

City of Lauderdale

*City Commission Chambers at City Hall
5581 W. Oakland Park Blvd.
Lauderhill, FL, 33313
www.lauderhill-fl.gov*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, January 29, 2024

6:00 PM

City Commission Chambers

City Commission Meeting

LAUDERHILL CITY COMMISSION

Mayor Ken Thurston

Vice Mayor Lawrence Martin

Commissioner Melissa P. Dunn

Commissioner Denise D. Grant

Commissioner Sarai Martin

Desorae Giles-Smith, City Manager

Andrea M. Anderson, City Clerk

Angel Petti Rosenberg, City Attorney

I CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Thurston called to order the Regular City Commission Meeting at 6:00 PM.

II ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Commissioner Melissa P. Dunn, Commissioner Denise D. Grant, Vice Mayor Lawrence Martin, Commissioner Sarai Martin, and Mayor Ken Thurston

ALSO PRESENT:

Desorae Giles-Smith, City Manager
Angel Petti Rosenberg, City Attorney
Constance Stanley, Police Chief
Andrea M. Anderson, City Clerk

III COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (AND RESPONSES TO THE PUBLIC, IF THE TIME PERMITS DURING THIS PORTION OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION)

IV ADJOURNMENT (NO LATER THAN 6:30 PM)

I CALL TO ORDER OF REGULAR MEETING

II PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG FOLLOWED BY GOOD AND WELFARE

HOUSEKEEPING

A motion was made by Vice Mayor L. Martin, seconded by Commissioner D. Grant, to ACCEPT the Revised Version of the City Commission Meeting Agenda for January 29, 2024. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner M. Dunn, Commissioner D. Grant, Vice Mayor L. Martin, Commissioner S. Martin, and Mayor K. Thurston

Abstain: 0

III CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA

IV APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION MEETING FOR DECEMBER 14, 2023.

Attachments: [December 14, 2023 - Special City Commission Meeting Minutes](#)

These Minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

- B. MINUTES OF THE CITY COMMISSION MEETING FOR JANUARY 8, 2024.

Attachments: [Janaury 8, 2024 - City Commission Meeting Minutes](#)

These Minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

V PROCLAMATIONS / COMMENDATIONS

VI SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS (10 MINUTES MAXIMUM)

- A. AN UPDATE ON SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS, PRINCIPALS, AND CRIME PREVENTION (REQUESTED BY VICE MAYOR LAWRENCE "JABBOW" MARTIN).

VII GENERAL PRESENTATIONS (5 MINUTES MAXIMUM)

- A. A PRESENTATION RECOGNIZING JORDAN BOURSQUOT, BROWARD COUNTY BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB 2024 YOUTH OF THE YEAR WINNER (REQUESTED BY VICE MAYOR LAWRENCE "JABBOW" MARTIN).

VIII ORDINANCES & PUBLIC HEARINGS - FIRST READING (NOT ON CONSENT AGENDA) (AS ADVERTISED IN THE SUN-SENTINEL)

1. ORDINANCE NO. 24O-01-101: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL CODE OF ORDINANCES, APPENDIX G, FRANCHISES, ARTICLE III, GARBAGE, REFUSE AND TRASH, EXHIBIT "A" AMENDING THE RATE SCHEDULE OF FEES THAT WENT INTO EFFECT BY THE SERVICE PROVIDER ON OCTOBER 1, 2023; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY CITY MANAGER, DESORAE GILES-SMITH).

Attachments: [ORD-24O-01-101-CODE-ARTICLE III. GARBAGE RATES 10-1-23.pdf](#)
[AR 24O-01-101](#)

This Ordinance was approved on the Consent Agenda on first reading to the City Commission Meeting, due back on 02/12/2024. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

2. ORDINANCE NO. 24O-01-102: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 10, GARBAGE AND TRASH/UNSANITARY AND UNSIGHTLY CONDITIONS/ABANDONED REAL PROPERTY; ARTICLE II, RECYCLABLE WASTE, SECTION 10-22, FEES TO UPDATE THE FEE SCHEDULE WITH RATES EFFECTIVE AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2023; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY CITY MANAGER, DESORAE GILES-SMITH).

Attachments: [ORD-240-01-102-Code-10-22-Recycling Fees 10-1-23.pdf](#)
[AR 240-01-102](#)

This Ordinance was approved on the Consent Agenda on first reading to the City Commission Meeting, due back on 02/12/2024. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

3. ORDINANCE NO. 240-01-103: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL APPROVING THE TRANSFER OF LAND AND PERSONAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1249-1281 N.W. 31ST AVENUE, MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE WYNGATE PLAZA, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN THE ATTACHED WARRANTY DEED AND BILL OF SALE TO BE TRANSFERRED FROM THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL (CITY) TO THE LAUDERHILL COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA); APPROVING THE WARRANTY DEED AND THE BILL OF SALE REGARDING THE TRANSFER; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY CITY MANAGER DESORAE GILES-SMITH).

Attachments: [ORD-240-01-103-CRA land transfer ordinance.pdf](#)
[AR 240-01-103](#)
[Deed Warranty CITY to CRA -Wyngate Plaza.pdf](#)
[Bill of Sale CRA-Wyngate.pdf](#)

This Ordinance was approved on the Consent Agenda on first reading to the City Commission Meeting, due back on 02/12/2024. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

- 3A. ORDINANCE NO. 240-01-104: AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A CAPITAL BUDGET ADJUSTMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,707,216.00 AND A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,945,613.00; REFLECTING APPROPRIATE ADJUSTMENTS TO VARIOUS REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS AS SPECIFICALLY INDICATED IN THE BREAKDOWN IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$7,652,829.00; PROVIDING VARIOUS BUDGET CODE NUMBERS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY CITY MANAGER, DESORAE GILES-SMITH).

