



THE CITY OF MIRAMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

APRIL 9, 2026

5:30 P.M.

A meeting of the City of Miramar Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) took place at 5:39 p.m. on Thursday, April 9, 2026, at the Economic Development & Housing Department (ED&H), 2nd Floor Conference Room W-202E, 2200 Civic Center Place, Florida 33025.

Transcriber's note: EVERYONE please state your name EVERY TIME you speak, so as to be accurately identified in the minutes, as the transcriber is not present in the meeting.

I & II. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The following members of the EDAB were present:

Trever Wade, Chairperson
Margarita Morales, Vice Chairperson
Shawn Jones
Nancy Levros
Irina Pinos

The following members of the EDAB were absent:

Peter Apol (Excused)
Darryl Holsendolph (Excused)

A quorum was achieved.

Mr. Hughes remarked that Mr. Apol's term as the board's representative for commerce expired after April 2026; the City Clerk notified Mr. Apol, extending an invitation to reapply, but he declined due to the demands of family matters. He had heard nothing from Mr. Holsendolph in months.

Chairperson Wade mentioned recently seeing Mr. Holsendolph in Publix where they spoke briefly, and he mentioned not attending the last two meetings. He encouraged him to return.

Also present:

Richard Hughes, Assistant Director, ED&H Department

Vice Chairperson. Morales made a motion, seconded by Chairperson Wade, to approve the excused absences of Mr. Apol and Mr. Holsendolph.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Regular Board Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2026

Deferred to the next meeting.

IV. ELECTION OF CHAIR/VICE CHAIR:

Mr. Hughes stated, per the board's bylaws, a chairperson and vice chairperson should be appointed in April of each year; nominations were invited for both positions.

Ms. Levros made a motion, seconded by Ms. Pinos, to approve the appointment of Ms. Morales as the EDAB chairperson. The motion carried 5-0.

Chairperson Wade made a motion, seconded by Ms. Pinos, to approve the appointment of Mr. Jones as the EDAB vice chairperson, as noted above. The motion carried 5-0.

V. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:

Chairperson Morales commented on being asked by neighbors about the residential construction project, Miramar Cove, and she shared some information with them, as Miramar would be even more transformed than it was at present. She was also asked about the mall project in Miami just south of Miramar.

Mr. Hughes responded that he heard no further information on the American Dream Miami mall; nor was there anything in the press about the project. He knew the City Commission received a quarterly report, but he knew nothing about the City's position.

Chairperson Morales asked if the board could attend a City Commission meeting to ask about the matter.

Mr. Hughes affirmed that was possible, or each board member could speak directly to the city commissioner who appointed them, asking if they had a status update on the mall project.

Chairperson Morales said she would email the board members on a date to meet with Commissioner Chambers, her appointing commissioner.

Mr. Hughes explained the board needed to adhere to the Florida Sunshine Law, so this meant if more than one board member met with a city commissioner, the meeting had to be publicly noticed to allow members of the public to attend.

Vice Chair Jones suggested one board member speak to a commissioner, then bring back whatever information they gained to the board for discussion.

Mr. Hughes pointed out that it was likely that after Ms. Morales spoke with Commissioner Chambers, he might bring the matter up at the end of the subsequent Commission meeting to get the input of other elected officials. The Commission might choose to invite the attorney associated with the mall project to update the Commission at a future meeting.

Chairperson Morales commented that members of the public could sign up at a commission meeting to speak during the public participation agenda item and get information on the mall project that way. She asked if all EDAB members could attend the Commission meeting to ask for an update.

Mr. Hughes pointed out that was another option, as the commission meeting was noticed, so the board members could attend the meeting as a group and speak to the commission as they desired during public participation. The next commission meeting was April 22, 2026. He explained that the public participation agenda item was wide open for the public to speak on any matter that was not on the commission's meeting agenda. If the item a member of the public wished to speak about was a part of the meeting agenda, they would have to wait until that agenda item came up for consideration to speak.

