

September 2022



FLORIDA BLACK CAUCUS
OF LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

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President's Message



Greetings FBC-LEO Members and Friends!

I am Morris West, former Mayor and current City Commissioner of Haines City and your new president of the Florida Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials, also known as FBC-LEO. I am excited and humbled to lead this organization over the next two years. For years I have made an earnest commitment to public service, and I don't take my service to this august body of leaders for granted.

From serving as a little league football coach to membership in the Rotary Club and local NAACP to co-founding the Morris and Leah West Foundation with my lovely wife, I have dedicated my life to being a blessing and showing up for others in any way I can. Further undergirding my strong belief in the importance of service were my parents, Mattie and Willie West, my matriculation through my beloved Bethune Cookman University – hail, Wildcats! And my

dynamic brotherhood, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Incorporated, whose motto is "culture for service and service for humanity." Professionally, I am a retired police chief, a graduate and member of the FBI national academy and the current C-O-O of United Protective Security Services.

In 2016, I was elected to the Haines City Commission and have never wavered on my commitment to serve and uplift the community. Through my journey as a public servant, I have been affiliated with the Florida League of Mayors and the Ridge League of Cities as part of the Central Florida Regional Planning Council, and currently serving on the Florida League of Cities Land Use and Economic Development Committee.

I have been a member of FBC-LEO for six years. I started out helping the organization secure sponsorships before taking on the role of 2nd Vice President and ultimately rising through the ranks to achieve this esteemed role as president.

I'm excited to see where we will take FBC-LEO in the future! As the good Bishop T.D. Jakes likes to say, Get ready! Get ready! Get ready! God bless!

Watch the FBC-LEO Initiatives video below to learn about the association's goals for the next two years.

Sincerely,

Morris West

President Morris West
Commissioner, City of Haines City

2022 - 2024 FBC-LEO Initiatives



Message from Outgoing FBC-LEO Liaison Sharon Berrian



Dear FBC-LEO Officers, Board and Members:

There are no words to express how grateful and appreciative I am for the wonderful salute given to me during the FBC-LEO breakfast in August in recognition of my retirement on September 30th.

I have been tremendously blessed to work with FBC-LEO since its founding in 1985. And I am overjoyed to have been appointed this organization's first Staff Liaison after the Florida League of Cities contracted with FBC-LEO to handle its day-to-day administrative duties. Over the years, I have watched as dedicated and committed municipal officials poured into this great organization.

And the hard work is paying off! FBC-LEO has thrived and established itself as an important institution for the advancement of multiple elected officials throughout Florida. I am so proud and honored to have helped as this organization has grown. I am immensely grateful to have worked with many great leaders throughout our state to help make FBC-LEO the exemplary organization it is.

Luke 1:45 says: "Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her." I am indeed truly blessed to have had the opportunity to serve elected leaders for 38 years as you serve others.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to help FBC-LEO become a premiere organization. May God Continue to Bless and Keep each and every one of you!

Sharon G. Berrian
Staff Liaison, FBC-LEO
Director, Membership Relations
Florida League of Cities, Inc.

2022-2023 FBC-LEO Board of Directors

Executive Committee



President
Morris West
Commissioner
City of Haines City



1st Vice President
Justin Campbell
Commissioner
City of Palatka



2nd Vice President
Jessica Davis
Commissioner
City of DeLand



Past President
Teresa Watkins Brown
Councilwoman
City of Fort Myers

Officers and Directors



Secretary
Melissa P. Dunn
Vice Mayor
City of Lauderhill



Assistant Secretary
Rufus Borom
Commissioner
City of Palatka



Assistant Treasurer
Yvonne Minus
Councilmember
City of Melbourne



Parliamentarian
Regina Hill
Commissioner
City of Orlando



**Regional Coordinator
North**
NanDrycka King Albert
Councilwoman
City of Midway



**Regional Coordinator
South**
Veronica Edwards Phillips
Commissioner
City of Lauderdale Lake



Historian
Dianne Williams-Cox
Commissioner
City of Tallahassee



Chaplain
Constance Butler
Vice Mayor
Green Cove Springs



Sergeant-At-Arms
Felicia M. Brunson
Mayor
City of West Park

Thank you, 2022-2023 Nominating Committee Volunteers

- Chair Phillip Walker**, Commissioner, Lakeland & FBC-LEO Past President (20-22)
- Marlon Bolton**, Commissioner, Tamarac
- Shannon Hayes**, Councilman, Crestview
- Gary Russ, Jr.**, Commissioner, Gretna

FBC-LEO Webinar



**FBC-LEO
WEBINAR**

FREE AND OPEN TO NONMEMBERS.

