



MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor & Commissioners

CC: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

FROM: Richard L. Steinberg, Vice Mayor *RLS/mt.*
Deede Weithorn, Commissioner *DW/aks*

DATE: September 29, 2008

SUBJECT: For Your Information-Miami-Dade County League of Cities August 7, 2008 Minutes

Please find attached the minutes for the August 7, 2008 Miami-Dade County League of Cities Board Meeting for your information.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Marlene Taylor at ext. 6087 or Anne Swanson at ext. 6528.

RLS/mt

Agenda Item 6
Date 10-7-08

OFFICERS

President
HON. RICHARD STEINBERG
 Commissioner, Miami Beach
 First Vice President
HON. JIM GIBSON
 Mayor, Gardens
 Second Vice President
HON. MICHAEL BLYNN
 Councilman, North Miami
 Third Vice President
HON. JUAN C. BERMUDEZ
 Mayor, Doral
 Secretary
HON. LUIS GONZALEZ
 Councilman, City of Hialeah
 Treasurer
HON. HORACE FELIU
 Mayor, South Miami

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HON. JOSEPE KELLEY
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HON. CESAR CARASA
 Mayor, West Miami



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Minutes
August 7, 2008

President, **Richard Steinberg**, Vice Mayor, City of Miami Beach, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. and welcomed the guests. Councilman, Lucky Garcia, City of Hialeah Gardens, gave the Invocation. Secretary, Luis Gonzalez, Councilman, City of Hialeah, led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The **municipalities represented** at the board meeting: Aventura, Bal Harbour, Bay Harbor Islands, Biscayne Park, Coral Gables, Doral, El Portal, Hialeah, Homestead, Medley, Miami Beach, Miami-Dade County, Miami Gardens, Miami Lakes, Miami Shores, North Bay Village, North Miami, North Miami Beach, Opa-Locka, Pinecrest, South Miami, Sunny Isles Beach, Surfside, Sweetwater, Virginia Gardens, West Miami **Associate Members** and guests: All Services, Arriaga, Sterling & Associates, AT & T, Bank Atlantic, Berger Singerman, Brown and Brown of Florida, C.A.P. Government, CAC Medical Centers, FPL, GMCVB, Kimley-Horn & Associates, Law Offices of Oscar Marrero, Levy & Associates, LINC, Miami Dade College, Metro Dade Firefighters, Public Defenders Office, Public Rick Underwriters, Rachlin LLP, Rodriguez Trueba and Company, Sagemark Consulting, Stearns, Weaver, Miller, etal..., University of Miami, Wachovia, Waste Management, Weiss, Serota, Helfman, Pastoriza Cole & Boniske, P.L..

President **Richard Steinberg** asked for a motion to approve the minutes and the consent agenda. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Third Vice President **J.C. Bermudez** introduced Mayor **Yioset de la Cruz** of the City of Hialeah Gardens. Mayor de la Cruz introduced some of his elected officials and staff from the City of Hialeah Gardens that were in attendance; Councilman Lucky Garcia, Councilman Elmo Urrea, Councilman Rolando Pina, Marcos Piloto, Steve Cypen, and City Attorney Charles Citrin. The city of Hialeah Gardens has become one of the fastest growing communities. In that we had 5,000 residents back in 1990 and now we have over 26,000 residents. We have grown not only in population but also in man size. About 4 years ago the City annexed and won a square mile from the County that we are now turning into an entertainment site, Something interesting about the City of Hialeah Gardens is that we have one of the best semi-Wal-Mart's in the United States second best in the world to the one in Japan. If any one is interested in buying land or looking for investment the City of Hialeah Gardens is the place to come to. The City was incorporated in 1948, and this year we turn 60. A promotional video of the City was played, and afterwards Mayor de la Cruz thanked everyone for coming to the City of Hialeah Gardens.

