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April 19, 2021

**NORTHWEST COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS**  
**MEETING NOTICE**

**Date:** Monday, May 10, 2021  
**Time:** 12:00 Noon  
**Host:** City of Coconut Creek  
**Location:** Virtual Zoom Meeting

**Chairperson: Mayor Becky Tooley**

Please R.S.V.P. by Monday, May 3, 2021 to Maureen DeLaunay at 954-973-6720 or [mdelaunay@coconutcreek.net](mailto:mdelaunay@coconutcreek.net) with the number of representatives from your City who plan to attend and also advise of any agenda items for the meeting.

**AGENDA**

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Minutes – Minutes of April 12, 2021, hosted by City of Lauderhill
3. Speakers: Ericks Consultants, Inc., Topic – Legislative Update
4. Old Business
4. New Business
5. Adjournment

The next meeting will be hosted by the City of Sunrise.

**Join Zoom Meeting:**

<https://coconutcreek.zoom.us/j/92972940444?pwd=a29VME1XU0x2eXlyNXdGalFIUlgzUT09>

**Meeting ID: 929 7294 0444**  
**Passcode: 158284**

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Find your local number: <https://coconutcreek.zoom.us/u/adpRR3BDLk>

Notice is hereby given to all interested parties that if any person should desire to appeal any decision made at the above meeting of the Northwest Council of Elected Officials, such person will need a record of the proceedings conducted at such meeting and for such purpose he/she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.



1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Ken Thurston called to order the virtual meeting at 12:00 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – **March 8, 2021 - City of North Lauderdale**

City of **Coconut Creek** Mayor Tooley moved to approve the Minutes as submitted. Seconded by City of **Margate** Mayor Schwartz. No discussion. **Minutes approved unanimously by voice vote.**

3. **PRESENTATIONS**

Mayor Thurston asked for a motion to add a second presentation to the agenda; specifically, **Lauderhill** Commissioner Melissa P. Dunn’s presentation on Return 2 Work Week.

City of **Lauderdale Lakes** Mayor Rogers made a motion to approve adding the item as stated above to presentations, seconded by City of **Lauderhill** Commissioner S. Martin; the motion was unanimously approved.

• **PIVOTING IN A PANDEMIC (PRESENTED BY LAUDERHILL FIRE CHIEF MARC CELETTI)**

Mayor Thurston introduced City of **Lauderhill** Fire Chief Marc Celetti, who was inspired to become a firefighter by his brother, Gary Celetti, one of the original **Lauderhill** firefighters. After graduating from Piper High School in 1978, Chief Celetti attended Florida State Fire College in Ocala, and upon his successful completion, he was hired in 1979 by the City of **Lauderhill** at age 20, and in 1999, Chief Celetti was promoted to Fire Division Chief and appointed as the City’s Fire Marshal, a distinction he continued to hold. Chief Celetti was one of the only two department members to hold this title in the 60-year history of **Lauderhill**’s Fire Department. In 2005, Chief Celetti was assigned to manage **Lauderhill**’s Building Department, overseeing recovery efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Wilma; he was a former member of the Broward County Board of Rules & Appeals, and a past chairperson of the County’s Fire Code Advisory Committee. Mayor Thurston stated Chief Celetti was a board-certified fire code official, holding several professional certifications, and an associate member of National, State, and local fire service associations, and he was appointed as **Lauderhill**’s Fire Chief in 2013. He mentioned a year ago **Lauderhill** elected officials returned from a conference in Washington, D.C., when they were told some elected officials who attended the conference tested positive for COVID-19, and neither his colleagues nor he understood the full ramifications, nor that over 500,000 people would eventually die from the virus. When **Lauderhill** was scheduled to hold the meeting of the Northwest Council of Elected Officials in April 2020, the decision was made to cancel, and the meetings eventually moved to a virtual format. Mayor Thurston commented it was necessary to pivot and adapt municipal and other business meetings and functions to the unique circumstances resulting from the reality of the pandemic.

