



NORTHWEST COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

MEETING MINUTES **MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2025**

The City of Lauderhill hosted the meeting of the Northwest Council of Elected Officials on Monday, April 14, 2025 at the Ken Thurston Inverrary Center and Public Service Facility, 3300 NW Inverrary Boulevard, Lauderhill, FL 33313.

Elected Officials/Attendees:

Mayor Jackie Railey
Commissioner Sandra Welch
Vice Mayor Nancy Metayer Bowen
Commissioner Shawn Cerra
Vice Mayor Tycie Causwell
Commissioner Sharon Thomas
Mayor Denise D. Grant
Commissioner Richard Campbell
Commissioner Melissa P. Dunn
Commissioner John T. Hodgson
Mayor Arlene R. Schwartzman
Commissioner Anthony N. Caggiano
Commissioner Joanne Simone
Vice Mayor Darrell (Dee) Lewis-Ricketts
Commissioner Cindy Murphy-Salomone
Deputy Mayor Neil C. Kerch
Assistant Deputy Mayor Jacqueline A. Guzman
Commissioner Latoya S. Clarke
Vice Mayor Kicia Daniel
Commissioner Morey Wright
Commissioner Krystal Patterson
Commissioner Hazelle Rogers
Debbie Afflick

Municipality:

City of Coconut Creek
City of Coconut Creek
City of Coral Springs
City of Coral Springs
City of Lauderdale Lakes
City of Lauderdale Lakes
City of Lauderhill
City of Lauderhill
City of Lauderhill
City of Lauderhill
City of Margate
City of Margate
City of Margate
City of North Lauderdale
City of Parkland
City of Sunrise
City of Sunrise
City of Sunrise
City of Tamarac
City of Tamarac
City of Tamarac
Broward County
For State Representative Lisa Dunkley

Guest Speakers:

Jonathan Allen
Bertha Henry
Sheri Brown Grosvenor

Community Foundation of Broward
Community Foundation of Broward
Community Foundation of Broward

Lauderhill Administration and Staff:

Kennie Hobbs, Interim City Manager
Sean Henderson, Interim Deputy City Manager
Hans Ottinot, Interim City Attorney
Andrea M. Anderson, City Clerk
Nadia Chin, Deputy City Clerk
Zach Davis-Walker, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs
Ryan Lohnes, Lauderhill Police Officer

I CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Denise D. Grant welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m. She invited all elected officials, guests, and staff to introduce themselves.

II APPROVAL OF MINUTES – **March 17, 2025 - City of North Lauderdale - City of Lauderdale Lakes** Vice Mayor Causwell moved to approve the Minutes as submitted. Seconded by City of **North Lauderdale** Vice Mayor Lewis-Ricketts. No discussion. **Minutes approved unanimously by voice vote.**

III PRESENTATIONS

Lauderhill Commissioner Campbell mentioned the 2026 FIFA World Cup Tournament, an event that took place every four years. Soccer players competed from countries around the world and it was fortunate for Broward cities that Canada, Mexico, and the United States would be hosting this event; seven of the matches would take place in South Florida. He noted the relevance of the event to Broward County was that in preparation for this huge event, a committee was established to ensure all the focus was not on Dade County. It was the responsibility of Broward County and its cities to ensure they were prepared to welcome and benefit from the event, maximizing the potential impact such an event would have. He said it was conservatively estimated that the event would produce \$1.3 billion in South Florida. Commissioner Campbell stressed the importance for Broward cities being creative in their efforts to ensure local businesses and sports programs benefited as much as possible from this opportunity. A meeting was recently held in Lauderhill with the promoters, the first of many leading up to the 2026 event; he was the contact person in Broward County.

Lauderhill Commissioner Dunn mentioned significant cuts were anticipated to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Medicaid, Medicare, and social security; this was a concern shared by all Broward cities. On May 1, 2025, City of Lauderhill would be hosting a town hall meeting with Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick to explore ways to advocate to prevent such cuts from happening in a deeper way and to mobilize to mitigate the effects of the loss of such services. She believed this was one of those issues that crossed borders, so cities needed to collaborate on solutions to ensure their residents' needs were met.