Vice Chair Jones mentioned putting together a proposal to bring more exposure to smaller local businesses to give them an opportunity to be a part of a director list, in addition to the list the city compiled for its rewards program. He said this would not be with Miramar, though he could have Miramar staff assist with explaining the opportunity to the local small businesses. It would be him asking

the small businesses if they had the capacity to choose an incentive that would encourage patrons to shop at their establishment. He would gather the suggested incentives voiced by the various small businesses by category, make them a part of the same network provider that Miramar used, so when customers were exposed to the opportunities, they could scan a QR code or download an app to see all the various small businesses in Miramar offering incentives. At present the dealership he worked at averaged about 150,000 customers in their database, so he would use his company as a conduit to allow local small businesses to expose their incentives to the dealership's customer base. He stated in the dealership waiting room, there were about four large screens on which anything could be advertised on a rotating basis; he could advertise on the screens to the customers the existence of the incentive program involving Miramar's local small businesses and the incentives they offered. Mr. Jones said there was also a stationary monitor in the dealership with an interactive touchscreen on which a Miramar local business could be featured for a set period of time. This would give local businesses more exposure, as it would raise awareness of their existence. Though the small businesses would not have to pay to be included in the initiative, he could give an option for them to pay to be specifically highlighted on the stationary screen, as it would constitute direct advertising for their business. Mr. Jones said the cost would be nominal, as he would be using an existing system to post the information; he would possibly have someone design and put the advertisement(s) together, so the cost had yet to be calculated.

Mr. Wade asked about the companies that could not incentivize, such as those in the insurance business.

Vice Chair Jones understood, stating he would explore how to still give such businesses exposure via another link.

Chairperson Morales sought clarification if the advertising would be seen by only the customers physically present at the dealership or would all the customers in the dealership database be sent the link.

Vice Chair Jones replied it would only be seen by the ones coming through the dealership; when they saw the advertising, they would download the app, so they could be exposed to the various offerings of Miramar's local small businesses. He would also do word-of-mouth advertising as he interacted with customers who might voice a need for particular services.

Chairperson Morales wondered if bringing on influencers with numerous followers would be helpful.

Vice Chair Jones affirmed it would benefit the dealership, the influencer, and him.

Chairperson Morales asked board members if they could attend the April 22, 2026, commission meeting, and sign up to speak during public participation.

Mr. Hughes stated the public participation item took place between 7:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Vice Chair Jones suggested Mr. Hughes send board members an email reminder close to the Commission meeting date.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Small Business Communication & Service Needs Assessment: Dr. Randy Cross, NSU

Mr. Hughes explained Dr. Randy Cross, the guest speaker, but had an emergency and was unable to attend. Dr. Cross was supposed to give the board some background information on a project at NSU where they created a Center for Public Service, Innovation & Research. Dr. Cross oversaw the Center and served as an assistant professor at NSU; he once served as the Director of the City's Human Resources Department from which he retired a few years ago. He said the mission of the Center was to help local governments in the public sector do their work better and more efficiently. Dr. Cross had a contract with Miramar citywide that allowed the Center to do a variety of work for the city in the areas of workforce research, best practices, etc. Mr. Hughes commented that the ED&H Department staff were exploring ways to be better targeted for grants and services to small businesses. Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic, the city did stimulus grants to help small businesses who fell behind, and the current MBA program was one of the initiatives that grew out of that work, as well as the small business grant program that helped small businesses purchase equipment, hire professionals services help, technology upgrades, etc.; and there was the small business signage program. He said the small business grant program was currently on hold due to staff getting back logged and was on hold, but they hoped to relaunch it in the coming year. Staff wanted to dig deeper to determine if they were missing anything, and this would be facilitated by contacting small businesses, having them complete a survey, speaking with the owners and their staff to find out how the city's programs benefited, and if there were other needs that the programs were failing to address. Dr. Cross's group would go out into Miramar's local business community to create instruments to get feedback, whether via survey, one-on-one interactions, small focus groups, etc., over the next few months to try to get to the level of detail that city staff sought to learn more about. Dr. Cross's presentation would be deferred to the next EDAB