**Lauderhill** Fire Chief Marc Celetti discussed pivoting in a pandemic, highlighting the following:

- **Lauderhill** began holding COVID-19 workshops every two weeks
- He felt sure cities were dealing with their response to COVID-19 in a variety of aspects, though for the same reason: humanity
- As well as **Lauderhill**’s Fire Chief, he was the City’s Emergency Management Coordinator; in looking back on his emergency management training, dealing with a pandemic was not high on the list of priorities, rather, the focus was on natural disasters, civil unrest, and, more recently, foreign and domestic terrorism

- In Florida significant attention was placed on being prepared for hurricane season; one could watch hurricanes form and progress for days, with a large volume of information available from various sources; but hurricanes impacted an area for hours and moved on; this was not the case with the COVID-19 pandemic
- The pandemic was a physical threat that continued over a year, and no one was prepared for what they were against; losing over 500,000 people was unimaginable
- In March 2020, Lauderhill began to realize what was transpiring, and his department received a call from an area hospital asking what was happening in the City; he told the hospital his department was getting ready for what they thought was coming, and the hospital told him they had nine elderly patients in their emergency rooms in critical condition from one of Lauderhill's assisted living facilities (ALF), and all nine were transported there by private ambulance; that is, the ALF did not call 911; it was likely the ALF did not realize the impacts they would soon be faced with, nor did his department; his staff contacted the ALF immediately and was told there were other residents experiencing flu-like symptoms
- Lauderhill currently had 750 ALF beds; it was currently known, but not at the time, that the most vulnerable to COVID-19 were elderly persons 65 years and older; the layout constraints and the patient population of ALFs and long-term care facilities led his staff and he to deduce ALFs would become a breeding ground for the COVID-19 virus
- In March/April 2020 the COVID-19 virus ran its course through Lauderhill's long-term care facilities, so they were the focus; as the virus became global, countries around the world came to realize what they were up against
- Two days after news about the first ALF, his staff and he discovered another facility with 16 positive residents; henceforth, his staff began daily contact with Lauderhill's ALFs to determine the level of outbreak, and though he felt sure other cities fire officials and staff were going through the same thing, his department was shocked at the low level of personal protective equipment (PPE) at these facilities; his staff watched staff at those facilities come out and get into their cars and drove home wearing their PPE, and they knew the problem of infection would increase
- Like Lauderhill, other cities established an emergency management team with all the stakeholders and decision makers, and his department selected one captain to be the single point of contact for everything related to COVID-19; though it was a daunting task, sharing accurate information was vital, and the department continued to manage that position today; in the early stages, a large volume of information came out, and it was important to make sure his department and City administration provided the leadership needed to continue running Lauderhill, and protecting residents with as much accurate information as possible; weekly, then later biweekly, COVID-19 workshops were conducted to keep everyone informed
- Pivoting to adjust to the realities of COVID-19, families and businesses made changes in their lives they never thought of; the basics of washing hands regularly, and covering one's mouth when coughing took on a new meaning
- PPE supplies was another challenge, as people in the healthcare industry knew what PPE was, but most in the general public did not; his staff was shocked to find out people in some ALFs shared their PPE, leading to further spread of the COVID-19 virus; his logistics staff, looking forward to what would be needed, began purchasing PPE supplies for the City's first responders, and they managed to maintain a 60-day supply, though this was not the case for others, such as the ALFs; the City was able to partner with the State to get PPE supplies out to ALFs, etc., along with much-needed training; the National Guard was brought in to do some training at the ALFs; Broward County had a very large number of ALFs and long-term care facilities
- The City's fire rescue staff began to notice a change in the calls for service, as aside from COVID-19 type calls, there were significantly fewer calls for other emergencies, such as stroke, heart attack, slip and falls, etc., as people opted not to go to the hospital for fear of contracting

COVID-19; this led to critical care patients staying home, and when rescue personnel eventually got to them, they were in a more severe condition than they would have been had they called for help earlier; such trends exacerbated his staff's ability to respond to emergencies

