



**THE CITY OF MIRAMAR
BUSINESS INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT
CONSTRUCTION & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 14, 2026

1:00 P.M.

A meeting of the City of Miramar's Economic Development & Housing (EDH) Department's Business Industry Development (BID) Construction & Professional Services Advisory Board took place at 1:09 p.m. on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, 2nd floor, Engineering Conference Room W-201L, EDH Department, 2200 Civic Center Place, Miramar, FL 33023.

1 & 2 CALL TO ORDER/ATTENDANCE

The following board members were present:

Chairperson Denise Brown, President, DPX Construction Management
Vice Chairperson Robert Washington, Instructor, Carpenters & Pile
Drivers Union
Mac Alabre, CEO, Lien Library Inc., FIU
Vernon Dooling, Minority Builders
Amaury Genao, Turner Construction Company
Garrie Harris, CEO, Alpha 1 Staffing
Vernon Williams, Brigcon Construction Svcs.

The following board member was absent:

Dorothy Brown-Alfaro, Jador Intl. Corp. (Excused)

A quorum was achieved.

Other persons present:

Marisela Sanchez, BID Coordinator
City Attorney Jordan Gary
Darrell Cunningham, VP Mission Services, Goodwill

Michael Watson, Director of Workforce Development, Goodwill

3. ATTENDANCE/SIGN-IN SHEET

- **Review and Approval of Absent Board Members:**

Chairperson Brown indicated two board members were absent, Mr. Alabre, and Ms. Brown-Alfaro. She understood from staff that board should excuse their absences based on the information staff received from them on the reason for their absence from the present meeting.

Mr. Washington asked if staff received any communications from Ms. Brown-Alfaro as to the status of her continues absences from the board meetings.

Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the excused absence of Ms. Brown-Alfaro, as noted above; seconded by Ms. Harris. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Brown replied that she was aware of any update.

Ms. Sanchez knew that Dr. Hollis was in contact with Ms. Brown-Alfaro, but no update was communicated to her by Dr. Hollis. She receive no information as to the reason for Mr. Alabre's absence.

Ms. Harris asked Ms. Sanchez if she was aware of Mr. Alabre communicating any information on the reason for his absences to Dr. Hollis.

Ms. Sanches was unsure if he did communicate with Dr. Hollis, but she tried calling Mr. Alabre on April 13; she left him a voice message, but he did not reply; he replied to the email sent to all board members the previous week asking if they would be attending the present meeting, and he said he would attend.

Vice Chairperson Washington made a motion to approve the excused absence of Mr. Alabre; seconded by Mr. Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Review/Approval/Signing of Past Minutes:

Deferred to the next meeting.

5. BROWN BAG WEDNESDAYS TECHNICAL TRAINING

- Credit Repair - April 8, 2026

Ms. Sanchez stated the BID division held their technical training with Credit360, with about 22 persons attending, and it was a good class; she could bring copies of the material they reviewed with the attendees. Basically, the material focused on such topics as: how to calculate, and build one's credit score, both as a business and personally; and steps to take in preparing, building, and fixing one's credit. She said the class took place on April 8, 2026; the trainer's name was Andre Coakley with Credit360, and the course title was Improving Business & Personal Credit.

Mr. Genao asked if any of the participants were repeat participants, or were they mostly newcomers.

Ms. Sanchez responded that it was mix of both, noting the City had an event with Commissioner Colbourne: Doing Business with Miramar; when staff attended such events, they were able to get more people to sign up for the class.

Mr. Williams asked if anything was discussed with regard to small businesses, and business credit reports, and making sure the participants understood the difference between personal credit and business credit.

Ms. Sanchez answered yes. Mr. Coakley went into detail regarding business versus personal credit, giving a few scenarios as to the vendors small businesses should try to use in order to build their credit.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Miramar COVE Job Fair – Wednesday, June 10, 2026

Ms. Sanchez referred to the flyer she handed out, stating the City would be hosting a contractor fair Stiles, and Sun Beam at the Miramar Police Headquarters conference room, Town Center. The program was already launched, but they had a few networking events coming up within the next few weeks, and they would continue to promote it. To date, they did not know how many attendees were registered, but they hoped by the next board meeting she would have those numbers for the board.

Mr. Genao asked how many people could fit in that space; that is, what was the RSVP limit.

Ms. Sanchez responded, comfortably, the room could accommodate 50 people; however, they had a backup plan for if the number was higher, stating that it was normal to see if 100 persons registered, maybe 50 showed up. There was a bigger room upstairs that would accommodate 120 people.