Uniting Local Voices Webinar
Tuesday, Oct 25, 2022
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM EDT

Program Summary

Florida is a complex and diverse state with over 400 unique communities. What's best for one municipality isn't always best for another. From protecting the safety of our neighborhoods to preserving the unique interests of our communities, we believe Florida's many towns and taxpayers deserve flexibility and accountability, not sledgehammer solutions. Join host Jeff Branch and panelists as they explore how to unite local voices and strengthen the role of residents in advocating for our cities and their services.

Panelists:

Scott Dudley, Director of Field Advocacy and Federal Affairs, Florida League of Cities

Commissioner Dianne Williams-Cox, Tallahassee

Commissioner Joshua Simmons, Coral Springs

Register Today!

Member News



Welcome to our new FBC-LEO Member

Warmest welcome! We are delighted to have you as a member of the FBC-LEO organization and look forward to getting to know you.

- **Cynthia Chestnut**, Commissioner, City of Gainesville
- **Joy B. Smith**, Commissioner, City of West Park
- **Delarian Wiggins**, Councilman, City of Pensacola

**Florida League of Cities Elects Cocoa City
Mayor Michael Blake as 2nd Vice President**

Space Coast Daily

The Florida League of Cities hosted its Annual Conference on Thursday in Hollywood, Florida. Cocoa Mayor Michael C. Blake was elected as the 2nd Vice President of the Florida League of Cities. The association serves an integral role as the united voice for municipalities across the state of Florida and helps to shape legislation, as well as help governments, share ideas and resources. Blake will serve in the role for the 2022-23 term. Blake has served as an elected municipal official for nearly 25 years including time as the President of the Space Coast League of Cities in 2008, serving on the board of the Florida League of Mayors this past year, and several different committees for the Florida League of Cities and Florida Municipal Insurance Trust. [Source](#)

**Bartow Vice Mayor Longworth
Named 2022 Municipal Official of the Year**

Florida League of Cities

The Florida League of Cities (FLC), celebrating its 100th anniversary as the united voice for Florida's municipal governments, announced that City of Bartow Vice Mayor Leo E. Longworth is this year's recipient of the League's prestigious E. Harris Drew Municipal Official Lifetime Achievement Award. "I appreciate this, and I'm so humbled. I must give honor to God, who directs my life," said Longworth after being presented with the award. "I will honor and cherish this – especially the fact that this is being given during the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Florida League of Cities. Thank you all so much." Presented annually, this award is named for Supreme Court Justice E. Harris Drew, the man who coined the League's motto: "Local self-government, the key to American democracy." The award recognizes and honors local elected officials who have made lasting and worthwhile contributions to the citizens of Florida through their efforts and dedication in the performance of their duties at the local level. [Source](#)

**Miramar Mayor Named President
of Florida League of Mayors**

Florida League of Mayors

The Florida League of Mayors (FLM), an organization for Florida's Mayors, founded and developed by Florida's Mayors, announced that Wayne Messam, Mayor of the City of Miramar, was elected President of the Association. He succeeds outgoing President Scott Singer, Mayor of the City of Boca Raton, and will serve a one-year term. "This is a humbling experience," said Messam. "This association helps support Florida's mayors as we each work to serve our communities to the very best of our abilities. While we're all from different parts of our diverse state, we all share common goals, and the Florida League of Mayors helps us achieve those goals. I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to lead this association and its members, and I look forward to the year ahead as we continue working together and learning from one another." [Source](#)

FBC-LEO Booth at FLC Annual Conference



Thank you to the volunteers listed below for working the FBC-LEO Booth during FLC Annual Conference. We received a record number of membership applications at the booth this year!