in attendance. Mayor Robaina thanked Raul Martinez for introducing him and speaking to him about the League of Cities back in 1995. Mayor Robaina said that this is one of the best institutions. It gives municipalities the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern and to work together on so many issues to protect our sovereignty. It's an honor for me to be a part of MDCLC. He introduced some of his elected officials and staff in attendance; Council Vice President Carlos Hernandez, Councilman Luis Gonzalez, Past City Councilman and State Representative Eddy Gonzalez, and OMB Director Alex Vega. We are doing a lot of great things in the City from elderly housing to road projects to a new project bringing a new Jackson Memorial Hospital, with more elderly housing. We are building an Educational Academy from 9th grade on where young men and woman of the community can train to be the next police officer, firefighter, paramedics, and 911 communications personnel. The academy is located at 76th street and 26th avenue. It will open on August 18, 2008, the first day of school, but the grand opening is on August 20, 2008. This will be a model for every City and County to be able to follow. They are leveraging on the fact that they already have a Police Department, Fire College, and a 911 center. We are using these resources that were already built to be able to train these young men and woman of the community for the future. Reality is that not all our children are going to be lawyers, doctors, and cpa's and if we don't start customizing education we will continue to graduate only 60% of our students. So we need to create career paths for those students that might be thinking of leaving school. The City of Hialeah is proud of our heritage, and of the things that we have done and the things that we are going to do. I am very proud to say that we are one of the Cities to have our own Fire Department since 1925 and those men and women who have served our residents have done it proudly and with integrity and they will continue to do so for the future of this community. God willing we will continue to be united and to protect home rule.

Second Vice President **Michael Blynn**, Councilman, City of North Miami introduced our sponsors for the evening **Mark Pollock** and **Scott Kremer**, The Financial Group. They spoke about retiree health care. GASBE has introduced new reporting standards starting in 2006. At the Financial Group we have combined our resources with a couple of investment banking firms that are represented tonight. These folks have been on ground with regards to how you can finance these liabilities at a lower cost to capital, improve your balance sheet and also provide retiree health care from a liquidity perspective. As we start looking at our government as a primary employer certainly we can have a lot of different reasons as to why people come to work for the government paying benefits, job security, and a higher outlook. Paying benefits is a breakdown of what you are giving me today and what you are promising me for the future. That future is certainly in compensation and retiree health care. The dilemma that we have today with government is which one are you going to offer. Certainly as we start looking at the percentage compensation as a percentage total budget all of a sudden retiree health care and pensions are becoming a major part of what's going on. Pensions have been around for a while, there have been some very healthy funding in pensions. There was a study done in 2006 where it shows that Florida had very high funding levels as a percentage of its liability. Even if you look at other states 95-98% of the states, they are all well funded within their pension programs. If you start comparing what pension funding looks like versus OPED you can see that many states haven't even started to address their OPED funding problems. Many states including Florida have zero funding with regards to what their pre-funding for their retiree health care programs. There are only a few states that have the 35% or more in

health care funding. The Financial Group is proud to be a member of the MDCLC, and tonight's sponsor. We are available to meet with you and or you administrators to see whether we can help with your financial situation. We look forward to working with you and the League.

President Steinberg announced the slate of officers being proposed for the 2008-2009 Board. Motion was made and passed by a unanimous vote.

1st Vice President **Shirley Gibson**, Mayor, City of Miami Gardens introduced **Dr. Eduardo Padron**, President, Miami Dade College. Dr. Padron spoke about how now in America more than 90% of all new jobs that are being created require post secondary education. Currently with just a high school diploma you can only work at McDonalds and Burger King and with the money you make at those jobs you can not raise a family. In other words you join the cycle of poverty. As a matter of fact someone mentioned it before, we are only graduating 60% of all the high school students. The dropout rate in our community is totally unacceptable and of those who graduate and want to go to college it's becoming almost impossible because of the financial burden and other obstacles that are in the way. Miami Dade College is a door of opportunity for everyone in this community that want to make a difference in their lives. We have an open door. I am here to ask you to support Constitutional Amendment #8. This will be on the ballot in November. Constitutional Amendment #8 authorizes counties to levy funding for community colleges. It gives people a choice to support the community colleges and supplement funding for a limited period of time. This amendment was approved with a largest margin of support by the Florida Taxation and Budget Reform Commission with 24 of the 25 members supporting it. We would appreciate it if your cities would consider passing resolutions supporting Amendment #8. President Steinberg thanked Miami Dade College President Padron for his support of the League and presented him with an MDCLC plaque. He then presented the 3 Miami Dade College students who received a one thousand dollar scholarship for their studies at the college. This is the second year that the League has partnered with Miami Dade College to provide this scholarship to students that are interested in government service. Two students will be assigned to a municipality and one to the League office for an internship program. President Steinberg and the MDCLC Board are proud of this scholarship program and look forward to expanding it in the future. Dr. Padron thanked the League for their commitment to education. President Steinberg called up the scholarship recipients Rose-Tania Honorat, Gershom Jones, and Christian Moreno and presented them with their scholarship.

Treasurer **Horace Feliu**, Mayor, City of South Miami introduced **Mr. Bill Read**, Director, National Hurricane Center. Mr. Read gave an update on the current hurricane season. He informed that we are really off to busy start; it might not seem like it because Florida has not been impacted by the weather. There have been already 8 named storms in the pacific ocean and 5 in the atlantic. This is the 3rd most active July on record, the most active July was in 2005. The season actually started on May 31, 2008 with Tropical Storm Arthur, then there was Hurricane Bertha it happens to be the longest live storm that we've had in the month of July. In the hundred and something years that we have been keeping record, it's also the earliest we have seen a category 3 or greater hurricane form east of the caribbean. Hurricane Dolly came out of the caribbean and was strengthening all the way up to land fall. It came in as a minimum category 2 hurricane but the estimates that are coming in from far south

Texas are about a billion dollars of damage. We know that here to with Hurricane Wilma didn't come in as a very intense hurricane but it did tremendous damage. Just this past week we had Tropical Storm Edward. It went within 30 miles of Galveston, Texas and produced mostly welcomed rain. As of August 1, on an average we have 2 name storms, this year we've had 5. They updated the seasonal forecast for the year and we're calling for about 85% chance of above normal activity. We have already had 5 storms and we're half way to normal. We are expecting 14-18 name storms and as many as 3-6 storms will be major. We still have along way to go on the hurricane season, 115 days left in the season and we are now in the peak. Back in 1992 we only had 7 storms the whole year, one of them being Hurricane Andrew, and if you go back to 1983 there were only 4 storms the fewest number of storms since 1930. The number of storms really isn't relative unless I tell you where a storm is going to go. Just be prepared. The attendees and guest asked Mr. Read questions. President Steinberg then thanked Mr. Read and presented him with an MDCLC plaque in appreciation of his presentation.

Under the Legislative Committee President Steinberg discussed the battle that all municipalities have with Miami-Dade County with regards to property taxes. The County Mayor and County Manager proposed a budget where millage rates would have shifted approximately \$36,000,000 in new taxes onto the back of property owners in municipalities. The League of Cities took the leadership role in fighting this fight to make sure that it was not going to happen. President Steinberg thanked County Commissioner Carlos Gimenez for being the strong advocate at the County Commission meeting. What happened at the County, what we had pushed for was to make sure that they not put themselves in a box that would have forced them to shift cost to Cities. We ask you all too please stay engaged on this issue, we will be reaching out to you again leading all the way to September. There has been a lot of misinformation from the County and a lot of finger pointing at the League for misinforming the public but let me tell you the truth is in the numbers and the truth in the numbers tells you that the County was shifting cost from Unincorporated Dade to Incorporated Dade nothing more nothing less. So for them to want to say maybe it was a little more or a little less the total number was about \$36,000,000 and maybe it was \$4 more for one person versus what we said. Who knows but the total was there and if you look at \$36,000,000 you know what that does to your City and you know what it does to your ability to provide tax relief that your residents are expecting. The reality is when they get that tax bill they won't remember whose portion went up or whose portion went down. They are going to come to you and ask you why you raised their taxes. So we need to make sure that the County is honest with the people in our community and are not telling them that their lowering taxes or not raising taxes because they look at a County wide number that produces comparable revenue but they actually break it down and let people know what its doing in their community. I want to thank all the elected officials because when I was there with a number of you before the County Commissioners we heard almost everyone of them say that their phones were ringing from the municipal Mayors and Commissioners that they represent. We would not be able to accomplish what we did had it not been for your actions of calling your individual Commissioners and letting them know how important it was to your City and constituents.

President Steinberg then introduced County Commissioner **Carlos Gimenez**, Miami-Dade County. This all started when my staff came back from the press conference that the Mayor and Manager held regarding the new budget. After I reviewed the

