

City of Lauderhill

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



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, November 10, 2025

2:30 PM

City Commission Chambers

Special City Commission Meeting

LAUDERHILL CITY COMMISSION

***Mayor Denise D. Grant
Vice Mayor Sarai "Ray" Martin
Commissioner Richard Campbell
Commissioner Melissa P. Dunn
Commissioner John T. Hodgson***

***Kennie Hobbs, City Manager
Andrea M. Anderson, City Clerk
Hans Ottinot, City Attorney***

I CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Grant called to order the Special City Commission Meeting at 2:30 PM.

II ROLL CALL

Present: 4 - Commissioner Richard Campbell, Commissioner Melissa P. Dunn, Commissioner John T. Hodgson, and Mayor Denise D. Grant

Absent: 1 - Vice Mayor Sarai Martin

ALSO PRESENT:

Kennie Hobbs, Jr., City Manager
Hans Ottinot, City Attorney
Constance Stanley, Police Chief
Nadia Chin, Deputy City Clerk

III THIS IS A LIMITED AGENDA MEETING. THE ONLY ITEM TO BE DISCUSSED WILL BE:

1. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN, ITS IMPLICATION AND EFFECTS ON OUR PEOPLE & LOCAL ECONOMY (REQUESTED BY MAYOR DENISE D. GRANT).

Mayor Grant opened the discussion by explaining that she and City Manager Hobbs and his staff had been having ongoing conversations regarding the federal government shutdown and its impacts. She emphasized awareness of the shutdown's effects, noting they had been following news coverage indicating the shutdown had lasted approximately 48 days according to Zach Davis-Walker, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.

The Mayor outlined various affected areas including SNAP benefits, insurance programs, and federal employees. She referenced how different cities had been engaging to help, specifically mentioning the City of Miramar's approval of \$150,000 to address food insecurity. She also acknowledged County Commissioner Hazelle Rogers' assistance efforts, including engaging local restaurants. Mayor Grant highlighted that Donna's restaurant had fed over 900 federal employees at the airport, and that Pierre Belizaire, a food truck vendor, had fed 300 people over the weekend.

Mayor Grant stressed that while these efforts were helpful, they were insufficient given the scale of need. She expressed the need for in-depth conversations about what the city could do, mentioning that she and the City Manager had prepared proposals for the commission's consideration. She indicated she had an additional idea to present after the formal presentation.

Mr. Davis-Walker began the presentation, with Mayor Grant noting that the city's federal lobbyist was available online for questions and that a congressional leader would join at 4:30 PM.

Mr. Davis-Walker presented a brief on the government shutdown status, reporting that the previous night the US Senate had achieved a 60-vote

supermajority to move forward with consideration of a bipartisan package designed to reopen the federal government and fund federal agencies through early 2026, specifically January. He explained this procedural vote allowed formal debate and consideration of the bill to continue, marking a major step toward ending the ongoing federal shutdown.

He detailed that the continuing resolution (CR) package would reopen the federal government and fund most agencies through January 2026, providing time for Congress to complete work on remaining spending bills not included in the current minibuss. The package would fully fund certain agencies including USDA (responsible for SNAP benefits), military, veteran affairs, and the legislative branch for the remainder of the fiscal year. It would reverse all federal employee layoffs from the past 40 days, guarantee back pay for furloughed or unpaid federal employees, and include a commitment to hold a December vote on a Democratic proposal to extend expiring Affordable Care Act subsidies by one year.

Mr. Davis-Walker noted that the package included earmarks currently in play for Lauderhill, including approximately \$850,000.00 for veterans and senior home hardening and \$3.15 million for infill housing. He expressed optimism that once debate began, the legislation would pass so the city could receive these funds, crediting the congresswoman for her efforts.

He then outlined the procedural steps: the Senate had already passed their vote 60-40 allowing debate to begin, the House must pass an identical bill or negotiate with the Senate, the bill would go to the President's desk for signature, and agencies would direct OMB to begin spending funds usually within hours. He warned that if any of these steps stalled, the shutdown would unfortunately continue.

