



MIAMI BEACH

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LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: October 13, 2008

SUBJECT: Recent Sun Post Article

This Letter to the Commission is in response to a recent Sun Post cover story article printed in the September 18th, 2008 circulation, which was titled 'Blood Beach'. The article in question looks at the number of homicides in Miami Beach for 2008, implying that the murder rate in our City this year is reaching a record number for this decade. It should be noted that there have been six (6) homicides in the City of Miami Beach during the first three quarters of the 2008 calendar year. Should that statistical trend continue, the total projected number at the end of the year would be eight (8). If so, that number would equal the number of homicides in 2004. If we do not see another homicide in our City this year, we will, of course, have less than the total in 2004, less than the total in 2002 (seven), and have an equal number with the totals in 2001 and 2003 respectively. The below numbers reflect the homicides for the City of Miami Beach each year since 2000:

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number of Homicides	3	6	7	6	8	4	3	4	*6

* through October 7, 2008

For the record, four of the six homicides in 2008 have been cleared by arrest and one was exceptionally cleared when the subject took his own life moments after committing the homicide. The subject in the sixth and most recent homicide has been identified and a warrant has been issued for his arrest. Four of the six homicides involved disputes between subjects who knew each other and another occurred during the commission of a crime (shoplifting). Three of the six homicides involved subjects who had recently arrived and/or were passing through our City.

It goes without saying that the Miami Beach Police Department is very cognizant of this issue and continues to focus their efforts on reducing homicides, as well as, all other categories of violent crime. It should be noted that all categories of violent crime tracked for annual Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR), with the one exception of homicides, are down for 2008 versus 2007. This would be a continuation of a reduction in violent crime recorded in 2007, making Miami Beach one of the few cities in Miami-Dade County with a decrease in that specific crime category.

JMG:CN:tr