Mr. Williams referred to the flyer, stating there was nothing on the flyer indicating it was a contractor fair; that is, specifying the types of contractors being sought, such as: plumbers, painters, electricians, asphalt operators, roofers, HVAC technicians, etc. He stressed that closeout experts and controllers were not contractors; this was something he pointed out to Dr. Hollis the last time, and he wished to bring this up again. Stiles was giving Dr. Hollis misdirection, as the flyer did not communicate that the event was a contractor fair. He stated that, based on his experience, the time at which the event was being held, and where he knew it was, they were making major subcontractor selections already. What would transpire would be a repeat of what took place with current builders four years ago where it resulted in numerous angry contractors who attended the fair intending to bid on contracts in their field, only to discover those contracts were already awarded. Mr. Williams believed Dr. Hollis did not really understand this process, and that Stiles was misleading her, as she attended several such contractor fairs with developers, and it was the same outcome contractors like himself were encountering. Again, he did not like the wording of the flyer where it stated who should attend; this was where he had a problem with the flyer.

Mr. Genao questioned if when Mr. Williams read the flyer the language convey to her vendors and suppliers should attend, or did it read more like a job.

Mr. Williams said it read to him like a job fair.

Mr. Genao continued, that is, like the subcontractors sought to expand their teams, as opposed to contracting opportunities.

Mr. Williams replied absolutely. He wished the matter to be cleared up; that is, those involved should state they were looking for, for example, plumbing contractors, not plumbers.

Chairperson Brown concurred, stating the subcontractors, the ones that would make the major money on the project were already chosen, and the fair was a way of appearing to extend something to the community, but not really extending something to the community.

Mr. Williams said this was 100 percent his meaning.

Ms. Harris surmised it was smoke and mirrors.

Chairperson Brown agreed with the comments as to the language, as it did not represent a company; plumbers, electricians, etc. were workers; the language one would use for a subcontractor fair was not that used in the flyer. This meant that the true subcontractors were not getting a bite of the apple.

Mr. Williams commented that he volunteered to serve on the BID Advisory Board for the sole purpose of fixing such issues, and four years ago he was in a heated meeting with the current builders, and he did stand up, and helped them to let the audience understand the process, and why they were at that stage. However, the developer and the contractor were not making a valid effort to include small business subcontractors; again, those referred to in the flyer were workers.

Mr. Genao knew in previous BID board meetings over the last year and a half the board discussed compliance with regard to best efforts, local programs, etc. He don't remember the subject job fair being discussed being aligned with that. If Mr. Williams's interpretation was correct, the subject fair would be a missed opportunity to execute the type of programming board members signed up to advocate and promote in the City. The project associated with the subject contractor fair was one of the largest projects in Miramar.

Mr. Williams said it was about a \$2 billion project.

Mr. Genao added, if this were the case, it would be one of the largest projects in the City that, seemingly, had none of the aspirations that were supposed to be implemented.

Mr. Williams indicated he was not saying there was a goal requirement that he was aware of, as the subject project was a purely private development, but if the City's BID program was hosting the subject event, the flyer's language was misleading.

Vice Chairperson Washington asked if the flyer had been sent out yet.

Ms. Sanchez answered yes; it was circulated at some of the City's networking events.

Chairperson Brown recalled the board watching a video about the subject project when it was being announced, and during that time efforts were supposed to be made to reach out to subcontractors to be a part of the project. The flyer did not correspond with the expectation that was created by what the board was shown; the flyer was very minimal compared to the expectation created with the video.

Mr. Williams remarked that with regard to the contractor fair in November 2025 at which Stiles was present, his company took information, and they tried to reach out to various staff or others at Stiles they believed were involved in the project, only for them to say they would call them back or email them, but they never did. As a business owner, he knew the flyer was nothing but smoke and screen; it was not realistic.

Ms. Sanchez noted the board's voiced concerns about the flyer, so she would meet with Dr. Hollis to devise a solution.

Ms. Harris asked if there was a way for the board to approve the language in flyers for contractor fairs, or speak with contractors prior to the event; that is, for the board to have more participation in the process.

Ms. Sanchez said she was unsure, so she would speak with Dr. Hollis as to the procedures, and the extent to which the board could be involved in the process going forward.

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Chairperson Brown asked City Attorney Gary to speak to the memorandum the board received.

City Attorney Gary stated she had no comments on the subject memorandum at the present time, as she thought it was premature in light of the bill not yet being signed into law by Governor DeSantis. If the Governor signed it into law, it would not affect the City until 2027. She said the contents of the memo constituted advice to Dr. Hollis from the City Attorney's Office.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Presentation: Goodwill Industries of South Florida (Goodwill): Darrell Cunningham, Vice President of Mission Services; and Michael Watson, Director of Workforce Development

Chairperson Brown introduced Darrell Cunningham and Michael Watson, stating they were asked to attend the board meeting to discuss construction related matters. In a conversation with Mr. Cunningham, she thought about potential partnerships that could take place, and how to further the City's efforts by joining forces with other agencies, or entities doing similar work for a greater impact. She said, in particular, at Miramar High School, and other opportunities the board and city staff took on.