Mr. Davis-Walker discussed local-level considerations, noting that if the bill didn't succeed due to policy riders or House disagreements, delays could persist. He mentioned court cases regarding backup funding for SNAP and executive branch decisions on contingency fund usage. He confirmed that if the bill passed, SNAP and veteran services would be protected until January 2026, addressing Commissioner Campbell's clarification that this was a continuing resolution. The major concern he highlighted was healthcare costs, noting there was no guarantee regarding the December vote on ACA subsidies, but the CR included an agreement to hold that vote. Without extension of subsidies, major healthcare cost increases could occur.

He concluded by emphasizing that while the Senate's action was a major step forward, the government remained shut until the full package passed both chambers, and Lauderhill should remain prepared for short-term disruptions while continuing to monitor federal partners and keep residents informed.

Mayor Grant then asked about the city's proposed actions.

City Manager Hobbs presented the city's proposed response measures, which would require commission consensus to move forward. For water services, the city would discontinue water disconnections and penalties for federal workers who were past due, implementing an application process with minimal

documentation to verify federal employment. Late fees would also be waived.

For business licenses and Certificates of Use (COUs), which were due October 1st, the city would defer payments and associated fees for business owners unable to pay, and would not issue notices of violation for businesses owned by federal workers.

Code Enforcement actions would be deferred except for life safety issues. While pending code violations would be deferred, life safety concerns would continue to be addressed.

The city would allow food distributions for 30 days including fee waivers for nonprofits and churches wanting to provide food distribution services.

City Manager Hobbs highlighted upcoming food distribution events: Vice Mayor Martin would host a food distribution at John Mullins Park on December 13th, and a turkey giveaway for Thanksgiving on Tuesday, November 25th outside Lauderhill Meat and Fish (formerly Fresco y Mas) with 600 turkeys available - 300 for walk-ups. The city would allocate tickets to the Mayor, commission, HOAs, and community groups, and assist vulnerable families coordinated through the parks department. A luncheon and turkey giveaway was scheduled for November 19th with Tea Time with Seniors at the Sadkin Center.

The City Manager mentioned ongoing conversations with their local credit union, WeFinancial, about providing gap financing loans for federal workers, noting credit unions tend to be more amenable to personal and signature loans.

Regarding employment assistance, City Manager Hobbs stated they had consulted with the City Attorney about seasonal or temporary positions federal employees might qualify for, with further HR consultation needed to ensure federal law compliance.

A federal workers government shutdown link would be created providing information about all Broward County food banks. A food drive was planned in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club, Larkdale Elementary, and Kiwanis Club for distribution.

City Manager Hobbs emphasized that with commission consensus, communications would immediately roll out information via social media, flyers at parks, and constant contact systems. A dedicated link for federal employees would consolidate all this information plus countywide services.

Mayor Grant acknowledged the City Manager's comprehensive outline and expressed hope for colleague agreement on the necessity of moving forward. She mentioned Commissioner Dunn's work with West Ken Lark and a planned holiday event at the community HOA requesting canned goods.

The Mayor addressed the food bank initiative working with Boys and Girls Club, with Mr. Davis-Walker coordinating. She explained they were shifting focus from Jamaica relief efforts (having already sent pallets and shipments over two weeks) toward local needs. Items collected would go to various Lauderhill

schools and the Boys and Girls Club, recognizing the demographics and economic positions of children there to ensure they could enjoy the holidays.

Mayor Grant mentioned working with Mugahed Alameri (MG)'s organization (ICNA Relief) and Feeding South Florida to provide fresh foods for 400 families in the city, partnering with other organizations. She promised to advise on specific dates for community participation or assistance needs.

In addition to the 600 turkeys mentioned, Mayor Grant announced she had secured 550 turkeys for distribution to city churches. She had asked 25 pastors to identify 20 families in their congregations with genuine need, emphasizing distribution with dignity and respect, allowing pastors to determine the best delivery method. This distribution would occur November 19 at Tea Time with Seniors from 11 AM to 3 PM, where seniors would receive brunch/lunch and turkeys, followed by distribution to pastors in a side room, replicating last year's process with increased quantities.