- Social media put out a plethora of information, so his department concentrated on providing information based on their responses; the City Commission and City Manager were given information directly related to Lauderhill, as information from the State was not always accurate and had a significant lag time
- Lauderhill dealt with some unknowns; for example, the State funded one of the City's ALFs as a 100-percent COVID-positive stable patient receiving facility without communicating with City government; the State felt there was no need to consult the City about the subject ALF that was located in the middle of the community, doing nothing to notify anyone in the area; that ALF was no longer a COVID-positive facility and resumed its ALF function; when his department responded to a 100-bed ALF, it was typically due to a condition resulting from a patient's age; turning such a facility into a 100-percent COVID-positive facility was an impact the City could not anticipate or prepare for; Mayor Thurston and City Manager Giles-Smith worked tirelessly trying to get information from both the ALF and the State to no avail; the State funded the facility as such, and the City had to deal with the consequences, learning how to manage such an unforeseen situation, including how to treat the patients they were responding to
- Testing was the next large hurdle, as the workforce was being impacted, cities were closing down, and businesses were badly impacted, so the City reached out to the State to have testing sites located in Lauderhill, as the City was centrally located in Broward; their persistence resulted in State testing sites being located in two parks, the Central Regional Park in east Lauderhill, and the Lauderhill Sports Park in west Lauderhill; to date, several thousand tests were administered; they began noticing, though testing was available, residents in underserved areas of Lauderhill were not coming to be tested, so staff explored ways to educate the community, and help with transport to testing sites, and this was in addition to testing taking place at the ALFs; there were issues with long lines, and the wait time for test results; City staff continued to work on encouraging and motivating Lauderhill residents to get tested, and they slowly began to see testing become more prevalent
- To address the long lines and wait time for test results, the City partnered with a laboratory and trained its firefighters to administer COVID-19 tests to City employees and their families on a weekly basis, creating Lauderhill's own in-house system to test employees; this testing continued to present, successfully getting results in a timely manner; these were some of the steps taken to get the City's workforce educated and tested, knowing the more they were tested, the more the community would get tested, etc.; it was a testament to City administration's support, allowing his department to continue testing
- The establishment and staffing of food distribution points of distribution (POD) was the next challenge, while going through hurricane season and maintaining government functions, the same as other local governments all over the country
- After several long months, and a lot of pain for families, residents, businesses, etc., the City saw the opportunity for vaccines to come to the forefront; it was important to recognize the City's underserved community was not getting vaccinated; the City was able to change the Central Regional Park to a vaccination POD, and they were currently administering 1,000 vaccines a day
- After partnering with Broward Health through the Regional Park POD, his staff and he stressed the need to provide more access to vaccinations to the underserved community; the City was able to be one of two pilot programs to begin vaccinating local residents unable to get to regional PODs; City staff, through education and social media push, were able to get vaccines into the community, so residents could walk down the street to a location and get vaccinated; it was a team approach with the City's Parks & Recreation Department, Police Department, and trained firefighters to administer vaccines

- From the inception of the pandemic to date, his department pivoted to take on the challenge of dealing with the COVID-19 virus, adapting well, and trying to make decisions with the City's leadership to get the Lauderhill community through it successfully; they continued vaccinating, and they were on a 90-day window with the small POD in the community, and they anticipated another 90 days with more vaccines available
  - His department staff, City administration and the Commission recognized the need to be flexible, so as to pivot and adapt to an ever-changing situation in the pandemic, understanding some elements, such as sufficient PPE were outside their control, but the City networked with other cities and pooled resources to acquire the best equipment and PPE for the dollars allocated
  - The City lost a police sergeant and a police officer, and City staff lost family members and others, and he hoped the country was making the turn in the right direction, with more people being vaccinated, tested, and continuing to practice CDC guidelines.
- **RETURN 2 WORK WEEK (LAUDERHILL COMMISSIONER MELISSA P. DUNN)**

Mayor Thurston introduced Lauderhill Commissioner Dunn, stating she became a member of the Lauderhill City Commission in November 2020; she came into office with already established hardworking goals.

Lauderhill Commissioner Dunn gave a PowerPoint presentation on Return 2 Work Week, highlighting the following:

- The event was scheduled May 10 to 14, 2021; the goal was to provide persons in the community with access to livable wage jobs and education resources; the initiative was aimed at unemployed persons in Broward County
- The six high unemployment zip codes identified were already a part of the Prosperity Broward program, three of which were in Lauderhill; the zip codes included Lauderdale Lakes and Tamarac
- The six zip codes were already challenged with high unemployment rates prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; in parts of the County the unemployment rate was as low as four or five percent, while in the high unemployment zip codes, the rate was in the double digits
- The areas encompassed in the six zip codes faced other challenges, such as: poverty, lack of health insurance, households without a vehicle or internet access
- A partnership was created with several entities, and Career Source Broward provided data showing how many people from the six zip codes were listed in their system as unemployed and looking for jobs; for example, 33309 showed 309 people registered with Career Source Broward
- The partnership was to facilitate connecting persons with livable wage jobs and education resources; workshops were offered to help persons applying for jobs to be ready for job interviews, including creating their resume; the way to ensure the initiative succeeded was through partnerships, so Lauderhill wished to partner with other cities and businesses, faith-based organizations and nonprofits to expand access to the abovementioned resources
- Agencies partnering with the initiative included: The City of Lauderhill, Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, Career Source Broward, Prosperity Broward, Broward College, the Urban League, the Greater Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce, the Haitian American Chamber of Commerce, Creative HR Partners, A Better Concept PR, and the Diamond Butterfly
- They would begin a week prior to the event with a virtual press conference, inviting all the partners to participate; a very aggressive media outreach would be launched to alert the public on what was coming
- The intent was to kick off the event with the faith-based community on Sunday, May 9, 2021; the vision was to have churches all over Broward County, particularly in the six zip codes, speaking

about the subject initiative simultaneously; they would be provided with the media tools to promote the program to their congregation, and the tools would be linguistically diverse

- On Monday, May 10, 2021, the first workshop would focus on helping people draft their resume; this would be led by Career Source Broward; next, there would be a job readiness workshop to teach participants proper interview techniques, led by the Haitian American Chamber of Commerce
- On Tuesday, May 11, 2021, the focus would be on a subsection of the community often underserved; that is, people transitioning back into society after incarceration, led by the OIC of South Florida; participants would learn about the resources available to get them connected with jobs; next, there would be a virtual town hall conversation, at which the discussion would focus on workforce investments necessary for communities to have economic recovery from COVID; the discussion would include pathways to livable wage jobs for the unemployed and underemployed, as well as policies that could be put in place to help communities have the resources they needed to go to work
- On Wednesday, May 12, 2021, an additional job readiness workshop would discuss getting a job, and keeping a job; the topics would include: problem-solving skills, effective communication, and other soft skills; a second workshop would discuss communication styles, led by Creative HR Partner
- On Thursday, May 13, 2021, the virtual job fair would take place; the vision was for the media outreach to begin with the faith-based organizations, moving to workshops held Monday to Wednesday to better prepare applicants for going before prospective employers on Thursday to apply for jobs; the goal was to have 30 employers with positions they currently wished to fill, with some ready to schedule interviews and, if satisfied, moving to consider the person for the job
- On Friday, May 14, 2021, participants would be connected to educational opportunities; this was a unique opportunity, as though there would be some universities present, not everyone sought a college education, so apprenticeship programs would be offered, along with others, such as Broward UP, and other trade schools to connect residents with opportunities to further their education; this portion of the program would be led by Prosperity Broward; ten to 12 education programs, some free, were registered for this part of the event
- Four things were being requested of the cities, particularly those situated in the six zip codes: 1) Issue a proclamation naming May 10 to 14, 2021, as Return 2 Work Week, and those who issue the proclamation would be included in the press conference in the week prior to the launch of the event; 2) identify employers who might be hiring in their city and share their contact information, the intention being to contact residents with employers in their city, as she believed in circulating dollars in local communities; cities could provide her with a list of employers, and they would do a special outreach with Career Source Broward to match registered persons with those employment opportunities; 3) help promote the event via a toolkit that would include suggested language to copy and paste on a city's social media pages, newsletters, a video, flyers, posters, etc.; thus, the outreach would have each city's identifiers, including city logos, etc.; 4) participate in the virtual press conference
- The City paid to create the logo shown in the presentation, from which palm cards were printed, and participating cities could change out Lauderhill and place their name on the media materials, including printing palm cards; several social media messages would be provided for cities to share with their community and promote the event and opportunity to their constituents
- Cities interested in partnering on the event could provide their contact information, and she would follow up with them as soon as possible to provide the abovementioned media materials.