meeting. He added that staff gave Dr. Cross and his staff some background information on the ED&H grant programs, along with the city's economic plan, so they could get a full picture of where the city stood with regard to assisting local small businesses. As it was very early in the process, he thought it would be good to bring in the EDAB, so the members could give their input to Dr. Cross after his presentation.

Chairperson Morales asked if Dr. Cross and his team would be doing any benchmarking, asking what the timeframe was to complete the scope of work.

Mr. Hughes answered yes. The timeframe for the project was 14 weeks. He looked forward to seeing what they found, and hoped it would be useful.

2. Target Industry Marketing Brochure

Mr. Hughes referred to the copy of the brochure he distributed to the board, stating it was a first draft for a target industry initiative; ED&H identified via a consultant some three years prior a target for foreign investment in three industries the city should work to build on: aviation, financial services, and IT and software. He said the city needed to create for each of those industries an effective marketing brochure that hit on the particular industry and justify why an international firm should come to do business in Miramar. The company ED&H is working with was out of Minnesota, but they were very experienced in doing such work for municipalities at the state, county, and local levels, as well as private organizations. The brochure was not a finished product, and one of the things he disliked about the draft provided was it was not easy to read, as the font size was too small, and ED&H staff gave their feedback. He said the brochure before the board was the designer's first cut; they were trying to fit all the information, so ED&H staff could better decide what information they wanted the brochure to contain that was more likely to get people's attention, and provide enough information to make readers aware of the companies in the particular industry. The brochure could allude to some of the talent in the region, specifically the nature of the workforce in the Tri-county area; this would give them the sense that the talent was nearby. Mr. Hughes said, additionally, there would be some quick information on the demographics of Miramar, where the city was located on the map of South Florida, the State, and the U.S., and the proximity of the major roadways. The brochure would include city contact information for interested parties to get more information. He would provide the finalized brochure to the board by the end of the month; it would be used as a template for the brochure of the other two industries; it would be distributed as handouts at city events, etc. where appropriate, as well as through the city's social media platforms, including the LinkedIn account. He said staff is researching how to identify, for example, site selectors who worked with large

international organizations that were tasked with identifying the specific three industries in places with the potential to conduct business. Staff could then get the brochures to them and encourage them to notify their clients about the potential to do business in Miramar.

Chairperson Morales asked if there was a budget for the ED&H staff to participate at any industry shows specific to the three industries.

Mr. Hughes replied that staff had not yet reached the point at which they felt ready to engage in that manner, as there was a substantial cost to attend international shows. The city might be able to piggyback on the Fort Lauderdale Alliance that attended such shows on behalf of Broward County, either giving them the brochures to distribute, or attending a show as part of their group. He said it was a modest budget of \$6,000.00 to produce the three brochures; the work was being done outside, so someone with a different eye would work on it, rather than trying to do the work in house. He contacted three different vendors, marketing companies that were familiar with how it worked, and what were the best practices to attract site selectors to get interested in one's area.

Mr. Wade thought minimizing the content and adding a QR code would be useful; the QR code could be expanded to be linked to a site that allowed access to much deeper information; it could also include contact information, such as the email address.

Chairperson Morales added that with the QR code, deeper information could be organized by area and be more site specific.

VII. OLD BUSINESS: NONE


VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS & INFORMATION:

1. Business Grants, Support & Services Workshop (Hosted by Commissioner Colbourne)
Thursday, April 23, 2026, 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Commission Chambers

IX. ADJOURNMENT:

Next meeting: Thursday, May 14, 2026 @ 5:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.



Magarita Morales, Chairperson
MM/cp