

Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee Meeting
January 30, 2014

NEW BUSINESS

4. Discussion Of Safety And Water Sports In Residential Areas.

Commission Item C4M, June 5, 2013

(Requested by Commissioner Tobin)

Javier Otero, Fire Chief

ITEM # 4



MIAMI BEACH

City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee Members

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager 

DATE: January 30, 2014

SUBJECT **REFERRAL TO NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OF SAFETY AND WATER SPORTS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

BACKGROUND

The issue of water sports activities was discussed during the November 19th, 2012, Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee (NCAC) meeting. During that meeting, the Fire Chief submitted proposed language to revise the code in an effort to implement prior guidance from the commission to allow water sports activities in the areas that are not designated as protected swim zones. During a subsequent meeting of the NCAC, the City Attorney clarified that the language proposed by the Fire Chief was not needed since the city code prohibits the use of water craft only within the restricted swim zones. The current practice of the Fire Department's Ocean Rescue Division is to enforce the code as per the legal interpretation rendered by the City Attorney.

Overall, the majority of waters sports enthusiasts are aware of the code and do not encroach into the protected swim areas. Encroachments occur seldom and voluntary compliance is not regularly a problem. Currently there is a tower with corresponding protected swim area at 21st street and 30th street. Kayaking in the unprotected area between the two towers is not prohibited by code.

CONCLUSION

Voluntary compliance with current code is the norm. Lifeguards are proactive and are normally able to keep vessels out of the protected swim zones through voluntary compliance.

Reference:

Sec. 82-468. Watercraft prohibited in restricted swim areas.

Except as provided in section 82-469, it shall be unlawful for any licensee or watercraft operator to steer, propel, operate, cause to be operated or use any watercraft within the restricted swim areas as set forth in section 82-467.

(Ord. No. 93-2848, § 1(21-19), 5-19-93)