Attachments: [ORD-240-01-104-Budget-Supplemental & Capital Appropriation.pdf](#)
[AR 240-01-104](#)
[Copy of Supplemental FY 2024 Period 4.pdf](#)

This Ordinance was approved on the Consent Agenda on first reading to the City Commission Meeting, due back on 02/12/2024. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

IX ORDINANCES & PUBLIC HEARINGS - SECOND READING (NOT ON CONSENT AGENDA) (AS ADVERTISED IN THE SUN-SENTINEL)

4. ORDINANCE NO. 24O-01-100: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL APPROVING THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE REAL ESTATE PRE-DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT AND ADDENDUM BETWEEN THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL AND LE PARC AT LAUDERHILL, LLC, PROVIDING FOR DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES IN THE FORM OF TAX REIMBURSEMENTS FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 358 MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING UNITS COMPRISED OF SIX (6) THREE STORY GARDEN APARTMENTS AND TWO (2) UP TO EIGHT STORY MID RISE APARTMENTS, AT APPROXIMATELY 36 UNITS PER ACRE ON A 9.93+ ACRE SITE IN THE RM-40 ZONING DISTRICT LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS AT&T NO. 1127-18 B TRACT 1 RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 127, PAGE 18 OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS 3831 NW 13TH ST, LAUDERHILL, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attachments: [ORD-24O-01-100-CC-Le Parc Development Agreement FINAL 2024.pdf](#)
[AR 24O-01-100](#)
[Amendment Dev Agreement LeParc-FINAL 1-30-24 CLEAN.pdf](#)
[Ex A RES 19R-04-67 Original Development Agreement with LeParc at Lauderhill LLC](#)
[Ex B RES 22R-07-152 Addendum to Real Estate Development Agreement with Le Parc at Lauderhill.pdf](#)
[Ex C ROW Docs](#)
[Ex D Le Parc Formulary.pdf](#)

This Ordinance was approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

X RESOLUTIONS (IF NOT ON CONSENT AGENDA)

5. RESOLUTION NO. 24R-01-16: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL APPROVING THE FIFTH AMENDED ANNUAL CALENDAR OF CITY HOSTED SPECIAL EVENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY CITY MANAGER, DESORAE GILES-SMITH).

Attachments: [RES-24R-01-16-Calendar-City Hosted Events 5th Amended 2024.pdf](#)
[AR 24R-01-16](#)
[Updated Commissioner Events \(Fifth\)](#)

This Resolution was approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

6. RESOLUTION NO. 24R-01-17: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL APPOINTING

_____ BY THE CITY COMMISSION AS A WHOLE TO SERVE AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE CODE ENFORCEMENT BOARD FOR THE REMAINDER OF A ONE (1) YEAR TERM EXPIRING NOVEMBER 2024; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attachments: [RES-24R-01-17-Brd-Code - Alternate-Comm Whole 2024.pdf](#)

[AR 24R-01-17](#)

[Code Enforcement Board List](#)

[Smith, Bakari - Code Enforcement Board Application and Resume](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner D. Grant, seconded by Commissioner M. Dunn, that this Resolution be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner M. Dunn, Commissioner D. Grant, Vice Mayor L. Martin, Commissioner S. Martin, and Mayor K. Thurston

Abstain: 0

7. RESOLUTION NO. 24R-01-18: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FINAL SETTLEMENT BETWEEN KURTHLYN BIGGS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$65,000.00 AND OLIVIA WELLINGTON IN THE AMOUNT OF \$35,000.00 AND THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL INCLUSIVE OF ATTORNEYS FEES AND COSTS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY CITY MANAGER, DESORAE GILES-SMITH).

Attachments: [RES-24R-01-18-SETT-AGT-Biggs & Wellington](#)

[AR 24R-01-18](#)

This Resolution was approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

8. RESOLUTION NO. 24R-01-19: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL, FLORIDA, APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE PUBLIC CENSURE OF COMMISSIONER DENISE D. GRANT; FINDING THAT COMMISSIONER DENISE D. GRANT'S BEHAVIOR WAS UNACCEPTABLE AND UNBECOMING OF A PUBLIC OFFICER; PROVIDING THAT ALL PERSONS, SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING CITY STAFF, SHOULD BE VALUED AND TREATED WITH PROFESSIONALISM, CIVILITY AND RESPECT; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Attachments: [RES-24R-01-19-Public Censure Grant FINAL AMENDED 1-22-24.pdf](#)

[AR 24R-01-19](#)

[Ex. A-Cummings Complaint.pdf](#)

[Ex. B-Crooks complaint.pdf](#)

[Ex. C AMENDED Investigative Report - 12.05.23.pdf](#)

Commissioner Grant stated, for the purpose of having something on record, her attorney, Kaysia Earley was present to speak on her behalf.

Kaysia Earley, legal representative for Commissioner Grant, noted since Commissioner Grant was elected to the City of Lauderhill City Commission in November 2018, she faithfully and diligently served the resident of the Lauderhill community, as well as served on various programs, initiatives, and committees, at community events, and voted to allocate millions in the aid of local residents and businesses. Commissioner Grant received numerous honors, and other awards, so she was eager to continue her work in this manner with integrity and grace; thus, she looked forward to attending any training, and continuing education classes the City implemented, and any other classes to ensure she was current with the City's latest policies and procedures.

Commissioner Grant remarked on it being really heart wrenching to hear Ms. Earley's words come forth when she knew she was not, indeed, wrong. She would not take the position to say she committed the acts she was said to have committed, as she believed the community knew her, and in the five years since she was elected to serve on the City Commission in 2018, she served the Lauderhill community with honor and distinction. The Lauderhill community took a chance on her in 2018, not knowing all that she could accomplish, but because of the work she had done, and the success of that work, the community reelected her to the City Commission in 2022, with her receiving 84.7 percent of the votes, an improvement from 65 percent of the votes in 2018. She felt this showed that the work she did in the Lauderhill community was being endorsed by the constituents. Commissioner Grant claimed the proposed censure was not just of her, but it was a shame that the community, too, was being censured, as she represented the Lauderhill community that understood why she was on the Commission; it was not for political gain, or to propel herself professionally. In fact, she was on the Commission to serve at a level for which she was called; this was her assignment, a part of her purpose, and, indeed, purpose never died, and with the work she did in the City would continue. She sat in her current position with great peace, a peace that surpassed all understanding, as she knew her heart and her hands were, indeed, clean. As the subject resolution proceeded, and her colleagues would make their own decision, her decision was already made, as she was planted in her position. Commissioner Grant thanked her attorney during the subject process for her good counsel, in addition to the Lauderhill constituents who sent their support in the form of 2,150 letters and text messages. This had been a journey for her, stating it was a journey of lessons learned going through the subject process. She was healthier, stronger, and more courageous, and she was more in love with humanity, and willing to continue to put herself forward to serve at a greater level. She, again, thanked everyone for their support, as the message in the letter itself sounded awful, but Christ was also crucified, as were many persons, and so she would not put herself in the position of deity, but, nonetheless, he was an example. Commissioner Grant thanked everyone, stating those persons who knew her, knew she would continue to serve, and she respected all persons.

Mayor Thurston opened the discussion to the public, stating any comments made should be directed to the content of the resolution, with no personal attacks made; speakers were limited one minute, and they should state their name and address.

State Senator Daphney Campbell noted she resided in North Miami, but she felt she had to speak in support of Commissioner Grant. She stated her need to raise a pressing concern brought to her attention by the Lauderhill community, who brought to her notice that Commissioner Melissa Dunn had an unusual high turnover rate of assistance with eight individuals serving in this role in just three years; this was in stark contrast to Commissioner Grant, who had only two assistants in five years. Furthermore, it had been reported that many of these assistants complained of a hostile work environment, and requested transfers; this raised serious questions about the leadership, and management practices of Commissioner Dunn.

City Attorney Rosenberg pointed out speakers were asked to make no personal attacks.

Senator Campbell questioned why this matter had not been fully investigated, so steps could be taken to address allegations of a hostile work environment to ensure City employees were able to work in a safe and respectful atmosphere. It was the community's responsibility to ensure the city's leadership was held to the highest standards of accountability and transparency. She urged all members of the City Commission to join her in demanding answers and action on such a critical issue.

Mayor Thurston told Senator Campbell she exceeded her time limit by an additional minute, during which time she engaged in personal attacks against Commissioner Dunn, disregarding his directive that public comments be kept to the resolution only.

Erma Brimage, 4031 NW 11th Street, Lauderhill, stated she was a resident of Lauderhill for about five years, and she wished to speak to what she knew of Commissioner Grant's character. She called her sister in the way, as Commissioner Grant was in the way of helping residents of Lauderhill, which she knew personally, and in speaking with other local residents regarding her positive character. Commissioner Grant gave such a personal influence on the residents of Lauderhill, as she always tried to help in many ways she could; she opined Commissioner Grant had a very pleasing personality, her conversations were always positive, and she asked God to bless her in all her endeavors, as to her, and others who encountered Commissioner Grant, she was wonderful toward them in helping residents of Lauderhill.

Commissioner Grant thanked Ms. Brimage.

Dennis D. Grant, Tamarac resident, stated he was a pastor, community activist, and he had a radio program on WAVS on which he represented members of the Lauderhill Commission and others around the world, whether it was in the form of interviews with them or running commercials. For the past 21 years, he received numerous commendations from members of the Lauderhill Commission, past and present. He said phone calls were coming into his radio program about the present situation on which he did not comment, but he wished to attend the present meeting before making comments back to his listeners. The allegations leveled at Commissioner Grant were appalling to

listen to, and in looking at all sitting members of the Lauderhill Commissioner, he wished to say to them that let him without sin cast the first stone. He remarked that in all that was being said about Commissioner Grant, if the closets of many other commissioners, past and present, were examined, it would be ten times worse. Based on his investigation, he believed the subject situation was a political coup to derail Commissioner Grant, as she was on target to become the next mayor of Lauderhill, but as there were many who were against this idea, they had to find things to come out against her. He believed Commissioner Grant was outstanding, so she would prevail, as God was with her, and God's people were behind her.

Christine Ramsay, 6100 NW 44th Street, apartment 109, Lauderhill, commented civility, professionalism, and respect; she was appalled that the City, or whomever, was saying Commissioner Grant did not possess those qualities. She thought maybe they were seeing a different Commissioner Grant, but that was a different Commissioner Grant than who she knew, as well as the people around who knew her; she said let the life she lived speak for her. Having been to loads and loads of functions where people followed Commissioner Grant, she stated no one followed people who were not humble, professional, or did not exude civility. She moved to Lauderhill because of Commissioner Grant, and she heard many good things about the Lauderhill community, and in her looking for a place to live, many people encouraged her to come to Lauderhill, because it had numerous positive qualities that were because of Commissioner Grant. She asked Commissioner Grant to let the life she lived speak for her.