Darrell Cunningham, Vice President of Mission Services, Goodwill, stated he worked at the organization under four years; about four years ago they began relooking at what they were doing, and how they could not only provide jobs for individuals who worked for Goodwill, but how to provide jobs for the community, and industries. After doing research, the developed workforce development labs to train participants on skills in trade labor, such as construction, HVAC, and energy; the construction labs were launched in Broward County at a location off Commercial Boulevard and 21st, and in Allapattah off 22nd and 21st. He said they

sought to help people acquire micro credentials, so they could get a job, this was called level one. They could return to the lab to get another credential to secure a better job, eventually establishing their career in their desired field. He said, oftentimes, six months was too long for many people to get training, so they could find a job, so at level one they focused on how to get someone trained to be on a construction site as safely, and as knowledgeable as possible; the trainings were two to six weeks, and they included job readiness, conflict resolution, and trade skills. Mr. Cunningham said they had their HVAC lab in Miami, and they would be building on their solar energy lab in Broward. He said level three would apartment techs, training as a handyman, and level four was training for heavy machinery operation. They launched the program in November 2025, and two cohorts graduated in construction in Miami and in Broward, and cohorts were being run in both counties at present; a cohort was comprised of ten to 15 individuals in the lab, where they spent 75 percent of their time learning. Participants were exposed to a variety of careers using virtual reality headsets, engaging them to get a feel for what the skill could entail. Mr. Cunningham said they were exploring how to integrate apprenticeships into the trades in which they were training people, working with companies on how to customize a job. They were exploring training in other industries, such as retail, healthcare, and hospitality; in doing their community needs assessment, the data showed that these were growing industries in South Florida at a three to five-percent rate. He distributed flyers on their various programs to the board, stating they were working with various organizations, entities, and companies to have them view the subject program as a source for their labor needs. They had potential employers come into the lab to speak to the participants about the job, the idea being that as the training neared completion, they had a connection date by which they could be hired. He said regardless of the job location, the skill certification traveled with them. Their Goodwill branch covered Broward, Dade, and Monroe Counties, and they learned best practices from each other, one being that as individuals went through training, they needed some sort of stipend along the way to help them complete the training. They received a stipend when they reached 50 percent completion, and another when they were 100 percent complete. They provided services to help them along the way to deal with transportation, and other issues while in training; the training program was opened to all individuals in the community. He invited board members to visit one of their labs.

Michael Watson, Director of Workforce Development, added they had job placement assistance on the backend. He noted that they stressed to those they spoke with the need to have credentials attached to their name, something to show employers they had training, and they were willing to learn and grow. They had over 60 other entry certifications, for which the training programs were free, and it was a great thing to see past graduates who became employed were spreading the word to others. He said the referrals and feedback from past

participants was how they knew their program was working.

Mr. Williams commended Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Watson for developing a good program. As an experienced small business owner, one of the things he noticed about small business employers like him was they were not that educated about the existence of such programs, and they were not willing to hire people from such programs because when they did, some failed miserably. He thought thorough training of small business employers was needed as to what such programs provided in the training of participants, and the latter needed to have a better understanding of what a business owner faced in competitive industries, such as construction.

Mr. Watson concurred as to the need to educate employers on the programs and the individuals receiving the training they provided; their programs focused on training for job skills, and helping graduates stay employed. Before graduates went out on a job, they went through Goodwill's career skills department for an assessment of their job readiness, then they had a personal assessment to ensure they were suitable for the particular job; they also had a support team helping them when they began the job in case they needed anything. He said this method helped the program build momentum, whereby, employers who began with one or two, came back asking for more workers from the program.

Mr. Cunningham added that the Goodwill program sought to match the energy and the desire the participants had with the needs of the employers; they showed their participants how to be successful, and even though there might be some misses, there were more hits. It was a comprehensive program, and they continued to learn.

Mr. Alabre liked that the program supported the board's mission, and he could see it positively impacting the Miramar community, particularly the youths. He mentioned the board's mentoring and protégé program in place, and he sought more information on what Goodwill's recruitment process looked like. The invitation to Goodwill to speak to the board, so the latter could visit the next cohort, so they could determine the number of Miramar participants in the program, how many graduated from the program, and benefited by securing jobs. He asked if when participants came into the program there was a process to learn more about each individual with regard to compatible job training and employment.

