only fair to neighborhoods. And, again, I live in Lighthouse Point. I grew up in northeast Fort Lauderdale and Coral Ridge Isles. Neighborhoods don't need hotels anymore. And that's just a point I keep bringing up. And it's hard sometimes to have a conversation with somebody who's from Lake County, someplace that's more rural.

Mary Peloquin - We were well-guided by Daphnee when to write the letter, who to write the letter, and many of us did. I thank Daphnee a lot for that because, you know, we wouldn't know exactly what to do. So, it sounds like it helped. So, and we were all glad to see this bill fail.

Daphnee - I will reach out to you about a letter to the county regarding Breaker's Avenue, because it does, and you can help us out with that.

Representative LaMarca - If there are issues that you want to put into policy or anything with, please feel free to reach out to me or Daphnee, and I appreciate you all taking the time tonight. It started a little long, but we've had a busy year this year.

Karen Warfel – Sidewalk Master Plan - For those of you who may not know me, my name is Karen Warfel. I am with the City's Transportation Mobility Department. I am the Transportation Planning Division Manager. I am here to give you an update from the last time I was with you. Now we're getting closer to the end, so we wanted to touch base with you all, let you know where we're at and what the next steps are over the next couple months when we finalize the project.

It is a little bit different than some of our traditional plans. It's really going to be a data-driven tool of where are the gaps and how do we prioritize. It's not getting into the detail of exactly what segment and which street will go first, second, third, or fourth.

It's more of a tool for us as planners and the transportation department to start getting through chunks of those sidewalks as money starts coming through. We do have some money that the city commission has allocated over the next five years and a couple grants that we have received where we'll be able to start going through. So what we've done so far is completed a comprehensive sidewalk layer, which was some work, which I'll talk about, putting that all together because if we don't have a real knowledge of where there are sidewalks and aren't, we can't move anywhere forward from that. We have completed that and it took longer than expected with the data that we had available.

That completes my presentation, if you have any questions, I'm happy to answer them. I can see Dr. JJ, you have your hands raised, why don't you go ahead.

JJ Ryder, Rio Vista Civic Association - We have lots of sidewalks in our neighborhood that have fallen in tremendous disrepair I believe that falls under the homeowners. Is that correct?

Karen Warfel – No, the sidewalk ordinance was changed a few years ago where the city has the responsibility of maintenance. Fixit FTL app is fantastic. You can report those items or reach out to Public Works directly on where there's issues with the sidewalks.

Mary Peloquin – There are two vacant board positions one is the District Three Representative and the other has been ongoing is Recording Secretary.

Michael Albetta - I would like to make the nomination of Mr. Frankie Lane to this board for District Three Representative.

Mary Peloquin - If there's anybody else that's interested, you please e-mail me, or if you know somebody or want to nominate somebody, let me know.

2025 Dates - When we put these dates out, I would really like it if people would pay attention to what they are. We try to be respectful of each other's meetings.

Our sponsorship program was terrific this year i think we should have a sponsorship course that Vanessa should be the professor.

I hope any of you that are on Instagram are signed up for our Instagram page because Suzie does an amazing job with it and it not only has our information on it, it has all kinds of city information on it and it's updated quickly. I encourage people to make sure to sign up for that.

Melinda Bowker – Treasurers Report - Hopefully you guys can all see the treasure report now. So, a total with the bank account and PayPal is \$6,220. Balance in June, the last time I actually spoke to the membership, was \$6,141. We've had a slight increase since that time. But I just really wanted to say that we did have \$1,231 in expenses in the last several months due to the forum and just some of our other administrative expenses such as the website as well as buying new checks. And the reason that didn't hit us hard is due to that sponsorship program that Mary mentioned as well as we did get a couple voting memberships over the summer. Thanks to Vanessa for most of these sponsors that came in in the last several months. We have seven official sponsors listed. And then most importantly, our voting members, we are at a total, as you will see in this report of 47 voting members, which is great. We are still always open to having more. We have three non-voting business members.

And then at the bottom of the report, I always put the associations that are recognized by the city that have not paid their membership to us yet. We only have 15. And then there are the associations that are actually not recognized by the city that are also not our members, which are 22 associations.

Mary Peloquin – The Forums were very, very successful. I've thanked the board already at our board meetings, but I haven't said anything to our general

membership the forum. I just appreciate everybody showing up and coming and helping.

John Burns,CBA - I just wanted to, on behalf of the CBA, thank the council, because we have used your format for the brochure handout at the forums. I appreciate or thank you for lending that to us. And for whoever that created it, it made our job much, much simpler. So, thank you very much.

Mary Peloquin - Well, you're welcome. And you can thank Melinda, who's on this, because she's the one that put that together, plus the slideshow. And then Suzie, she put together the sponsorship poster and the programs, I mean, all that stuff. Suzi and Melinda did all the printing, got all those things done.

Food for thought There are three of us that term out in March. I want people to know what positions are going to be open for sure. And if they're interested, they should let me or the person that has that position know. We all are happy to mentor people. The three people that term out are myself, Melinda, and Jim Concanon. So those three positions are definitely going to be open. All the other positions, nobody's terming out, and they can be reelected in those positions if they still want to keep them, which I would hope that they would.

Our holiday party is December 9th and it's going to be a repeat of last year at Cafe Seville. That was really fun last year. I think everybody really enjoyed it and amazingly, everybody fit in that room. So we're going to do that same thing again. So mark your calendars December 9th. Don't let anybody have a meeting that night!

Do I have a motion to adjourn? I make the motion to accept Michael Albetta, seconded by Brucie Cummings. Passed unanimously.

Meeting ended approximately 8:30pm