Mayor Grant requested City Manager Hobbs create a publication for residents outlining the city's plans if approved, also appealing to those who could help during these tough times. She then made her final proposal, acknowledging that while they were discussing primarily federal workers and seniors, families and young children were also affected, which justified the food bank efforts. She proposed utilizing \$100,000 toward general food insecurity from the city, acknowledging the tight budget but expressing confidence that Finance Director Sean Henderson and City Manager Hobbs could find a solution given the trying times.

The Mayor mentioned that cities nationwide had employees contributing a percentage of their paychecks toward such efforts but stated she didn't want to impose that on staff. She emphasized the importance of the moment and not failing the people who elected them for support.

Mayor Grant opened discussion to commissioners. Commissioner Dunn thanked the Mayor for her leadership and supported the City Manager's solid proposals for assisting federal workers. She provided data context: 11% of Lauderhill's population had no insurance, many trying to access the Affordable Care Act; 24% were on Medicaid or Medicare; ZIP code 33311 was Broward County's number one Medicaid ZIP code shared by four cities; and Lauderhill ranked ninth statewide for SNAP beneficiaries.

Commissioner Dunn suggested reevaluating the city's food distribution policy beyond the 30-day waiver, believing there must be a way to balance resident needs, business community needs, and administrative processes while meeting pre-existing significant needs. She requested the team examine a longer-term solution than the 30-day waiver.

City Manager Hobbs acknowledged they had already begun examining this issue, noting it had been raised at the Mayor's listening tour by numerous pastors. He had initiated conversations with staff about working through the delicate balance, recognizing businesses being amortized for that reason. He understood the dilemma regarding churches and nonprofits providing food

distribution and was working on solutions that wouldn't damage existing amortization efforts. When asked about timing, discussion clarified that while the next regular workshop was March, they could address it at the December meeting, January retreat, or as a presentation during a regular meeting.

Commissioner Dunn raised concerns about LifeNet for Families' required cessation of food insecurity assistance in December. When confirmed they must stop operations December 14th, she emphasized this was when they were needed most and requested guidance on the process for an extension given the emergency state around food insecurity.

City Attorney Ottinot stated the commission could direct the manager to stay enforcement of the amortization at their discretion. Mayor Grant noted two aspects: the multi-year notice already given and discussions about repurposing or providing other services, suggesting they should hear from LifeNet before making decisions. City Manager Hobbs added they should look holistically at everyone affected, including what the faith center and the church on 49th were attempting regarding food distribution. He had suggested LifeNet's new CEO have community conversations since this had been a community-driven process with real opposition.

Commissioner Dunn emphasized reopening the conversation, noting life had completely changed since five years ago when the community raised the issue. She mentioned Broward County and large funders were now trying to direct food insecurity funding to communities and saw LifeNet as a natural distribution point. City Manager Hobbs agreed to contact the CEO the next day for initial conversations, followed immediately by community discussions for feedback.

As the 3:00 PM hour approached with another meeting scheduled, Mayor Grant sought to conclude. City Manager Hobbs requested consensus to move forward with the discussed items for federal worker assistance. Commissioner Dunn confirmed support with her two specific suggestions about the food distribution policy and conversations with LifeNet.

Commissioner Campbell initially suggested needing further discussion, specifically regarding the \$100,000. Mayor Grant clarified this was separate from the federal worker assistance measures. She mentioned pulling back on some upcoming events and utilizing funds from the \$3 million received. City Manager Hobbs confirmed he would bring back a recommendation at the next commission meeting.

With Commissioner Campbell's agreement to move forward, City Attorney Ottinot sought clarification on staying the December 14th date for LifeNet, recommending a resolution at the next meeting for clarity since the commission had previously passed a date certain. The commission agreed to prepare a resolution for the November 24th meeting, with Mayor Grant emphasizing ensuring everything was clear and all necessary community conversations occurred before December's meeting, giving adequate time before the December 14th deadline. Director of Development Services Daniel Keester-O'Mills agreed to provide a list of entities subject to the amortization.

IV ADJOURNMENT - 3:10 PM