budget message it took me about 30 seconds to realize what they had done. What they had really done was that they created a County of winners and losers and if you were in a City you were a loser, simple as that. What they did was shift about 3 tenths of a mil from the Unincorporated area (UMSA), the library district, and the fire rescue and shifted it over to the County wide. So the irony of it is the less you receive in County services the more you have to pay. When we had our budget meeting earlier in July we actually changed the numbers, the income or the property assessment was actually higher than the Mayor and Manager had thought. So what they did was reduce the Countywide millage and recommended that the other millage stay the same. The net effect of that is that if you live in UMSA your tax rate would have gone down by .45% if you don't live in UMSA your tax rate would go up any where from 1.25%-6.41%. The 6.41% would be for the City of Hialeah because they are the ones that have the least amount of County services. A lot of folks got calls saying don't worry its not affecting you too much and that's what the County will do. They will try to divide and conquer all of you so that you don't go out in force because it's not affecting quite as much as maybe the City of Hialeah, the City of Miami, the City of Coral Gables, the Village of Key Biscayne, or the City of Miami Beach. If they had simply just kept last years tax rate I wouldn't be up here because then everyone would be treated the same. Everyone would have gotten the benefit of the additional \$25,000 homestead exemption which 70% of the people voted to get. It's not right for the County to allow one segment of the population to get that benefit and the other which lives in Cities not to get the full benefit. When we had a discussion on the charter reform amendments it all came into light. The new battle is going to be the County trying to take over all the fire services in all Miami-Dade County. But there are 5 cities that have their own fire departments. There is a new charter amendment that basically says everyone in Miami-Dade County will have a voice or a vote and if it goes affirmative then those 5 cities will have to turn over their fire department to the Miami-Dade County fire department. How does this all connect? What a coincidence that they had lowered the fire rescue taxing millage at the time they were going to float this idea of taking over the fire services. Isn't it interesting that they also lowered UMSA millage. You have this one battle coming with the County in terms of the millage rates and my proposal is that we either go back to last years rates that way everyone gets treated the same or even better we take it back to what the State limits are and then everyone gets an even bigger tax break. In regards to the fire, if it comes to pass and we actually put this on the ballot, then again it comes to the divide and conquer. I am going to finish with the County Charter written some 50 something years ago, it says the Board may also take over and operate or grant franchises to operate any municipal service if an election called by the Board of County Commissioners within the municipality a majority of those voting vote in favor of turning the service over to the County or the governing body of the municipality request the County to take over the services by a 2/3 vote of its members or by referendum. County Commissioner Carlos Gimenez answered questions from the audience. President Steinberg thanked him on behalf of all the Cities for protecting the interests of all the residents of Miami-Dade County and the Cities.

President Steinberg spoke about the County Budget Review Committee and asked for any volunteers who would like to participate on this committee.

President, Richard Steinberg introduced Executive Director, **Richard Kuper** for the Executive Director's Report. Executive Director, **Richard Kuper**, thanked everyone for listening to all the presentations and specially thanked the sponsor for the evening The Financial Group . Mr. Kuper reminded everyone about the Installation Dinner and that time is running out to purchase tables and ads.

Everyone wants to know what the League does, well Commissioner Gimenez, President Steinberg and many of you were involved with this issue the proposed budget from Mayor Alvarez. It is very important that we all work together. You all saw that in two days prior to the Commission meeting with the help of Commissioners like Gimenez we were able to make a real difference for all of the cities. Remember what Commissioner Gimenez said he is giving you a preview of what may happen in the future. He's talking about the fire department who knows what may be next the police department, and possibly other services that we all render. Mr. Kuper thanked Commissioner Carlos Gimenez and the Board Members for their tireless efforts on behalf of their constituents and municipalities. Mr. Kuper introduced and recognized all the Cities, the City Managers, the City Clerks, the City Attorneys, Board Members, Judges, and Judicial Candidates. Mr. Kuper acknowledged the following Associate Members that attended the meeting and thanked them for their continued support: George Acevedo from All Services; Julio Arriaga from Arriaga, Sterling & Associates; Fatima Perez from AT & T; Ricardo Gonzalez and Karina Castrillo from Bank Atlantic; Daniel Pascale from Berger Singerman; Robert Hollander from Brown and Brown of Florida; Carlos Penin from C.A.P. Government; Bert Valdes from CAC Medical Centers; Eloy Villasuso from FPL; Will Talbert from GMCVB; Cecilia Villoria and Allen Ghanny from Kimley-Horn & Associates; Oscar Marrero from the Law Offices of Oscar Marrero; Robert Levy and Jose Diaz from Levy & Associates; Beverly Gerald from LINC; Dr. Eduardo Padron and Geraldine Guerra from Miami Dade College; Joaquin del Cueto from Metro Dade Firefighters; Carlos Martinez from the Public Defenders Office; Ruth Mohr from Public Rick Underwriters; Jerry Chiocca from Rachlin LLP; Carlos Trueba from Rodriguez Trueba and Company; Jeffery Concepcion from Sagemark Consulting; Jimmy Morales and Joe Jimenez from Stearns, Weaver, Miller; Juan Carlos del Valle from University of Miami; Lance Aylsworth from Wachovia; Jason Neal from Waste Management; Matthew Mandel and MacAdam Glinn from Weiss, Serota, etal..

President Steinberg introduced Mayor Joy Cooper and Councilwoman Georgia Phillips. Each of them made a presentation for their candidacy of the 2nd Vice President of the Florida League of Cities. After their presentation the Board moved to support Mayor Joy Cooper in her bid for 2nd Vice President for the Florida League of Cities. A motion was passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.