Mr. Cunningham explained their recruitment process, stating they launched their social media campaign in November, and by March they had 800 interested people who were invited to a recruitment forum in the lab, so they could see where their training would take place in the various skills. He said it was at this point that the staff began assessing the participants to learn what skills they had

or sought, and as they were placed in cohorts for training. In four to six months, they became more selective. He added that they offered their labs as training grounds for training on new industry technology that an employer might not have time to do on their own, so their employee could get trained and certified in a state-of-the-art setting. Mr. Cunningham believed collaboration with organizations to advance their program included transparency in their recruitment process, as the stakeholders needed to know where people were. Thought training was important, but employment and placing was the key.

Ms. Harris felt excited about the prospects of having such a great partnership with a program like Goodwill's, as in her business she often needed to hire a certain number of people in a specific time. It would be a great resource to have, such as during hurricane season.

Mr. Watson said the number one person they had to take care of was the employer, as they created the opportunities for the jobseekers.

Mr. Genao asked how open Goodwill was to collaborate with other job assistance programs with a similar mission to share best practices; this could benefit both the employers and the jobseekers, so they did not have to spend an excess of time figuring out a myriad of key elements that might affect participation.

Mr. Cunningham replied Goodwill was very open to collaboration, and learning more about job assistance industry, learning when to put certain initiatives on hold, when to implement others, etc. Their instructors were from the industries, and they were taught how to teach.

Mr. Watson commented that they tried collaborations in the past, and some of the feedback received was that though their labs were good, they were not as good as other programs. His job was to protect his students, as it was not beneficial for them to hear that what they were going through was not enough, as they were on a path that anything could knock them off. There might be a time when they could do collaborations, as momentum kept building and growing, and though they had to satisfy the employer, they had to protect their participants who were training hard to get them certified and employed.

Mr. Williams suggested Goodwill market their program to developers; he worked with a large developer that, with most of their contracts, they incorporated programs like Goodwill's; with some projects, they were required to work with such programs to provide job opportunities.

Mr. Cunningham responded that they would add that to their reach.

Mr. Genao concurred, as if they got developer buy-in, everyone else would fall in

line as part of a project's hiring process. It was great that Goodwill's program includes the consideration of job conditions, such as construction, where employees were constantly exposed to the elements; this was of real consideration when individuals were training for such jobs.

Mr. Cunningham agreed, as some of the trainees had never been presented with questions on those aspects of a job, as they focused only on what the job might pay. Thus, an area of focus was helping trainees make an informed decision. He distributed his business card to the board, inviting them to contact him if they wished to sit in at a training lab.

Chairperson Brown thanked Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Watson for their presentation to the board; like them, the board wanted to witness its young participants benefiting from the mentoring and training programs available. She believed there were opportunities for Goodwill and the City to partner to move their agenda forward to have measurable impact; she knew this is what they wanted. It was a great meeting for the board to have, and it promised the start of a great relationship, and in the interim of the next meeting, board members could think about the different alignments that were possible, and how to approach a collaborative relationship with Goodwill. She thought it would be useful for board members to go onsite to observe a training lab, so they had a true idea of what it meant. Miramar High School students had a certain level of certification when they graduated, and to be able to take them to that next step, getting them additional training and micro certifications, then enabling them to move into employment with the board's relationship with Goodwill being a part of that movement, not just talking, but doing, this was very significant.

Mr. Cunningham looked forward to further communication with the possibility of collaboration, noting that in the past Goodwill was a very insular organization, but they were now more community collaborative, and they sought to have more impact in the community.

Vice Chairperson Washington mentioned he dealt with numerous programs, from registered to nonregistered apprenticeship programs that included facing challenges of background screening, drug testing, transportation, lack of knowledge and skills. He asked how Goodwill's program dealt with such aspects, as well as benefits and wages for those who completed their program.

Mr. Cunningham responded, in relation to the background screening, that their program partnered with enough employers where they understood which employers would work with persons with certain backgrounds or not; they held such conversations during the assessment phase. In relation to pay, they spoke with participants about pay rates, letting them know what an entry level position would pay, what they would get paid with and without certification, job experience

versus little or no job experience, etc. The long term for them was to put their supported employment piece on the backend, as they could access federal and state funding, so when someone came out of a cohort they could be placed in subsidized employment for three to six months, and work with employers to hire them permanently at the end of the time period. He said their goal was to at least 85 percent of the participants placed in jobs. With regard to transportation, this, too, was discussed during assessment to learn what they needed, whether it was bus passes, ride shares, etc.; they asked about their domestic situation to determine the suitability of a job far away versus closer to home, willingness to travel, etc.

8. ANNOUNCEMENT & OPEN DISCUSSION

Ms. Harris mentioned she would be mentoring at Miramar High School the coming Thursday.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 12, 2026, @ 1:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.



Denise Brown, Chairperson
DB/cp