Annamarie Linton, 5930 NW 16th Place, Sunrise, remarked, as a resident of Lauderhill, she faced difficulty and struggles to make ends meet, and instead of focusing on solving real issues, she was disheartened to see the Mayor and Commissioners engaged in petty political games. Commissioner Grant was always approachable and kind to everyone, and she dearly loved her as a sister, adding she treated others as family. She was appalled by what she saw as Commissioner Dunn's evident joy in targeting another black woman.

City Attorney Rosenberg reminded Ms. Linton her comments were to be restricted to the content of the resolution, and no personal attacks on any member of the Commission would be tolerated.

Ms. Linton apologized. She mentioned planning to join the women's group, but based on what she observed happening, she no longer wished to do so. She urged everyone to live in peace and unity, to join hands, and be at one.

Mayor Thurston sought clarification on Ms. Linton's address, as she stated her address was in Sunrise, but remarked on being a resident of Lauderhill.

Ms. Linton confirmed she was a resident in the City of Sunrise.

Alan Brown, 4460 NW 25th Place, Lauderhill, stated when it came to work environment, all City employees should be able to come to and work in an environment that was free of abuse, and free of unprofessionalism. He took the time to thoroughly read the investigative report, and when he saw that

employees felt so degraded, and humiliated to the extent of having to unbutton their shirt to prove they were not wearing a wire, it was totally unacceptable. When he heard the fact that a police chief was embarrassed in public, this was unprofessionalism; that a City Clerk felt her job was threatened if there was a majority vote, this was, again, unprofessionalism. All city workers or employees should be respected, as City staff, every day, gave the Lauderhill community their blood, sweat, and tears, so they must be shown respect. Mr. Brown supported the proposed censure, and he intended taking the subject matter higher to the Governor's Office, as he strongly felt Commissioner Grant should be removed from office.

Varion Harris, 4811 NW 19th Street, Lauderhill, mentioned the bully pulpit, stating to go to church and have a person of the cloth not humbling themselves, not taking responsibility for their actions; it was very appalling to him. When given the opportunity to rebut the findings stated in the independent investigator's report, whether agreeing or disagreeing, Commissioner Grant chose not to respond either way. He sat in the present meeting listening to what was being said, and the word humility came to his mind; it was time to take responsibility for actions, when there were 11 employees who gave testimony and statements, who did not wish their names placed in the report based on their fears of not feeling safe if their workplace; this was unheard of. To the previous speakers coming to the podium, and casting aspersions on other people, he would say to them the devil was the author of confusion; their comments were not what the subject situation was about. Mr. Harris supported the proposed censure, as the behavior revealed in the investigator's report should not be accepted or tolerated, as any general employee engaged in such behavior would be removed from their job.

Commissioner Grant asked to make a comment.

Mayor Thurston asked that all members of the public be allowed to speak first, after which comments from the elected officials would be taken.

Carlene C. Wright, 7980 NW 50th Street, Lauderhill, thought what was in the best interest for the City of Lauderhill was to be true to oneself, and understand who the Lauderhill community had in Commissioner Grant. Commissioner Grant was loyal to the City, a professional; she had several opportunities to work with her, and in all such encounters, she saw her behaving professionally with everyone she came in contact with; she was someone who loved from a place of service. Thus, what was good for the City, what was in the City's best interest was to understand how much Commissioner Grant had given to the City over her five years of service. She said they loved Commissioner Grant, and stood behind her, and they would walk, and march for her, and continue to hold her hand up, as she continued to serve, and help the Lauderhill community get to a better place. As a resident of Lauderhill for over 28 years, she loved her city, and appreciated what Commissioner Grant had done.

Willie Mae Cooper, 1541 NW 32nd Avenue, Lauderhill, and president of the West Ken Lark Homeowners' Association (HOA), stated she preferred to see and believe the best in people, and she did not judge people. She, too, heard things being said about Commissioner Dunn, but she commended

Commissioner Dunn on doing an amazing job, as were all members of the City Commission. The present issue was about harassment, and she stood for what God stood for, and He said no one should spread discord among people, nor should you take on other people's offenses. She said when she heard about the subject situation, it really bothered her that one of the ladies making the complaint was specifically named, which she felt was unacceptable, as just as the Commissioners had families that loved them, so did the person who brought the complaint. It was very important to be careful, as no one knew if someone was on the edge, and what they might do, so people should be treated with respect, and dignity. She said the elected officials were gifted with skills to run the City of Lauderhill, and the Lauderhill community held its leaders accountable.

Garry Gordon, pastor of Lauderhill Seventh Day Adventist Church, said he served as the senior pastor for five years, and in that time, they felt, as a church, extremely well supported by the City of Lauderhill, and by all members of the City Commission. The subject report, and the findings it detailed, was very shocking to them, and the allegations were very disturbing, because of the censure and the words used. He said there was a tension for the community between what had been alleged and the person they came to know. He sought clarification as to the purpose of a rebuttal to the findings in the report, since it was stated that no rebuttal was received; this was of concern to them, so they hoped Commissioner Grant might make mention of the reason for no rebuttal being made by her. Secondly, he did not see a timeline for the recommended training, and ongoing development for the Lauderhill leadership. He said when such serious allegations were made, and there was clear a division on whether or not the final report should be accepted, as well as the need for continued work, this, too, raised quite a concern, so there needed to be a coming together. There seemed to be no acknowledgement, which was concerning for them as a community of faith.

Commissioner Grant responded as to the number of persons making allegations, stating she had two assistants since serving on the Commission, one who was already with the City, and worked with her for four years; she transitioned into another position when she graduated from college. The "alleged person" came onboard as a temporary employee, but her position at the time was they would work well together, and she had high hopes that they would have done so in her efforts to move the City forward. The subject allegations came as a surprise to her; in fact, she filed to run for mayor on June 1, 2023, and on June 5, 2023, she was advised of allegations of harassment were filed against her. As a result of that, many persons indicated the filing of the allegations was political. For those who knew her, she felt she could not be confrontational and address the matters, but she had a strong faith in God and she understood politics. As a result of this position, she continued to do her work, with many people not knowing this was taking place, and she and the young lady continued to work well together until October 1, 2023, when she had a question for her in relation to something that happened at an event. It was shortly thereafter that a report was sent asking for a transfer based on her feeling harassed and it was something that had been going on for one whole year. Commissioner Grant said there were many facets to the situation, and she found it very challenging, as did her family, and without the support of her

community and friends, she would not be sitting where she was at present. It was hard when allegations were made against you that you knew in your heart you had not done; she believed it was all an effort to keep her out of office. Additionally, to all the persons who spoke against her, she wished them all to know that in the government stance, she was to speak and report to the City Manager, and all Charter members, and there were times when one interfaced with other persons, and staff in the City. At no time did a city commissioner interface with 16 or 18 people, so it was to her surprise that 16 to 18 individuals had something to say about her, which she thought indicated they were dealing with her for some time, which she found disheartening. Nonetheless, it was okay. With regard to Pastor Gordon's question about her giving no rebuttal, she was advised by Ms. Earley not to provide a rebuttal, otherwise, though she would have been more inclined to give a rebuttal; her attorney and she understood it was a fixed situation.

Ms. Earley commented that the subject discussion was not about Commissioner Grant disputing the final report; a full investigation was conducted by an independent firm. Regarding the question on giving a rebuttal, once they discovered there was an investigation, Commissioner Grant and she had the opportunity to present all the facts in evidence they had, which they did, after which the investigation was concluded. After the investigation, the independent law firm reported their findings, and invited Commissioner Grant to issue a rebuttal with additional evidence if she so chose, but there was no additional evidence to offer. In her practice as a criminal defense attorney, and a litigator, oftentimes the results yielded by an investigation were what they were. Ms. Earley stated it was impossible for Commissioner Grant to accept something that was not her truth, and she should not be asked to apologize for the sake of salvation, or to humble herself if she stood by her truth that remained unchanged. The goal was to move forward as a community, so Commissioner Grant could continue her service to the Lauderhill community.

Commissioner Grant wished it made clear to Pastor Gordon that the investigation as to harassment, and a hostile work environment were unfounded.

Ms. Earley assumed Pastor Grant had an opportunity to read the report in its totality, as it contained the findings on the allegations that led to the investigation. The initial allegations of Commissioner Grant creating a hostile work environment were unfounded. She noted there were other concerns about retaliation, so some persons from the City who were interviewed in the investigation decided to remain unnamed.

Commissioner Grant stated there was another investigation that indicated there was retaliation of sorts based on something else, and other persons were brought into this. Those individuals were not even considered when the letter was sent indicating that. She noted, to be fair, if the present discussion was about harassment, and a toxic environment solely, Pastor Gordon would be walking away from the present meeting understanding those allegations were unfounded.

Mayor Thurston commented, at the present time, he did not doubt the minds of

all persons concerned would remain unchanged. He received no further input from the public.

Commissioner S. Martin said, as he mentioned previously, there was probably some unprofessionalism, but he believed it started between Commissioner Grant and her aide at the time. He commended the City Manager and Human Resources (HR) for their swift response to make sure that situation was resolved by the removal of the employee. However, he did not believe a public censure was warranted, as the situation was already satisfactorily resolved; he agreed with the recommendations of the outside investigator with regard to elected officials receiving training, and that the City establish new policies. Again, he opined the situation between Commissioner Grant and her former aide had more to do with a conflict of personalities.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor L. Martin, seconded by Commissioner M. Dunn, that this Resolution be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner M. Dunn, Vice Mayor L. Martin, and Mayor K. Thurston

No: 2 - Commissioner D. Grant, and Commissioner S. Martin

Abstain: 0

9. RESOLUTION NO. 24R-01-20: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FROM THE STATE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRUST FUND (LETF) IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$36,000.00 FOR THE PURCHASE OF SEVEN (7) NEW CAMERA PACKAGES FOR USE BY THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL POLICE CRIME SCENE UNIT; PROVIDING FOR PAYMENT FROM BUDGET CODE NUMBER 120-683-9935; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY CITY MANAGER, DESORAE GILES-SMITH).

Attachments: [RES-24R-01-20-LETF-expenditure-crime scene cameras.pdf](#)

[AR 24R-01-20](#)

[Transfer of State Trust Funds.pdf](#)

[Use of State Trust Funds.pdf](#)

This Resolution was approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

10. RESOLUTION NO. 24R-01-21: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE CITY'S VISION/STRATEGIC PLAN TO BE EXECUTED OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS THROUGH "LAUDERHILL VISION 2030"; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY CITY MANAGER, DESORAE GILES-SMITH).

Attachments: [RES-24R-01-21-Adopt City Vision-Strategic Plan](#)

[AR 24R-01-21](#)

[City of Lauderhill Strategic Plan Draft 01 25 24](#)

A motion was made by Vice Mayor L. Martin, seconded by Commissioner S. Martin, that this Resolution be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Commissioner M. Dunn, Vice Mayor L. Martin, Commissioner S. Martin, and Mayor K. Thurston

Abstain: 0

Off Dais: 1 - Commissioner D. Grant

XI QUASI-JUDICIAL MATTERS (IF NOT ON CONSENT AGENDA)

XII QUASI-JUDICIAL MATTERS, FIRST READING

XIII QUASI-JUDICIAL MATTERS, SECOND READING

XIV UNFINISHED BUSINESS

XV OLD BUSINESS

XVI NEW BUSINESS

XVII COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC OFFICIALS SHALL BEGIN IMMEDIATELY BEFORE ADJOURNMENT

City Attorney Rosenberg advised the City Commission earlier in the present day she received in the mail a packet of letters from the residents of Environ; though the letters were directed to her, they requested that the elected officials lobby the Florida Legislature again with regard to Chapter 718, the Condominium Act. They had concerns with regard to the budget and repair requirements and the deadline of December of 2024. She said they requested that the elected officials begin the process to seek amendments to the statute to get a longer deadline for them, as they believed the members of the City Commission were elected to protect the residents and to do their job. She was going to draft a letter on the Commission's behalf to acknowledge the receipt of the letters, reminding the Commission in 2022 they passed Resolution No. 22R-11-148 at the request of Commissioner S. Martin. The resolution was the City's attempt to get the State Legislature to extend the longer timeframe for the completion of the structural reserve study and the budget funds. As she looked at the State statute, and the way it was worded, it still had the December 2024 deadlines. Ms. Rosenberg asked the Commission if she should submit the residents' letters to the State Legislature for their consideration, or if they would give her direction on how they wished to proceed. Some members of the Commission were not present at the City's annual retreat, and so she wished to update the

Commission with regard to the Form 6 litigation. The Weiss Serota law firm indicated they would be filing a class action, and so far, 12 cities signed on; she asked if they would reduce the flat fee of \$10,000.00 depending on the number of cities that joined, and they said no, so the flat fee of \$10,000.00 would be regardless of the number of cities that joined the suit. They asked the City to communicate as to whether Lauderhill would join the class action lawsuit; the Commission was asked to give her direction on whether they wished the class action lawsuit to proceed with or without Lauderhill's participation. She noted the Florida Legislature was now in the legislative session, and a number of items were moving along. The homestead exemption that the City Commission voted not to support was currently moving forward; it would apply an annual increase in the exemption value based on a Consumer Price Index percentage. She said it did look like it would require a referendum vote thereafter. Ms. Rosenberg remarked on another bill, HB7019, that tried to appropriate and offset reductions for ad valorem tax revenues the City would experience if the State implemented the abovementioned homestead exemption; the current version of the bill only helped to offset it for counties; cities were not addressed. When the City Commission went to Tallahassee, they could try to advocate for assistance for the cities, as if the proposed homestead exemption bill passed, resulting in reduced tax revenues to the cities, the State was not providing any funding to help cities mitigate that loss of revenues. She said another bill, Senate Bill 1322, and corresponding HB 1195 required cities to have a supermajority vote in order to increase the millage rate. There were a few others regarding land use, with potential modifications to the Live Local Act; the short-term rental bill was still moving through, though it was postponed at present, and if it moved forward, they were only grandfathered in if persons adopted the ordinance prior to currently and the language of 2011; the proposal would change it to 2015. Regarding other bills included, Commissioner Dunn's single-use plastic initiative, there were attempting to pass a bill that would preempt cities from imposing regulations regarding single-use plastics. Senate Bill 472, the limitation on torts pertained to negligence. Currently, the limitations were \$200,000.00, and \$300,000.00; in 2023, they were trying to increase it to one million, and in the current session, attempts were being made to increase it to \$400,000.00, \$600,000.00. This meant they were caps, so if the City were sued, that was the amount they could be held liable for. She said these were just some items that the elected officials might wish to address with the state representatives when they went up to Tallahassee.

Mayor Thurston asked if there were particular items on which Ms. Rosenberg desired responses from the Commission.

City Attorney Rosenberg answered yes; specifically, regarding the Condominium Act, she questioned if the Commission wished her to forward the packet of letters to each of the City's state representatives, so they were aware of the residents' request, and take steps to address them if they chose to. As the Commission recently passed a related resolution, they could consider passing another, or direct her to include copies of the existing resolution along with the letters to the state legislators. She sought direction from the Commission on contacting Weiss Serota to indicate the City's decision on joining the Form 6 class action litigation.

Mayor Thurston remarked on being ill and unable to attend the retreat in person, but he did listen in remotely to the entire retreat; he was not connected to speak only because he did not want anyone to hear him coughing. He asked for input from his colleagues on the two matters on which Ms. Rosenberg sought the Commission's direction.

Vice Mayor L. Martin stated he was in favor of including copies of the City's previously passed resolution with the residents' packet of letters, and forwarding them to Tallahassee, and cc'ing the City's response to the sender of the packet. He was unsure if the Environ residents were aware that the City passed the previous, related resolution that was then forwarded to the state representatives requesting action. Regarding the City's joining the Form 6 class action lawsuit, he questioned if the 12 cities were from Broward County, or from various areas of South Florida.

City Attorney Rosenberg replied the 12 cities were: Palm Beach, Delray Beach, Bal Harbor, Golden Beach, Indian Creek, Miami Springs, Lighthouse Point, North Bay Village, Safety Harbor, Cooper City, Coral Springs, and Weston.

Vice Mayor L. Martin said he was not in favor of spending \$10,000.00 of taxpayers' dollars for that purpose, so he did not support the City joining the subject litigation.

Commissioner Dunn recalled on the last two trips to Tallahassee, the City's delegation, which included the City Manager, Mayor Thurston, Vice Mayor L. Martin, and herself, in their meetings with state legislators, discussed matters related to the Environ residents' requests. She supported sharing the residents' packet of letters with state representatives, and including a copy of the City's previously passed, related resolution with them. Residents were urged to reach out to their state representatives themselves, as though it was great for the local elected officials to speak on their constituents' behalf, more impact was made when the community spoke to state representatives, and shared stories about the impact state legislation had on them and their households. Thus, residents should flood state representatives' mailbox with their letters, and the City representatives would continue to hold conversations. She supported the City's joining the Weiss Serota Form 6 class action lawsuit.