Interim City Manager Kennie Hobbs stated Lauderhill staff would soon send out a communication regarding cricket events returning to the City of Lauderhill at the Broward Central Regional Park/Lauderhill Performing Arts Center (LPAC). This was not only significant for Lauderhill, but for all Broward cities, as World Cup Cricket games were played at the Central Regional Park in 2024. He remarked on Lauderhill's newest facility, the Ken Thurston Inverrary Center and Public Service Facility; it was just under 16,000 square feet. It was a multiuse facility, housing a variety of activities, including: a basketball/gym with a capacity of 650, and a seating capacity of just under 300; a multipurpose room, in which the present meeting was being held, that had a seating capacity of just over 100; the Development Services Division was housed to the west of the building where staff carried out Lauderhill's Planning Department functions, along with code enforcement, and the Building Department. Mr. Hobbs mentioned the City purchased the site in September 2013, and it received its certificate of occupancy (CO) in March 2025. The facility allowed the City to offer both recreational and administrative services to residents

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living in the northwest area of Lauderhill. He mentioned there were 26 parks located throughout Lauderhill, a combination of active and passive parks; one of the City's priorities was to further develop these parks. Lauderhill took great pride in its recreational programs for residents of all age ranges; at present, the City serviced some 3,000 youths through its sports programs, such as football and track programs, noting the youths also came from areas outside Lauderhill. He said over the last two years the City purchased three additional park sites, so in the coming year there were plans to develop them. For the current City Commission, parks played a major part their efforts to provide services to all residents of Lauderhill. He invited everyone to take with them a copy of the City's newsletter, the Spotlight, as it gave an overview of what the City of Lauderhill had to offer.

Mayor Grant asked staff to distribute the newsletter, along with the City Manager's quarterly report. She thanked city staff for all their hard work to ensure the City upheld, and maintained its standard of excellence serving Lauderhill residents and businesses. She noted parks were safe havens for residents, particularly for young people, and they were resource centers, mentioning the City's Adopt-A-Park program, whereby individuals and organizations volunteered to help keep city parks clean on a monthly or quarterly basis. Oftentimes, Lauderhill was portrayed negatively in the news and the Commission was working on helping to change that narrative, working with staff to highlight the good and important, beneficial elements in Lauderhill that advanced the City, making it a place where persons lived a quality life. Mayor Grant stated crime was one of the negatives associated with Lauderhill, noting there was an increase in crime on a national level, so Lauderhill, too, had been impacted. City administration was looking at the root cause of crime in Lauderhill and exploring the social services the City could offer residents to reducing incidents of crime. She said on June 12, 2025, the City would host a Public Safety Conference; just prior to that event, there would be a unity walk, then a prayer vigil that would include community leaders and clergy members; they too would walk the City of Lauderhill. People often took on the personalities of their leaders and if they knew their leaders cared, residents would care too. Attending the conference would be law enforcement professionals from across the country to discuss best practices of communities with similar experiences to those of Lauderhill and how they were being addressed; the City hoped to implement some of the best practices. She invited elected officials and other city representatives to attend the conference.

In regards to the safety measures utilized at Lauderhill's parks, Police Officer Ryan Lohnes stated he did community outreach, including work with homeless persons in Lauderhill, noting the police department had a program called the Quality of Life Morning Patrols. For three hours each morning two officers would go out to city parks and other identified problem areas, places where homeless persons tended to congregate, to offer them free services. He said officers found homeless persons often refused the services or they accepted them and later refused because they were not to their liking. Officers tried to offer them a variety of services as Broward County had numerous resources, including state funding, grants, etc. The goal was to help homeless persons create a better life for themselves. He said officers did not push homeless persons around or tell them to leave the area; he gave them his card and cell phone number to call if they needed help.

Mayor Grant thanked Broward County Commissioner Hazelle Rogers on her 29 years of public service, during which she served as a city commissioner, and mayor later, a state representative, and, at present, as a County commissioner. It was clear she loved public service, thanking for her for her mentorship.

Broward County Commissioner Hazelle Rogers acknowledged the hard work of Mayor Grant. She continuously shared information with elected officials around Broward, particularly when she became aware of things happening in her district. She sought to raise awareness to issues so other elected officials could act to address them. Many city commissioners were unaware of how much County Commissioners did, as they were constantly working to make things happen for their constituents, and she had a high appreciation for the elected officials and staff she constantly worked with. The subject event was a great forum for northwest Broward elected officials to meet, and have conversations outside of Broward League of Cities meetings.

A. A PRESENTATION FROM THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF BROWARD (CFB) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jonathan Allen, Vice Chair of the CFB, introduced the CFB representatives present, noting they would joined him in making the presentation on the CFB; he highlighted the following:

- The CFB's mission was to transform communities; they focused on leadership, fostered collaborations, built endowments, and advanced equity
- The CFB had been doing this work for over 40 years in the Broward County area
- Former Lauderhill Commissioner Hayward Benson was one of their fund holders; he moved beyond the elected office and established a fund with the foundation, so the family legacy could last forever
- They provided information, support, and services via their professional advisors and very experienced staff
- They supported nonprofits through their Nonprofit Center to elevate their performance and operations
- Community foundations were charitable organizations that pooled donations from individuals, families, businesses, etc.; funds helped support current and future community needs
- Community builders were individuals or entities who contributed a million dollars or more to establish and endow a fund
- Sheri Brown Grosvenor, Vice President of Community Impact, was responsible for evaluating and analyzing grants; grants totaled \$200 million since 1984 to date
- They were ranked among the top 100 community foundations in the nation
- The presentation covered community endowments, how they grew, and their power to impact community needs long term
- The City of Oakland Park and the City of Lauderhill took the leap of faith to establish such funds with the CFB.

Sheri Brown Grosvenor, Vice President of Community Impact, continued the presentation, focusing on grant making and the maintenance element:

- Grants were categorized in four distinct areas
- Education and youth enrichment, focusing on: quality of education; combining academic achievement with exposure to opportunities, such as college tours, pathways beyond college, certifications, etc.; internships with city governments was a great way to expose youths to work
- Social and economic mobility: looking at how to remove barriers preventing adults, primarily, from achieving economic sustainability; there were actually more jobs than people filling them; they were working on getting people work ready, and helping those who were working improve their incomes
- Entrepreneurship: Lauderhill had numerous entrepreneurs, as they worked with the Lauderhill staff on a program to facilitate this development; they worked with an organization, Minority Diversity Suppliers, currently operating primarily in Miami, Florida, but they sought to expand their presence in Broward County; they provided technical assistance and support to persons wishing to start or grow their businesses
- Healthy and thriving communities, where they focused on: mental and physical health; comorbidities were plaguing Broward residents, such as diabetes, hypertension, etc.; they sought to ensure a communities physical amenities, such as parks, provided spaces that facilitated residents' physical health; food insecurity was a significant issue and people lacked sufficient, healthy food to thrive; two hospital districts, Broward Health and Memorial Health were working together to launch an initiative "Better Together" about a month and a half ago; they sought to determine where higher levels of food insecurity were in Broward County and explore steps to resolve the situation
- Art and Culture: This continued to be a major focus of the foundation and they supported numerous art and cultural initiatives in various Broward cities
- The Nonprofit Center at the CFB served large and small organizations; they could access training, resources, guidance on how to start a nonprofit, etc.; they could be put in the queue for funding from the CFB

- Community building and opportunity: This area dealt primarily with the CFB's diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure they created an inclusive community, so everyone had an opportunity to thrive in Broward County
- The Silver Tsunami was a report on the aging population in Broward County, and the need for more services geared towards those individuals
- The CFB's future areas of focus included: education and literacy; addressing homelessness; providing affordable housing; maternal and infant health; addressing areas that were food and health deserts in Broward County; college and career readiness; continued support of nonprofits, etc.
- The CFB partnered with other fund foundations in awarding grants on initiatives, such as: those addressing LGBT and other disparities in the community; a new educational initiative in the environmental area called the Florida Wildlife Corridor helped residents learn more about their local environment and wildlife through two or three organizations
- Huizenga Park in the downtown Fort Lauderdale area; replicating the Florida Children's Initiative in Pompano that would allow Broward to get state funding for programming in that city.
- The Leap of Love initiative sought to spread the message of love around Broward County; the CFB commissioned three murals across the County; the first was in Plantation when exiting from the Turnpike on Sunrise Boulevard going east; on the right-hand side there was a love mural in the park right over the bridge; the point of the initiative was to get all Broward cities to adopt a love mural, the plan being to have a love mural in each of the County Commissioner's districts; they were spreading the word via attending city commission meetings, speaking on how they could become a part of this initiative; the latest mural commissioned was in Dania Beach in March 2025; a city need only identify a space well situated to spread the message of love; cities were asked to contribute a minimum of \$10,000.00 towards the mural, which cost about \$60,000.00; many cities contributed more, but the CFB worked to get the rest of the funds; the next mural was anticipated in Hollywood; the City of Pompano was open to having a mural, and CFB was currently in discussions with the City of Oakland Park.

Bertha Henry, Treasurer, CFB, continued the presentation as follows:

- Local communities bore the brunt of the cost to satisfy the needs of their residents
- The CFB knew that people would give if they were asked; they explored how to reach the entire community about contributing to the wellbeing of the community they benefited from
- When thinking about philanthropy and how one's municipality could benefit from that, it could be difficult; one way to facilitate this was for a municipality to contribute via the establishment of a fund, which they could designate the type of and the type of activities the fund would be used for in relation to satisfying community needs; this allowed those benefiting to contribute to the funds used to provide services
- Her focus was working with people who loved their community, desiring positive things for their community long after they died; the CFB was a way to do that
- As treasurer for the CFB, she also served on the audit committee, and the investment committee; they hired the investment bankers, the persons responsible for the funding coming into the CFB, so they watched over the foundation's finances, and how to grow them as much as possible responsibly

Ms. Brown Grosvenor stated the CFB was always looking for community experts to serve on their grant review panels, inviting the elected officials present to join, as it was a great way for them to see what was going on in the community via the proposals they received, how decisions were made, and for the elected officials to weigh in on those decisions. The elected officials could become fund holders utilizing their own resources, and establishing a fund in their name. She urged the City of Lauderhill's elected officials to keep discussing how to further build Lauderhill's fund; the CFB could help with that; elected officials could join the CFB's email list to stay abreast of what was happening.

An attendee mentioned the need for cities to pool their efforts in order to get resources to address shortfalls due to state and federal funding cuts, rather than each city approaching the same potential donors. Seniors, children, etc. all needed their city's help.

When asked if the CFB was doing anything for low income individuals, Ms. Brown Grosvenor replied the CFB was exploring what was the most effective role the organization could play, as needs were so great, and it required a great amount of resources to meet them. For example, though there were homeless persons roaming the streets who needed help, there were also working homeless people who fell into the unhoused category. One way they helped was by providing financial support for organizations that helped persons who needed help with their rent; with rent being so unaffordable, working individuals might need a few extra hundred dollars to make ends meet for the month. She said, with regard to actually funding the building of affordable housing, this was beyond their scope of services due to the cost factor.

A meeting attendee asked about the State considering lowering the age at which children could work; he opined the State's plan was to put children to work in fields, as many persons who worked in the fields were being deported, or leaving Florida. He was appalled at the idea, advocating for cities' lobbyists to voice objections at the state level so cities' positions were clear to state representatives. It was abominable; the state and federal government seemed to be destroying educational opportunities while considering the possibility of people's children working in fields.

Mayor Grant concurred as to the numerous executive orders issued by both the state and federal governments; in response to this, the City of Lauderhill created a new department, Intergovernmental Affairs, that was being led by Director Zach Davis-Walker. He was responsible for communicating with the City's county, state, and federal representatives and he kept the City Commission and administration apprised of what was transpiring at those government levels. Mr. Davis-Walker provided an update at each Commission meeting, including on executive orders and their possible impact to the City of Lauderhill. She thanked all city staff members who helped coordinate the present meeting, inviting attendees who had the time to allow Mr. Hobbs to give them a tour of the facility.

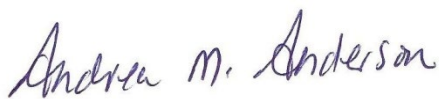
IV Old Business – None

V New Business – None

VI Next Scheduled Meeting – Monday, May 13, 2025 – City of Coconut Creek

VII Adjournment - There being no further discussion, Mayor Grant adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrea Anderson, MMC
Lauderhill City Clerk