Margate Commissioner Caggiano thought the Return 2 Work was a very interesting program

#### **4. Old Business – None**



## 5. New Business

Margate Commissioner Caggiano wished to have more dialog on election costs.

Mayor Thurston remarked, by now, Broward municipalities heard that Supervisor of Elections Joe Scott circulated to all city clerks that the cost to run municipal elections would soon increase. Currently, everyone sought additional information, and Mr. Scott was scheduled to speak to the Association of City Clerks; at the Lauderhill City Commission meeting scheduled for later in the evening, Mr. Scott was scheduled to give an update to the City Commission and staff on what was taking place in his office. He imagined this was a discussion item the League of Cities would take on; the next meeting was Coffee with President Callari, so it was likely the discussion would take place at the League meeting after that. Protest meetings with Mr. Scott were likely to come from the League, as all Broward cities would be negatively impacted by the proposed increase.

Margate Mayor Schwartz remarked Mr. Scott made a presentation to the Margate City Commission the previous week, where they discussed the increase, as their city would be moving from an election cost of \$18,000.00 to \$88,000.00, and an explanation was required for such a sizeable increase. She, too, knew the League would take up the cause, as she was on Broward County Mayor Steven Geller's call, and the reaction to the proposed election increase was negative from all 31 Broward cities. Mr. Scott's feeling was the present system of charging cities for elections was scattered, and he was reminded some cities scheduled their elections in November to avoid paying a humongous fee to have March elections; in November, elections were either gubernatorial or presidential, and cities tagged themselves on, as opposed to paying for an entire ballot in March. Ms. Schwartz commented Mr. Scott appeared to believe all 31 cities should share in the cost of elections evenly, regardless of what portion of the cost could be attributed to a particular city. She reiterated on Mayor Geller's call it was clearly indicated no Broward city was in favor of the increase, and she hoped the League would at least state each city's share in election costs should be different, and urge using a more gradual method of increase, rather than in such a drastic fashion.

Lauderhill Commissioner L. Martin wished to acknowledge he was the Lauderhill representative on the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board, and he hoped to partner with surrounding cities, as Lauderhill was bordered by five or more cities. He hoped to begin collaborating on projects, so he looked forward to reaching out to the MPO city representatives, asking attendees present to have their MPO representatives reach out to him to enable such discussions.

Coconut Creek Commissioner Welch heard Lauderhill Commissioner L. Martin's comments at the MPO Board meeting held the previous week, stating Lauderdale Lakes Mayor Rogers set the bar on reaching out and working with other cities, particularly on transportation and street projects, so he already had the best of the best next to him. She would be happy to help and/or work however she was needed.

Mayor Thurston thanked all Lauderhill elected officials and staff for tuning into the subject meeting, commending the City Clerk and her staff for organizing the meeting, and IT staff for the smooth manner in which the meeting ran.

Lauderdale Lakes Rogers asked which city would host the next meeting.

Coconut Creek Mayor Tooley replied Coconut Creek usually hosted the next meeting, which she was sure would be a Zoom meeting.

Mayor Thurston looked forward to when in-person meetings recommenced, as the host city usually sponsored lunch, but it was unknown when that would transpire.

6. **Next Scheduled Meeting – Monday, May 10, 2021 – City of Coconut Creek**
7. **Adjournment** - There being no further discussion, Mayor Thurston adjourned the meeting at 12:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrea M. Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrea Anderson, MMC  
Lauderhill City Clerk