Commissioner S. Martin echoed support to forward the Condominium Act letters from Environ residents to the City's state representatives, and he thought the City should join the Form 6 lawsuit.

Commissioner Grant concurred with forwarding the Environ residents' packet of letters on the Condominium Act to state representatives, along with the City's previously passed resolution. She supported the City's joining the Form 6 class action lawsuit.

Mayor Thurston concurred with both actions of sending the Environ residents' packet of letters and a copy of the City's resolution to the City's state representatives, and the City joining the Form 6 class action lawsuit.

Vice Mayor L. Martin mentioned being the City's representative on the Broward

League of Cities (League), noting one of the League's outreach efforts was to give out scholarships to graduating seniors within the Broward County area; thus, Lauderhill's schools were potential recipients. For those able to do so, he encouraged them to pledge \$200.00, though any donation was acceptable, as he sought to raise at least \$1,000.00 from the City of Lauderhill to add to the League's funding for the scholarships, and the number of awardees depended on the funds raised by the member cities of the League. In reference to Resolution No. 24R 01 19, during the annual retreat only Commissioner Dunn and he were present when HR and the City Attorney presented a review of the recommendations in the report from independent attorney. He asked that that information be shared with his colleagues, and the public in light of the outpouring of concern voiced by members of the public at the present meeting, so as not to leave any stone unturned. Vice Mayor L. Martin felt, to those persons in the audience who had yet to read the independent investigator's report, it was imperative that they take the time to read the full report before making judgment. At times, persons attended Commission meetings to speak on a particular issue, then focused their dialog on something else, and he found the attacks on Commissioner Dunn were totally unfounded, unnecessary, particularly when they were being made in the same statements calling for everyone to unite, and move forward. He hoped if the persons who spoke thus attended at Commissioner Grant's request that she would have stepped in, and put a halt to their comments. Never before had he seen Mayor Thurston get upset to the point of having to raise his voice to ask a member of the public to cease speaking in a manner that went directly against his previously stated instructions; this, in itself, spoke volumes as to the intent of what was becoming a circus. Vice Mayor L. Martin stated he was a soft-spoken, matter-of-fact, college educated, business-running, professional person who worked at the behest of the Lauderhill community. If someone misunderstood a situation, and reacted based on that misunderstanding, the right thing to do was to apologize, as sometimes it was better to fall on the sword for the benefit of the bigger picture, rather than pouring gas on the fire. He believed the City of Lauderhill made too many strides, working hard to move the City forward. If there were staff members who were uncomfortable dealing with an elected official, the latter person should find ways to mend that fence, as nothing would be accomplished if there were staff afraid to speak with elected officials, and the leadership in city administration did a yeoman's job of running the City, a fact everyone was aware of. He did not play with God, and to keep invoking God in situations one could fix yourself, it was 110 percent all face. It was time to move forward, and all it might take is to simply say, "I'm sorry.", which he was always willing to do. The Lauderhill community should stand on what they know, and let the rest take care of itself. He also provided the following community updates:

- Broward County Commissioner Robert McKenzie and he were present to help Parkland Middle School celebrate their literacy program; the school was one of the under enrolled schools and the City continued to support them in moving the school in a positive direction as much as possible
- The Caribbean American Soccer Association's (CASA) youth tournament took place the past week in the City of Lauderhill; it was fun to attend and be a part of what they did out there, as they put on an excellent show, as they did for many years

- A few weeks prior, the City had the pleasure of the presence of Sir Lawrence Rowe, a Jamaican cricket legend; the West Indies Allstars, and the West Indies Legends came together to put on an event; a gala was held at the cricket stadium to celebrate the game, and players who set records playing cricket over the years were present; he reminded everyone games for the Cricket World Cup would be played at the cricket stadium at the Central Regional Park in summer 2024, so everyone was urged to learn the game, so they could enjoy the event
- The Lauderhill Lions football, cheering, and banquet awards celebrated the achievements of numerous players, coaches, etc.; he tipped his hat to the City for all it did for Lauderhill youths, and the volunteers who chose to give back to their community with no expectation of payment or anything other than a thank you; at the end of the day, the young participants were receiving the experience of education, love, and understanding they were unlikely to get elsewhere; he acknowledged Kerrick Wiggins, shown in one of the pictures, who was part of the Lauderhill sports programs in excess of 15 years, and he recently let it be known that he successfully went through a bout of cancer, during which time he continued his volunteer services; he was a true fighter and friend
- The City's youth played at the recent Fore Life golf event at the Lauderhill Golf Course, hosted in partnership with former professional golfer, Paula Tucker, who coached youths in golf; Ms. Tucker and the City arranged to take all 50 of her young participants to the cricket legend event in the effort to expose the City's youth to a variety of activities in Lauderhill; some children had never seen cricket played before and many of them left with a better understanding of the game, with some expressing a wish to play the game
- The Martin Luther King, Jr., (MLK) Task Force Spelling Bee Championship was, again, a great opportunity for the City's youths to benefit; he would not pit his spelling ability against that of some of the third to fifth grade participants; the children were celebrated, and they were given an opportunity to be great, continuing to nurture their belief in themselves; competition was good, as the young participants studied, and put their best foot forward, and they enjoyed competing, wining, and congratulating those who won; this was a huge event for recently passed, former City Commissioner Margaret Bates, and the City would ensure the event continued in her absence; winning participants received a trophy, and a \$100.00 gift card; a shout out was given to Bethlehem Academy that had competitors in every age group
- The Bronco Awards Ceremony took place the past week, again, celebrating the City's youths, particularly the cheerleaders who won numerous awards in 2023; Commissioner Grant and he were present to help them celebrate, and letting them know the Commission and the City were behind them 110 percent
- The Broward League Water Academy: water was such a very important resource, and it was vital everyone understood what was happening with the City's water in light of all the stormwater, and sewer water problems; the academy was very special in such trying times, as it offered education on understanding the source of water, how it was maintained, and how to avoid flooding, and other daily issues residents faced.