Rufus Borom, Commissioner, Palatka
Felicia Brunson, Mayor, West Park
Constance Butler, Vice Mayor, Green Cove Springs
Jackie Gary Clarke, Mayor, Village of Indiantown
James "Alex" Goins, Commissioner, Cocoa
Shirley Green Brown, Vice Mayor, Alachua
Jessica Davis, Commissioner, DeLand
Marilyn Davis, Vice Mayor, Lauderdale Lakes
NanDrycka King Albert, Councilwoman, Midway
Lawrence "Jabbow" Martin, Commissioner, Lauderhill
Kathy Washington, Councilwoman, Welaka
Normita Woodard, Commissioner, Dade City
Mary Richardson, Vice Mayor, Dundee
Eryn Russell, Ambassador, Florida League of Cities
Leah West, Haines City
Morris West, Commissioner, Haines City

FBC-LEO Annual Breakfast Meeting Recap

The 2022 FBC-LEO Breakfast Meeting had record-setting attendance.



Outgoing FBC-LEO President Teresa Watkins Brown, Councilwoman, City of Fort Myers was presented a gavel plaque for her service to the association.



Attorney Benjamin Crump conducted the installation of the 2022-2024 FBC-LEO President. Morris West, Commissioner Haines City.



Attorney Benjamin Crump's powerful address stressed the importance of fighting for the safety of our children and the need to stand for justice when it is not politically expedient.



As a token of appreciation for 36 years of service to the FBC-LEO, Liaison Sharon Berrian was presented a bouquet of roses, an award, a photobook with messages and photos from the FBC-LEO membership and granted an Honorary Membership to the association.

From Our Partners



Florida City Government Week

Florida City Government Week, held annually in October, is a time for cities across the state to celebrate, showcase and engage citizens in the work of municipal government. 2022 Florida City Government Week will be held **October 17-23**.

Civic engagement activities can be held for citizens of all ages. Most are at no or low cost. Cities are encouraged to involve their local schools, businesses, media and civic clubs in Florida City Government Week activities. Visit flcityweek.com for ideas, tools and tips to get started with your #FLCityWeek celebration!

Events & Training Opportunities

FLCities Strong Webinar

Monday, September 12, 2022
10:00 a.m. ET
GoToWebinar



Strategic plans are sometimes adopted by a city and then set aside to collect dust. September's #FLCitiesStrong will look at processes and best practices in strategic planning to help you and your city maximize this effort. Guest speakers include experts from the **City of Seminole** and the water management industry.

Also, learn about **Gainesville's Edible Groves**, the first of the three Municipal Achievement Award-winning initiatives to be featured in #FLCitiesStrong! Representatives from the **City of Gainesville** will give attendees an overview of the program and its success.

[Register Here](#)

State-Mandated Continuing Education in Ethics Webinar

Wednesday, October 19, 2022
10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. ET
GoToWebinar



The class contains a morning and afternoon session to cover all 4 hours with a lunch break in-between. Meet the state requirement and maybe, just maybe, enjoy doing it!

Agenda

Session 1: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Florida Ethics Law (Chapter 112)

BREAK

Session 2: 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. - Florida Public Records and Public Meetings Law

Participating in the FULL four hours of this webinar meets the state requirement for annual ethics training. We hope to see you there!

Please note: Attendees for this class are required to both log-in and have audio access to be awarded credit. Instructors use both slides and verbal information/illustrations throughout the course. No audio-only attendance will count toward completion of the course.

Register Online

2022-2023 Meeting and Events

SAVE THE DATE

Be sure all of the upcoming FBC-LEO events are on your calendar.

General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, October 11, 2022
6:00 p.m. ET via Zoom

Annual Membership Reception

Wednesday, November 30, 2022
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. ET
Embassy Suites Orlando

General Membership Meeting

(In conjunction with FLC Legislative Conference)

Tuesday, January 10, 2023
6:00 p.m. ET via Zoom

**2023 FBC-LEO
Spring Conference**

March 2-3, 2023
Embassy Suites Orlando

General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, April 11, 2023
6:00 p.m. ET via Zoom

Annual Breakfast Meeting

Friday, August 11, 2023
7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. ET
Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek
(In conjunction with FLC Annual Conference, August 10-12, 2023)

Find Us on Social Media



Click on the icons below to follow us on Facebook, Indeed, YouTube and Twitter!

Florida Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials