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NO. LTC # 151-2011

LETTER TO COMMISSIONER

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

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager *JMG*

DATE: June 16, 2011

SUBJECT: **Building Department Additional Customer Advocate Assignment**

The purpose of this Letter to Commission (LTC) is to advise you of the assignment of an additional Customer Advocate in the Building Department.

If you recall, the Watson Rice study recommended that a Customer Advocate/Ombudsman position be created in the Building Department to assist customers with permit application, plans review and inspections complaints or problems. The Inspection Services Coordinator position in the Building Department was established to work in this capacity. After further review and subsequent discussions with representatives of the development community, most specifically representatives of the Night Life Committee, the Administration has determined that another representative of the Building Department assigned into such a role will assist with our customer relations.

To that end, please note that Barbara Hawayek, the City's Customer Service Manager, has been asked to assume an additional Customer Advocate role in the Building Department. Ms. Hawayek has been with the City for approximately eight (8) years in the Customer Service Manager role, working with different departments and on Citywide initiatives to improve the City's customer experiences. Ms. Hawayek most recently was assigned to the Code Compliance Division, which has since been absorbed into the Building Department. Prior to Ms. Hawayek's employment with the City, she served in a customer service capacity in private industry.

Ms. Hawayek will serve as a resource to all Building Department customers, assisting them with navigating the department processes. She will also assist customers who have questions regarding the plan review process, and trying to move plans through the review process in a timely fashion in an effort to meet the departmental goal of having plans reviewed and comments issued within 30 days. Ms. Hawayek will be responsible for responding to all inquiries submitted via the Internet "Contact Us" link or that are referred to the Building Department by the Mayor and City Commissioners or other members of the City Administration. Ms. Hawayek will also work with the other departments in the Building Development Process (Fire, Planning and Public Works) to resolve issues raised by customers.

We welcome Ms. Hawayek in this new assignment. She may be reached via e-mail at barbarahawayek@miamibeachfl.gov, or via telephone at (305) 673-7610, extension 6977.

JMG/JGG/RM/KT

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