Vice Mayor L. Martin urged nonresident members of the public who attended and spoke at Lauderhill's Commission meetings, making "fire and brimstone" comments without a stake in the City to come to the City and devote their time to helping Lauderhill's children; for example, mentor youths at a City school, etc.

He prayed to God the City got past the situation, apologizing on the Commission's behalf to Police Chief Constance Stanley, City Clerk Andrea Anderson, and any other City employee who felt they endured it; he wished them to know they had a City Commission that loved and cared about them.

Commissioner Dunn said peace began with her, and with each individual, and when one led from peace, love, and kindness, that communities could be transformed. She was grateful for the opportunity to work with men and women in the City of Lauderhill who were, in her opinion, some of the best in the business, and for that she was grateful. She went on to update the Commission and Lauderhill public on the following:

- The Second Annual Faith-Based Business Summit was held the past Tuesday; Vice Mayor L. Martin, and Commissioner S. Martin were thanked for attending, along with City Manager Giles-Smith; she thanked Mayor Thurston for sending a wonderful statement, as it was very inspiring; during the summit, they were able to build the capacity of the faith-based community; she believed when the faith-based community was strengthened, it gave them the tools to go out and serve the community in a way City government could not; at the event, they unveiled the Lauderhill P365 Campaign, for which 14 faith-based organizations signed up as peace ambassadors; each person had a role to play in stopping the violence; she was grateful to the faith-based community for helping to lead the way in promoting peace in Lauderhill
- For HOA presidents in attendance, she sent them all an email in the present week to notify them of her hosting a Zoom meeting specifically for HOAs to share with them the same campaign she unveiled to the faith-based community the past Tuesday
- The past Saturday, the City hosted the first Annual Haitian Independence Arts & Culture Festival; Vice Mayor L. Martin and Vice Mayor S. Martin were thanked for attending, and Mayor Thurston was thanked for the words of encouragement he sent; she thanked her aide Samantha Parish and Community Services Program Manager Niah Washington for holding it down on the day of, and thanks to the Parks and Police Departments, and Leslie Johnson and her team for the pre-event support
- During the Commission retreat, the Lauderhill Health and Prosperity Partnership (LHPP) unveiled their first impact report of over 62 pages that detailed significant outcomes the program achieved on behalf of the great City of Lauderhill; they had over 105 partner organizations working with LHPP; over 185 people, many of whom were residents and staff, and if anyone wished to witness for themselves love, peace, respect, and professionalism, they were invited to attend an LHPP meeting; the LHPP's annual report would be posted on the City's website by the end of the week for anyone to access, and from which residents could learn of the wide variety of opportunities they had to have a positive impact on the community
- Two Saturdays prior the City held its STEM Saturday under the leadership of the Parks Department; a representative from the Museum of Science & Discovery was present to teach the children how to work with robotics
- The Hibiscus Girls Leadership Academy inducted a new group of Pink Hibiscus, and the Yellow and Red Hibiscus girls were each awarded a \$500.00 scholarship; a new group of mentors signed up to support the girls on their journey

- Lauderhill Shines application for cohort eight was now open; she believed, originally, the application was going to be closed on January 24, 2024, but that date was extended to January 31, 2024; the class would begin on February 21, 2024
- Parks Department Director Scott Newton, Assistant Director Daphne Dyer, and she would be representing the City of Lauderhill in Sacramento, California, for the National League of Cities Youth Excel National Convening; this was the final year in that program where young people were being introduced to STEM career options; as always, they were grateful for the opportunity to sit at the table with other cities around the nation to find best practices on how to create opportunities for Lauderhill's youth
- She would be attending the Florida League of Cities Leadership Academy in about two weeks to, again, learn about best practices; her intention was always to find resources she could bring back to the City to benefit the Lauderhill community, which she did consistently
- As always, she loved serving the Lauderhill community.

Commissioner S. Martin updated the community on the following:

- Anyone in the Lauderhill community desiring an update on the Inverrary golf course was invited to attend to a steering committee meeting on February 7, 2024; it would be live on Zoom and Facebook. The committee would discuss some of the proposals put forth by the developer, and getting to a point where residents were beginning to agree about updating the existing covenant
- On February 10 2024, he would host the St. George/Broward Estates Fun Day/barbecue to which all were invited.

City Manager Giles-Smith showed a short video on the upcoming MLK gala event at the Lauderhill Performing Arts Center (LPAC) on Saturday, February 3, 2024, beginning with the VIP reception at 6:30 p.m., and the musical portion at 7:30 p.m., with performances by Tony! Toni! Tone!, Shirley Murdock, Hal Anthony, and The Old Skool Gang & Lenora Jaye. The LPAC was located at 3800 NW 11th Place, Lauderhill. She hoped to see the Lauderhill community come out to celebrate, and enjoy themselves.

Mayor Thurston mentioned the next Jazz in the Park event at the Ilene Lieberman Botanical Gardens would take place on Sunday, February 11, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; everyone wishing to attend should bring their folding chairs, blankets, and beverages.

XVIII ADJOURNMENT - 8:28 PM